

TOP Contacts State Legislature About the Use of Sporting Good Tax Dollars

Contributed by Web Master
Monday, 24 November 2008
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The following is a letter to the chairmen of the Sporting Goods Sales Tax Task Force, from the Texas Outdoor Partners (TOP). TOP represents the combined interests of the outdoor organizations of Texas, and with support from TBBU, is leading the fight to make sure sportsmen's tax dollars are being used for the purpose they were collected... the preservation of our sport, and the conservation of Texas wildlife and fisheries. Please pass along this letter to fellow outdoorsmen and help TBBU and TOP let our legislatures know that the sportsmen and women of Texas expect a greater portion of the revenue collected from sporting goods sales taxes to be utilized for the enhancement, protection, and expansion of hunting and fishing opportunities in Texas.

Angler's Club of San Antonio * Austin Woods and Waters Club * Coastal Conservation Association - Texas * Dallas Safari Club * Exotic Wildlife Association * Houston Gulf Coast Chapter, Safari Club International * Houston Safari Club * Kayak Anglers Society of America * Lone Star Bowhunters Association * National Wild Turkey Federation, Texas State Chapter * Pheasants Forever * Plateau Land and Wildlife * Quail Forever * Quality Deer Management Association * Recreational Fishing Alliance - Texas * Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation of Texas * Safari Club International, Austin Chapter * Saltwater-fisheries Enhancement Association * San Antonio Metropolitan League of Bass Clubs * SCIF Austin Sables * Sensible Management of Aquatic Resources Team * Texas Audubon * Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association * Texas Association of Bass Clubs * Texas BASS Federation Nation * Texas Bighorn Society * Texas Black Bass Unlimited * Texas Brigades * Texas Chapter of the Nature Conservancy * Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society * Texas Council of Quail Unlimited Chapters * Texas Deer Association * Texas Dog Hunters Association * Texas Forestry Association * Texas Gulf Coast Stewards * Texas Hawking Association * TexasHuntFish.Com * Texas Organization of Wildlife Management Associations * Texas Outdoor Council * Texas Sportsman's Association * Texas Trophy Hunters Association * Texas Trappers and Fur Hunters Association * Texas Wildlife Association * Texas Wildlife Management Council * Wildlife Habitat Federation
October 27, 2008
The Honorable Kip Averitt
Joint Chairman, Sporting Goods Sales Tax Task Force
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711-2068

The Honorable Harvey Hilderbran
Joint Chairman, Sporting Goods Sales Tax Task Force
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Dear Chairman Averitt and Chairman Hilderbran: The sportsmen's/conservation organizations listed above represent hunters, anglers, landowners, natural resource professionals, conservationists and others who share a strong interest in sustaining our conservation heritage and Texas' natural resources. We are writing today to express our sincere appreciation for the actions of the 80th legislature during this last session to support our fish and wildlife resources and our state and local parks. Your leadership along with the input, efforts and support of individual members of the legislature was critical to funding parks and wildlife and fisheries activities during this biennium, while creating a long-term funding solution through the passage of HB 12.

The organizations above strongly support continuing to honor the intent of HB 12 which called for funding of state and local parks at 94% of the estimated revenues from the Sporting Goods Sales Tax. While the bulk of the sporting goods sales tax should be used to meet the state and local parks funding needs, we would request that the joint committee consider and recommend that fish and wildlife resources receive a portion of the Sporting Goods Sales Tax since 3 of the top 10 items relate directly to fishing and hunting equipment and apparel. This would essentially meet the Legislative Appropriation Request by Texas Parks and Department with the addition to the critically needed Exceptional Items. Our organizations support all of the listed exceptional items, and sportsmen's groups directly requested the inclusion of several of the exceptional items. While we recognize the joint committee may be considering items to add or remove from the current list, the overall funding stream should remain basically the same.

The listed sportsmen's/conservation groups want to thank you in advance for listening to our concerns and taking the necessary actions to address them. This is important for us and for Texas. Please call Kirby Brown, Chairman of Texas Outdoor Partners at 210/826-2904 or k_brown@texas-wildlife.org if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Angler's Club of San Antonio
Austin Woods and Waters Club
Coastal Conservation Association - Texas
Dallas Safari Club
Exotic Wildlife Association

Houston Gulf Coast Chapter, Safari Club International
Houston Safari Club
Kayak Anglers Society of America
Lone Star Bowhunters Association
National Wild Turkey Federation, Texas State Chapter
Pheasants Forever
Plateau Land and Wildlife
Quail Forever
Quality Deer Management Association
Recreational Fishing Alliance - Texas
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation of Texas
Safari Club International, Austin Chapter
Saltwater-fisheries Enhancement Association
San Antonio Metropolitan League of Bass Clubs
SCIF Austin Sables
Sensible Management of Aquatic Resources Team
Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association
Texas Audubon
Texas Association of Bass Clubs
Texas BASS Federation Nation
Texas Bighorn Society
Texas Black Bass Unlimited
Texas Brigades
Texas Chapter of the Nature Conservancy
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Texas Council of Quail Unlimited Chapters
Texas Deer Association
Texas Dog Hunters Association
Texas Forestry Association
Texas Gulf Coast Stewards
Texas Hawking Association
TexasHuntFish.Com
Texas Organization of Wildlife Management Associations
Texas Outdoor Council
Texas Sportsman's Association
Texas Trophy Hunters Association
Texas Trappers and Fur Hunters Association
Texas Wildlife Association
Texas Wildlife Management Council

Cc: The Honorable Craig Estes
The Honorable Juan Hinojosa
The Honorable Tommy Williams
The Honorable Myra Crownover
The Honorable Drew Darby
The Honorable Dawwna Dukes