

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
79R3675 JJT-D

S.J.R. 37
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Finance
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The legislature established the Colonia Road Access Bond Program (program) in 2001 with the passage of S.B. 1296 and S.J.R. 37. Subsequently, under the constitutional amendment, Texas voters approved the issuing of \$175 million in general obligation bonds to the fund the program.

In 2004, transportation officials testified to the Senate Committee on International Relations and Trade that the program was an important component in the effort to improve the infrastructure in the colonias. Currently, the program is a road-access program and does not pave all the roads within the colonias.

In January 2002, the Texas Transportation Commission issued the first \$50 million in bonds from the original aggregate \$175 million. To date, a total of \$100 million in project requests has been allocated. There is \$75 million left in the program.

In order to pave all the roads within the border colonias, transportation officials estimate that the state would need \$429.5 million beyond the program's original \$175 million in bonding authority.

As proposed, S.J.R. 37 proposes a constitutional amendment to increase the bond authority to the necessary level to pave all roads within the border colonias.

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 Section 49-1(a), Article III, Texas Constitution, as follows:

(a) Authorizes, to fund financial assistance to counties for roadways to serve border colonias, the legislature by general law to authorize the governor to authorize the Texas Public Finance Authority or its successor to issue general obligation bonds or notes of the State of Texas in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$600.9 million, rather than \$175 million, and to enter into related credit agreements. Authorizes, except as provided by Subsection (c) of this section, the proceeds from the sale of the bonds and notes to be used only to provide financial assistance to counties for border colonia roadway projects, including projects to provide access roads to connect border colonias with public roads outside the colonias. Authorizes projects to include the construction of colonia roads and access roads, the acquisition of materials used in maintaining colonia roads and access roads, and projects related to the construction of colonia roads and access roads, such as projects for the drainage of the roads.

SECTION 2. Requires the proposed constitutional amendment to be submitted to the voters at an election to be held on November 8, 2005. Sets forth the required language for the ballot.