

By: Cortez

H.B. No. 409

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

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relating to waivers for entrance fees to state parks and certain hunting and fishing license fees for resident first responders.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 13.015, Parks and Wildlife Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a-2) and adding Subsection (a-3) to read as follows:

(a-2) The department shall waive the park entrance fee for an individual who is a first responder as defined by Section 42.012 and who:

(1) has completed at least 20 years of continuous service as a first responder; or

(2) has a disability connected to service as a first responder that consists of the loss of the use of a lower extremity or of a disability rating of 50 percent or more.

(a-3) The department may promote visits and enhance revenue at parks, including amounts necessary for salaries, advertising, consumable supplies and materials, promotional products, fees, and related expenses.

SECTION 2. Section 42.012, Parks and Wildlife Code, is amended by amending Subsection (c) and adding Subsection (d) to read as follows:

(c) In this section:

(1) "First responder" means a person who is:

1 (A) a firefighter certified by the Texas
2 Commission on Fire Protection or by the State Firefighters' and
3 Fire Marshals' Association of Texas;

4 (B) an individual certified as emergency medical
5 services personnel by the Department of State Health Services;

6 (C) a municipal police officer;

7 (D) a sheriff, deputy sheriff, or reserve deputy
8 sheriff; or

9 (E) a constable, deputy constable, or reserve
10 deputy constable.

11 (2) "Qualified disabled veteran" means a veteran with
12 a service connected disability, as defined by the United States
13 Department of Veterans Affairs, consisting of the loss of the use of
14 a lower extremity or of a disability rating of 50 percent or more
15 and who is receiving compensation from the United States for the
16 disability.

17 (d) The commission shall waive the fee or license
18 requirement for a resident who is a first responder who:

19 (1) has completed at least 20 years of continuous
20 service as a first responder; or

21 (2) has a disability connected to service as a first
22 responder that consists of the loss of the use of a lower extremity
23 or of a disability rating of 50 percent or more.

24 SECTION 3. Section 46.004(c), Parks and Wildlife Code, is
25 amended to read as follows:

26 (c) The commission shall waive the fee for:

27 (1) a qualified disabled veteran as defined by Section

1 42.012;

2 (2) [~~and for~~ a resident on active duty as a member of
3 the United States military forces, the Texas Army National Guard,
4 the Texas Air National Guard, or the Texas State Guard; and

5 (3) a resident who is a first responder as defined by
6 Section 42.012 and who:

7 (A) has completed at least 20 years of continuous
8 service as a first responder; or

9 (B) has a disability connected to service as a
10 first responder that consists of the loss of the use of a lower
11 extremity or of a disability rating of 50 percent or more.

12 SECTION 4. Section 50.002, Parks and Wildlife Code, is
13 amended by adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

14 (c) The commission shall waive the fee for an annual
15 combination resident hunting and fishing license for a resident
16 who is a first responder as defined by Section 42.012 and who:

17 (1) has completed at least 20 years of continuous
18 service as a first responder; or

19 (2) has a disability connected to service as a first
20 responder that consists of the loss of the use of a lower extremity
21 or of a disability rating of 50 percent or more.

22 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.