

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.S.B. 1511
By: Nichols et al.
Natural Resources & Economic Development
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Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Battleship Texas is the last remaining battleship that participated in both World War I and World War II. Currently docked in the Houston Ship Channel and under the responsibility of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), the Battleship Texas is a priceless historical asset that many generations of Texans have grown up visiting. However, the Battleship's current conditions (rust and water inundation) have become a challenge for the State and for TPWD. Interested stakeholders have come together and determined that the best course of action for the future preservation of the Battleship Texas is to enter into a memorandum of understanding to transfer the Battleship Texas to a qualified nonprofit foundation. (Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 1511 amends current law relating to the operation of the Battleship "Texas."

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. Provides that the purpose of this Act is to ensure that the Battleship "Texas," a national historic landmark whose engines are national mechanical engineering landmarks and that is the only remaining battleship to have fought in World War I and World War II, is maintained and preserved in satisfactory conditions for the benefit of the citizens of this state.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 22.261, Parks and Wildlife Code, as follows:

Sec. 22.261. JURISDICTION. Requires the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to enter into a memorandum of understanding for a term of 99 years with an appropriate nonprofit foundation for the operation and maintenance of the Battleship "Texas."

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter T, Chapter 22, Parks and Wildlife Code, by adding Section 22.262, as follows:

Sec. 22.262. PRESERVATION STANDARDS. Requires the memorandum of understanding required by Section 22.261 to include provisions:

(1) governing the preservation, management, and operation of the Battleship "Texas" consistent with the Standards for Historic Vessel Preservation Projects with Guidelines for Applying the Standards published by the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior as those standards existed on January 1, 2019;

(2) requiring the nonprofit foundation described by Section 22.261 to consult with the state historic preservation officer on matters related to the preservation or repair of the battleship; and

(3) regarding the protection of the public's interest in maintaining and preserving a priceless historical asset in a manner that ensures the public has access to the asset and an opportunity to provide comment regarding the preservation of the asset.

SECTION 4. Requires TPWD to enter into the memorandum of understanding required by Section 22.261, Parks and Wildlife Code, as amended by this Act, not later than the later of September 1, 2019, or the 90th day after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 5. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.