

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 514
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Infrastructure Development and Security
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Enrolled

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, a municipality is authorized to restrict vehicles, by class, to designated lanes of the municipality's highway. Houston's application of this policy has reduced traffic accidents by 68 percent and encouraged other municipalities to adopt the policy. However, current law does not apply to highways outside a municipality's jurisdiction, preventing counties from taking advantage of a policy that could significantly reduce traffic accidents. S.B. 514 authorizes a commissioners court to restrict, by class of vehicle, through traffic to two or more designated lanes on a county highway.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 545, Transportation Code, by adding Section 545.0652, as follows:

Sec. 545.0652. COUNTY RESTRICTION ON USE OF HIGHWAY. (a) Defines "department" and "highway."

(b) Authorizes a county commissioners court to restrict through traffic, by vehicle class, to two or more lanes on a highway in the county and outside municipal jurisdiction.

(c) Requires an order under Subsection (b) to allow a restricted vehicle unrestricted lane access to pass traffic and enter and exit the highway.

(d) Requires the commissioners court to submit the restriction description to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) prior to issuing an order. Prohibits the commissioners court from enforcing the restriction unless certain criteria are met.

(e) Requires TxDOT to approve restrictions in a systematic fashion that prevents inconsistent designated lane restrictions among adjacent counties or municipalities, as much as practicable.

(f) Authorizes TxDOT's executive director, or the executive director's designee, to suspend or rescind approval under this section under certain circumstances.

(g) Requires TxDOT to erect and maintain traffic-control devices necessary to implement and enforce an order under this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2003.