

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 946
By: Brown, Fred
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

State law currently governs the maximum width limits for non-commercial, personal use vehicles such as motor homes, travel trailers, fifth wheel trailers, fold-down campers and truck campers. The Federal Highway Administration, however, governs the maximum width of commercial vehicles and has established the maximum width for commercial vehicles at 102 inches wide measured from fender to fender. Every state has adopted the 102-inch maximum width standard established by FHA for non-commercial, personal use vehicles as well.

Twenty-four states, however, have provided exceptions to the width-limit for personal-use, non-commercial vehicles if the reason for exceeding the 102-inch width limitation is due to an “appurtenance” including an awning, grab handle, lighting equipment or a vent that extends six inches or less beyond a fender on one or both sides of the vehicle. The term “appurtenance” does not include a load-carrying device.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee’s opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

HB 946 would amend the Transportation Code to allow an exception to the maximum width limitation for non-commercial personal use recreational vehicles. The exception would apply only to vehicles where the excess width is attributable to an appurtenance defined as an awning, grab handle, lighting equipment, or a vent extending six inches or less on one or both sides of the vehicle.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2003.