

SUBJECT: Recognizing Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation as a Native American Tribe

COMMITTEE: State Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 11 ayes — Phelan, Deshotel, Guerra, Harless, Holland, Hunter, P. King, Parker, Raymond, E. Rodriguez, Springer

0 nays

2 absent — Hernandez, Smithee

WITNESSES: For — Ramon Vasquez, American Indians in Texas Spanish Colonial Missions; Raymond Hernandez, Tap Pilam Nation; Mark Baez; Alston Thoms; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Art Martinez de Vara, Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation; Javier Cervantes; Joe Black Horse Garcia; Alexis Reyes; Jesus J. Reyes, Jr.; Joshua Somers)

Against — None

BACKGROUND: The Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation is a tribal community of affiliated bands and clans of the Papaya, Pacoa, Borrado, Pakawan, and other nations modernly known as "Coahuiltecan." Their traditional homeland consists of, in today's political boundaries, Texas in the United States and Coahuila, Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, and Northern Potosi in Mexico.

The 77th Legislature in 2001 passed HR 787 by B. Turner and SR 1038 by Zaffirini that recognized the Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation for its contributions to Texas and commended their preservation of cultural and spiritual heritage and traditions. The nation petitioned for federal recognition in 1997 but remains unrecognized by the United States.

Some have suggested that Texas should recognize the Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation as a Native American Indian Tribe so members could be eligible for certain government programs, services, and benefits.

DIGEST: HB 4451 would designate and recognize the Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan

Nation as a Native American Indian Tribe exercising substantial governmental powers and duties.

The tribe would be eligible for all programs, services, and other benefits provided to state-recognized Native American Indian Tribes by the United States, Texas, or any other state because of tribe members' status as Native American Indians.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.