

SUBJECT: Exempting some youth from providing SSNs for hunting, fishing licenses

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

VOTE: 5 ayes — Guillen, Frullo, Larson, Márquez, Murr

0 nays

2 absent — Dukes, Smith

WITNESSES: For — Susan Hofker; John Hofker; Coleman Hofker

Against — None

On — Michael Hobson, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

BACKGROUND: Family Code, sec. 231.302(c)(1) requires that each licensing authority request, and each license applicant provide, the applicant's social security number to assist in child support enforcement.

DIGEST: HB 821 would amend the Family Code so that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department would not be required to request, and an applicant would not be required to provide, the social security number of an applicant for a hunting or fishing license if the applicant was 13 years of age or younger.

The bill also would amend the Parks and Wildlife Code to prohibit the Parks and Wildlife Commission from adopting rules that required the provision of a social security number of a person 13 years of age or younger who applied for a hunting or fishing license. However, the commission could adopt a rule requiring an applicant who was 13 years of age or younger, or the applicant's parent or guardian, to sign a statement that the applicant did not owe child support.

This bill would take effect September 1, 2015, and would apply only to an application for a hunting or fishing license submitted on or after January

1, 2016.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 821 would protect children and their families from unnecessarily providing confidential information. The purpose of requesting social security numbers from licensing applicants is to check if the applicant owes money for child support, which is unlikely if that applicant is 13 years old or younger.

Under this bill, applicants who are 13 or younger, or their parent or guardian, could sign a sworn statement avowing that they did not owe child support in lieu of providing a social security number. This would help ensure that no barriers stood in the way of children enjoying nature with their family and friends.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.