

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1048
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Criminal Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

During the past 18 months law enforcement officers in the panhandle have seen an upturn in cases of people being illegally transported from Mexico through the western United States to the eastern United States. Recent prosecutions include a man who was transporting 17 illegal immigrants in a 6 passenger vehicle.

These incidents occur from time to time in the regular course of a sheriff's duties. Information obtained from federal authorities tells us that these transporters tend to be well organized groups who earn a living transporting people illegally, using the same drivers and vehicles over and over again.

HB 1048 allows seizure and forfeiture of the vehicles used for illegally transporting people. Perhaps the seizure of these vehicles will slow down the trafficking of human cargo.

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

SECTION 1. Adds Section 20.05 (Unlawful Transport), Penal Code, to the list of felonies for which contraband can be seized. Other changes are strictly clean-up by Legislative Council.

SECTION 2. Applicability clause.

SECTION 3. Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005.