

By: Staples

S.B. No. 1713

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

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AN ACT

relating to the creation of a study commission on transportation financing.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 162, Tax Code, is amended by adding Section 162.017 to read as follows:

Sec. 162.017. STUDY COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION FINANCING. (a) The Study Commission on Transportation Financing is created as provided by this section.

(b) The commission is composed of nine members as follows:

(1) three members of the general public appointed by the governor;

(2) three members appointed by the lieutenant governor, of which one is a member of the general public and two are members of the senate; and

(3) three members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, of which one is a member of the general public and two are members of the house.

(c) Each member of the commission serves at the will of the person who appointed the member.

(d) The lieutenant governor shall designate one of the appointed senators and the speaker of the house of representatives shall designate one of the appointed house members to serve together as joint presiding officers of the commission.

1       (e) A member of the commission is not entitled to receive  
2 compensation for service on the commission but is entitled to  
3 reimbursement of the travel expenses incurred by the member while  
4 conducting the business of the commission, as provided by the  
5 General Appropriations Act.

6       (f) The commission may accept gifts and grants from any  
7 source to be used to carry out a function of the commission.

8       (g) The commission shall conduct public hearings and study  
9 public policy implications relating to the financing of  
10 transportation projects.

11       (h) The study shall include:

12           (1) a review of the state motor fuels tax in order to:

13                   (A) evaluate the state motor fuels tax, including  
14 its efficacy in funding the transportation needs of this state; and

15                   (B) examine and evaluate the expenditure of funds  
16 from the state highway fund;

17           (2) a review of the current sources for funding rail  
18 transportation projects in order to:

19                   (A) evaluate the options for rail funding,  
20 including their efficacy in funding identified rail needs of the  
21 state; and

22                   (B) identify other possible sources for funding;  
23 and

24           (3) a review of all other financing options for all  
25 modes of transportation, including but not limited to:

26                   (A) motor vehicle user fees and fines;

27                   (B) bonding; and

1                    (C) other debt financing methods.

2                    (i) Not later than December 1, 2006, the commission shall  
3 issue a report summarizing:

4                    (1) any hearings conducted by the commission;

5                    (2) any studies conducted by the commission;

6                    (3) any legislation proposed by the commission; and

7                    (4) any other findings and recommendations of the  
8 commission.

9                    SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
10 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
11 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
12 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
13 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.