

SUBJECT: Authorizing the modification of certain carcass rules

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

VOTE: 4 ayes — Frullo, Fallon, Gervin-Hawkins, Martinez
0 nays
3 absent — Faircloth, D. Bonnen, Krause

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 19 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

WITNESSES: No public hearing

BACKGROUND: Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, sec. 42.0177 provides that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission may modify or eliminate by rule the tagging requirements for deer, turkey, or other birds and animals, or other similar tagging requirements under ch. 42.

Sec. 42.018 requires a deer tag to be attached to a deer carcass until it is finally processed, which may occur only at a final destination, such as the hunter's home or a cold storage or processing facility. According to sec. 42.001, "final processing" means processing the animal for cleaning or cooking more than by quartering. "Quartering" is the processing of an animal into not more than two hindquarters and two front shoulders and includes removal of two back straps.

DIGEST: SB 720 would allow the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to modify or eliminate by rule the carcass, final destination, or final processing requirements or provisions for certain birds or animals, including deer. The commission also could modify or eliminate certain definitions related to general hunting licenses and requirements for possession of certain antelope parts.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2017.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

SB 720 would give the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission the rulemaking authority necessary to amend carcass processing requirements, as well as the definition of final destination, which would allow the commission to better respond to and mitigate disease risk. Chronic wasting disease is a growing concern in Texas, and concentrations of the prions that cause the disease are higher in some tissues than others. Transporting those tissues could further spread the disease, and as a result, many states have imposed restrictions on moving certain carcass parts. The commission should encourage hunters to leave certain carcass parts at the harvest site to prevent the spread of disease but currently does not have the authority to do so.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.