

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 504  
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Law Enforcement  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Current law attempts to curb the use of technologically advanced products designed to obscure information on license plates to defeat photo radar and enforcement cameras. When the current law became effective on September 1, 2003, some law enforcement agencies interpreted the measure to prohibit a wide array of license plate brackets.

C.S.H.B. 504 clarifies language from the last session to specify that the use of certain license plate brackets is no longer an offense under the Texas Transportation Code. In particular, the bill specifies that a license plate bracket is lawful if at least one-half of the name of the state in which the vehicle is registered is visible, and if the letters and numbers of the license plate are unobscured.

### **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**

C.S.H.B. 504 amends §502.409 of the Transportation Code by removing language prohibiting the use of material that obscures original design features of a license plate and adds language that prohibits the use of material that alters or obscures one-half or more of the name of the state in which the vehicle is registered. However, the bill does make an exception that allows a transponder issued by a toll road authority to alter or obscure one-half or more of the name of the state in which the vehicle is registered.

The bill also prohibits the use of material that alters or obscures the license plate number or letters, or the color of the plate. Additionally, the bill prohibits the use of blurring or reflective matter that impairs the readability of the name of the state in which the vehicle is registered or the letters or numbers of the license plate number.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2005.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE**

The substitute for House Bill 504 amends SECTION 1 of the original bill by adding language that allows a transponder issued by a toll road authority to alter or obscure one-half or more of the name of the state in which the vehicle is registered.