

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.H.B. 968
By: Homer et al. (Harris)
Agriculture & Rural Affairs
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Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of this bill is to allow all hunters to hunt with crossbows during the bow hunting season. Allowing all individuals to hunt with a crossbow during open archery season would increase interest in hunting and help foster generations of hunters and wildlife conservators. Many people treat crossbows the same as other archery equipment. This bill would open up access to archery season to those who are not disabled but do not have the upper body strength to enjoy traditional archery equipment, such as children or older hunters.

Although crossbows may look like guns because of the stalk and the way they are shot, they more appropriately are compared to traditional archery equipment in terms of ballistic performance and effective range. The crossbow delivers an arrow with the same type of drop as a long bow. The delivery of an arrow from a crossbow cannot be compared to the trajectory of a bullet from a gun. Also, a gun can be shot from around 400 yards away from the game, while a crossbow must be shot from a much closer distance of 50 to 100 yards.

Opening up the archery season to all individuals who hunt with a crossbow would increase license sales. Several other states, such as Maryland and Ohio, allow hunting with a crossbow during archery season and have not seen any negative effect on the archery season. In fact, the overall number of hunters during archery season has increased.

C.S.H.B. 968 relates to the use of crossbows for hunting.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 43.201(a), Parks and Wildlife Code, as follows:

- (a) Prohibits any person, except as provided by Subsection (c) (relating to the authorization for the Parks and Wildlife Commission (commission) to exempt a person from the stamp requirement of this section) or (d) (relating to the authorization for the commission by rule to prescribe alternate requirements for identifying the purchaser of a stamp issued in an automated manner), from hunting deer, turkey, or javelina (collared peccary) during an open archery season provided by law or by the proclamations of the Parks and Wildlife Commission and during which season only crossbows, rather than only crossbows used by hunters with upper limb disabilities, longbows, recurved bows, and compound bows are authorized to be used unless the person has acquired an archery hunting stamp issued to the person by the Parks and Wildlife Department. Authorizes a hunter, in a county that does not permit hunting with a firearm, to use a crossbow only if the hunter is a person with upper limb disabilities and has an archery hunting stamp.

SECTION 2. Provides that the change in law made by this Act applies to a proceeding regarding hunting with a crossbow that is pending or filed on or after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2009.