

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1781
By: Harless
Transportation
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Disabled parking placards are issued to people with disabilities, in addition to or instead of disabled license plates, in order to allow them to have access to handicap parking spaces when being transported by other people. In recent years, law enforcement agency officials and disability organization representatives have reported widespread misuse and alteration of disabled parking placards throughout Texas and around the nation.

In response to privacy concerns raised regarding a complete drivers license number being recorded on disabled parking placards, in 2003, the Texas Legislature directed County Tax Assessors to record placard numbers with the first four digits of a drivers license number followed by the applicant's initials.

As a result of this change, when patrolling handicap parking spaces, law enforcement officers are unable to trace disabled parking placards to determine whether placards are valid, stolen, issued to persons who are now deceased, or issued from other counties.

CSHB 1781 would direct County Tax Assessors to identify the county, issuing the disabled parking placard, by recording the 3 digit county number, followed by the first four digits of the applicant's driver's license number and then the applicant's initials.

Passage of CSHB 1781 would once again enable law enforcement officers to determine which county issued a given disabled parking placard and to whom it was issued.

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

CSHB 1781 amends Section 681.0031 (b), Transportation Code, to direct the county assessor-collector, when issuing a disabled parking placard, to record the county number, followed by the first four digits of the applicant's driver's license number and then the applicant's initials.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

CSHB 1781 changes HB 1781 by requiring the county assessor-collector, when issuing a handicapped placard, to record the county code, followed by the first four digits of the driver's license number and then the applicant's initials.