

SUBJECT: Waiving title requirements for certain antique outboard motors

COMMITTEE: Culture, Recreation and Tourism — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — K. King, Gervin-Hawkins, Burns, Clardy, Frullo, Israel, Krause, Martinez, C. Morales

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — Leonard Sturm; (*Registered, but did not testify:* David Sinclair, Game Warden Peace Officers Association)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Justin Halverson, Texas Parks and Wildlife)

DIGEST: HB 2450 would define an antique outboard motor to mean an outboard motor that was at least 40 years old. The bill would exempt an antique outboard motor with a maximum capacity of 25 horsepower from certain titling requirements for vessels and outboard motors.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 2450 would encourage participation in fishing and recreational boating by making it easier for Texans to purchase and legally use antique outboard motors of limited capacity on public waterways without a title. Current regulations prohibit the use of any outboard motor without a title on public waterways in the state except under certain restrictive conditions.

New outboard motors can cost thousands of dollars, making them prohibitively expensive for many Texans. By contrast, an older engine can cost less than \$100. There are many outboard motors that meet the bill's criteria for sale in Texas at flea markets, garage sales, and through other channels, but often without the paperwork needed to legally transfer

ownership. As a result, many would-be owners of older engines put off buying and repairing them because of the difficulty in obtaining a title. By exempting older engines from titling requirements, HB 2450 would enable less-affluent and younger people, who may be less able to buy new, to enjoy Texas waterways and encourage the preservation of older motors.

HB 2450 would not have a significant financial impact on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the state. Waiving the title fee would decrease revenue to the department's Game, Fish and Water Safety fund only by a small amount and would have a negligible impact on sales tax revenues.

**CRITICS
SAY:**

HB 2450 could result in an increase in the number of stolen outboard motors on public waterways in Texas. Proof of ownership of an outboard motor is evidenced by a certificate of title issued by the TPWD, and exempting older motors from titling requirements could open the door to theft and illegal activity. Waiving title fees for antique outboard motors also would deprive the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department of title fees and its share of state sales tax revenue on those fees.