

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1094
By: Menendez
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current law does not address the use of a wireless communication device while driving for individuals under the age of eighteen during the first six months that they have their driver's license. The original intent of the Graduated Driver's License Statute, Section 545.424 (Operation of a Vehicle by a Person Under 18 Years of Age), Transportation Code, was to reduce the risk of automobile accidents and unsafe driving among the youngest class of drivers. Since the passage of that section, wireless communication device use has significantly increased, including use of the devices while driving, which current studies have indicated has the potential to be a significant distraction to driver awareness and reaction time. As proposed, H.B. 1094 adds wireless communication device use to the activities prohibited for the youngest class of new drivers while operating a motor vehicle, motorcycle or moped.

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

Amends Sections 545.424(a) and (b), Transportation Code, to include wireless communication device use among the activities an individual under 18 years of age is prohibited to engage in while operating a motor vehicle during the six-month period following issuance of an original Class A, B, or C driver's license. Includes wireless communication device use among the prohibited activities for an individual under 17 who holds a restricted motorcycle or moped license to engage in while operating a motorcycle or moped during the six-month period following issuance of an original motorcycle or moped license to the individual. Makes conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005