

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1341  
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Water, Agriculture & Rural Affairs  
5/4/2021  
Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

#### Statement of Purpose

To better align Texas's state park policy with federal park policy and to honor the service of our military personnel, veterans, and first responders.

#### Background

Under state law, certain disabled veterans are eligible for a state parklands passport, which waives the entry fee for state parks for the veteran. However, under federal law, certain military personnel and veterans can receive free entry to all national parks. Legislation is needed to better align Texas's state park policy with federal park policy and to honor the service of our military personnel, veterans, and first responders. H.B. 1341 seeks to address this issue providing for a waiver of state park entrance fees for certain first responders and active duty members and veterans of the armed forces.

#### Key Provisions

- Amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to require the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to waive a state park entrance fee for a Texas resident who is a first responder, defined by the bill as the following:
  - a firefighter certified by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection or by the State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas;
  - an individual certified as emergency medical services personnel by the Department of State Health Services;
  - a municipal police officer;
  - a sheriff, deputy sheriff, or reserve deputy sheriff; or
  - a constable, deputy constable, or reserve deputy constable.
- Amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to require the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to waive a state park entrance fee for an active duty member or veteran of the armed services of the United States, the Texas Army National Guard, the Texas Air National Guard, or the Texas State Guard.

H.B. 1341 amends current law relating to waivers for entrance fees to state parks for resident first responders, military service members, and veterans.

### **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 13.015, Parks and Wildlife Code, by amending Subsection (a-2) and adding Subsections (a-3) and (a-4), as follows:

(a-2) Requires the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to waive the park entrance fee for a resident of this state who is a first responder. Defines "first responder."

(a-3) Requires TPWD to waive the park entrance fee for an active duty member or veteran of the armed services of the United States, the Texas Army National Guard, the Texas Air National Guard, or the Texas State Guard.

(a-4) Creates this subsection from existing text and makes no further changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 13.018(a), Parks and Wildlife Code, as follows:

(a) Deletes existing text authorizing certain people to apply to TPWD for a state parklands passport, including a member of the United States armed forces on active duty who is 65 years old or over, or a veteran of the armed services of the United States who, as a result of military service, has a service-connected disability, as defined by the Veterans' Administration, consisting of the loss of the use of a lower extremity or of a 60 percent disability rating and who is receiving compensation from the United States because of the disability. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2021.