

By: Alvarado

S.B. No. 858

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to safety standards for private passenger van services that transport students to and from public primary and secondary schools.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 34, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 34.0025 to read as follows:

Sec. 34.0025. SAFETY STANDARDS FOR PRIVATE PASSENGER VAN SERVICES. (a) The Department of Public Safety, with the advice of the agency, shall:

(1) establish safety standards for private passenger van services that transport students to and from school for compensation; and

(2) develop an annual two-hour training course on transportation safety for operators and employees of a private passenger van service described by Subdivision (1).

(b) An operator of a private passenger van service described by Subsection (a)(1) may not transport students to and from school unless:

(1) the operator is registered with the secretary of state to transact business in this state;

(2) the operator maintains commercial insurance;

(3) the operator meets or exceeds the safety standards established under Subsection (a); and

1 (4) the operator and each employee of the operator who
2 transports students for the private passenger van service complete
3 the annual training course on transportation safety developed under
4 Subsection (a).

5 (c) A school district shall provide to the parent of each
6 district student at the beginning of each school year or on
7 enrollment of the student after the beginning of a school year
8 written notice stating that the district may not release a student
9 to an operator of a private passenger van service described by
10 Subsection (a)(1) unless the district receives a signed
11 authorization letter from the parent that includes:

12 (1) the name of the student;

13 (2) the name and contact information of the operator;

14 and

15 (3) an acknowledgement from the operator that the
16 operator is in compliance with the requirements of Subsection (b).

17 (d) The Department of Public Safety and the agency shall
18 jointly adopt rules to administer this section, including rules
19 defining "private passenger van service" for purposes of this
20 section.

21 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2024-2025
22 school year.

23 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.