

- SUBJECT:** Authorizing the issuance of digital tags for the taking of certain animals
- COMMITTEE:** Culture, Recreation and Tourism — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — K. King, Gervin-Hawkins, Burns, Clardy, Frullo, Israel, Krause, Martinez, C. Morales
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Kevin Davis, Deer Breeders Corporation; Elise Richardson, Texas Deer Association)
- Against — Tom Vandivier, Texas Wildlife Association
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Justin Halverson, Texas Parks and Wildlife)
- BACKGROUND:** Parks and Wildlife Code sec. 42.010 establishes requirements for how tags are regulated and issued to licensed hunters for animals and birds allowed by law to be killed during each year or season.
- Interested parties note that several states have passed laws allowing hunters to electronically tag game animals in addition to using physical tags that have the potential to fall off. Some have called for providing the statutory authority to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to allow such tags.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 3081 would allow the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to develop and implement a program for the issuance of digital tags for animals, including birds, to holders of hunting licenses authorizing the taking of those animals.
- A program developed in accordance with the bill could:
- provide for the issuance of digital tags to a hunting license holder;
  - allow a person using a digital tag to create a digital record at the

time of the taking of an animal that included information required by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; and

- require a person using a digital tag to create the digital record as soon as possible after taking the animal and retain the record at all times before the carcass was finally processed.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2021.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have no impact to general revenue through fiscal 2023, but would have a negative impact to the TPWD game, fish, and water safety account of \$712,806 in fiscal 2022 and \$543,578 in fiscal 2023.