

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
81R8683 SLB-D

S.B. 2379  
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4/5/2009  
As Filed

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

When illnesses associated with oyster consumption occur, the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) requires that states take immediate action to stop the outbreak. The first line of defense for the consumer is making sure that oysters are harvested from areas that meet NSSP requirements. Illegal harvesting from a closed area represents a major health threat to consumers. If two or more individuals become ill from oyster consumption, the NSSP requires that states immediately close the growing area and recall all of the product produced from that growing area during the period in question. It is important to public health and the oyster industry that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) enforce closure lines and keep oysters from closed areas from entering the marketplace.

As proposed, S.B. 2379 increases the penalties for harvesting oysters from closed waters and authorizes game wardens to issue citations to the entire boat crew rather than just the captain for the offense of taking oysters from a restricted area.

### **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 76.118, Parks and Wildlife Code, by amending Subsections (b), (c), and (e) and adding Subsection (e-1), as follows:

(b) Provides that a person who violates Section 76.101 (Oyster Licenses Required), 76.107 (Sale of Sport Oysters Prohibited), or 76.109 (Night Dredging Prohibited), rather than Section 76.101 (Oyster License Required), 76.107 (Sale of Sport Oysters Prohibited), 76.109 (Night Dredging Prohibited), or 76.116 (Oysters from Restricted Areas) of this code, or a regulation of the Parks and Wildlife Commission issued under one of those sections commits an offense that is a Class B Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor.

(c) Provides that a person who violates Section 76.116, or at the same time violates Sections 76.109 and 76.116, rather than Section 76.109 and either Section 76.116 or Section 76.205 [*repealed*] of this code, commits an offense that is a Class A Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor.

(e) Provides that if it is shown at the trial of a defendant for a violation of Section 76.101, 76.107, or 76.109, rather than Section 76.101, 76.107, 76.109, or 76.116 of this code, that the defendant has been convicted once within five years before the trial date of a violation of Section 76.101, 76.107, or 76.109, rather than Section 76.101, 76.107, 76.109, or 76.116 of this code, the defendant is guilty of a Class A Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor.

(e-1) Provides that if it is shown at the trial of a defendant for a violation of Section 76.116 that the defendant has been convicted once within five years before the trial date of a violation of Section 76.116, the defendant is guilty of a Parks and Wildlife Code state jail felony.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 76.119(a), Parks and Wildlife Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2009.