

SUBJECT: Establishing the Oyster Advisory Committee

COMMITTEE: Culture, Recreation & Tourism — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — Ashby, Martinez, Bailes, Flores, Garcia, Holland
0 nays
3 absent — Collier, Morrison, Troxclair

WITNESSES: For — Johny Jurisich, Texas Oyster Association (*Registered, but did not testify*); Joey Park, Coastal Conservation Association Texas; Cyrus Reed, Lone Star Chapter Sierra Club; Danielle Goshen, National Wildlife Federation; W Brad Boney, Chad Wilbanks, Justin Woody, Tracy Woody, Texas Oyster Association; Micah Rodriguez, The Nature Conservancy)

Against — None

BACKGROUND: Some have suggested that creating an oyster advisory committee to advise on the management of oysters in Texas would allow for such policy to be better informed by the oyster industry.

DIGEST: CSHB 3385 would establish the Oyster Advisory Committee to advise the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission (the commission), the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), and the director of TPWD on the management of oysters. The bill would specify that the committee would be an advisory committee of the commission and subject to relevant statutory provisions of such an advisory committee.

The bill would establish provisions relating to the public nomination of committee members, frequency of committee meetings, and records of meeting minutes and attendance. By October 1 of each year, the committee would be required to submit a report to TPWD that included recommendations for the management of oysters in the state and any other useful and appropriate information.

The director of TPWD would be required to establish administrative procedures to carry out the bill's provisions, while the commission would be required to adopt any rules necessary for the relevant administration of the advisory committee by December 1, 2023.

By January 1, 2024, the presiding officer of the commission would have to appoint the initial members of the advisory committee, whose terms would expire January 1, 2026. Unless the committee was continued in existence of the applicable sunset review provisions, the committee would be abolished and the bill would expire September 1, 2027.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2023.