

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 79TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 20, 2005

TO: Honorable Todd Staples, Chair, Senate Committee on Transportation & Homeland Security

FROM: John S. O'Brien, Deputy Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB2955 by Hamric (Relating to the operation of a motor vehicle.), **Committee Report 2nd House, Substituted**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend Section 284.209, Transportation Code, affecting methods of enforcing orders relating to operating a vehicle on a toll road in certain counties.

Under current statute, a decision at a hearing on a violation may be enforced by one of three methods: placing a device on the vehicle that prevents movement, imposing an additional fine, or refusing to allow the vehicle to be registered. The proposed change in statute would provide that all three methods of enforcement would be employed. The counties that would be affected by the provisions of the bill are Harris, Montgomery, Waller, Fort Bend, Brazoria, Galveston, Liberty, and Chambers.

According to Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) records, there are over 4 million vehicles registered in the affected counties combined. The Harris County Toll Road Authority reports that over 1 million toll transactions are processed daily, which adds up to 365 million transactions annually. An estimated 22,678 violations occur annually. Harris County reports that 90 percent to 95 percent of all violations issued are paid within the 10-day grace period, and therefore only 5 percent to 10 percent of violations require a hearing. Eighty-five percent to 90 percent of the violations for which a hearing is held are resolved without having to impose any of the three optional enforcement methods. Assuming 15 percent of hearings would result in the imposition of enforcement actions, TxDOT estimates that a total of 340 violations would have resulted in prohibiting license registration renewal in fiscal year 2004.

TxDOT estimates that to accommodate the proposed change in statute, and therefore the increased number of vehicles for which registration renewal would be denied, would require the agency to create new programming to modify the Registration and Title System. The total cost of the 3,864 programming hours and the 846 nonprogramming hours is estimated at \$432,042.

The bill would amend Section 502.185 of the Transportation Code, to authorize a county tax assessor-collector or TxDOT to refuse registration to a vehicle owner who owes a county in Texas money for a fine, fee, or tax that is past due. Based on the analysis of TxDOT, it is assumed any costs associated with implementing the proposed change to Section 502.185 could be absorbed within existing resources.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 601 Department of Transportation

LBB Staff: JOB, SR, DLBa, TG, MW