

By: Parker

S.B. No. 2144

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to advanced air mobility technology.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 21, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 21.0045 to read as follows:

Sec. 21.0045. ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) In this section, "advanced air mobility" has the meaning assigned by Section 21.072.

(b) The commission shall appoint an advisory committee to assess current state law and any potential changes to state law that are needed to facilitate the implementation of advanced air mobility technology in this state.

(c) The commission shall appoint to the advisory committee members to represent:

(1) diverse geographic regions of the state;

(2) state and local law enforcement;

(3) the advanced air mobility industry;

(4) transportation experts;

(5) commercial airport representatives;

(6) vertical takeoff and landing operators and vertiport operators;

(7) local governments; and

(8) the general public.

(d) The advisory committee shall:

1 (1) hold public hearings in locations across the state
2 or via electronic means; and

3 (2) receive comments through an Internet website, by
4 mail, and by other methods, if appropriate.

5 (e) Not later than November 1, 2024, the advisory committee
6 shall submit to the commission and the legislature a written report
7 that includes the committee's findings and recommendations on any
8 changes to state law that are needed to facilitate the
9 implementation of advanced air mobility technology in this state.

10 (f) The advisory committee is abolished and this section
11 expires January 1, 2025.

12 SECTION 2. Subchapter B, Chapter 21, Transportation Code,
13 is amended by adding Section 21.072 to read as follows:

14 Sec. 21.072. ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY. (a) In this section,
15 "advanced air mobility" means an aviation transportation system
16 that uses highly automated aircraft, which may be manned or
17 unmanned, to operate and transport passengers or cargo at lower
18 altitudes for commercial, public service, private, or recreational
19 purposes.

20 (b) The department shall:

21 (1) review existing state aviation standards and
22 guidelines, airport facility planning, and compatibility guidance
23 to ensure that the standards, guidelines, planning, and guidance
24 are applicable to advanced air mobility;

25 (2) support the development of federal and industry
26 standards for advanced air mobility technology that prioritize
27 safety as the technology develops;

1 (3) designate a department employee as a liaison to
2 the Federal Aviation Administration for purposes of Subdivision
3 (2);

4 (4) develop a statewide plan, or an update to the Texas
5 Airport System Plan, that specifies potential locations for and
6 classifications of vertiports and other associated infrastructure
7 to guide the future operational environment of advanced air
8 mobility; and

9 (5) provide resources and assistance on the use of
10 advanced air mobility technology and infrastructure to local
11 governments, regional councils of government, transportation
12 planning organizations, the advanced air mobility industry, and
13 other entities for the purpose of identifying governmental methods
14 to integrate industry innovation and community vision and help
15 promote advanced air mobility technology.

16 (c) The department, Texas Education Agency, Texas Higher
17 Education Coordinating Board, and Texas State Technical College
18 System shall jointly collaborate with school districts,
19 institutions of higher education, and interested public and private
20 stakeholders on educational opportunities related to advanced air
21 mobility technology.

22 SECTION 3. The Texas Department of Transportation, Texas
23 Education Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and
24 Texas State Technical College System are required to implement
25 Section 21.072, Transportation Code, as added by this Act, only if
26 the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose.
27 If the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that

1 purpose, the Texas Department of Transportation, Texas Education
2 Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Texas State
3 Technical College System may, but are not required to, implement
4 Section 21.072, Transportation Code, using other appropriations
5 available for that purpose.

6 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.