

By: Straus

H.B. No. 1081

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment and operation of a motor bus-only lane program.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 455, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 455.006 to read as follows:

Sec. 455.006. MOTOR BUS-ONLY LANE PROGRAM. (a) The department, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and in conjunction with the metropolitan rapid transit authorities, regional transportation authorities, municipal transit authorities, county mass transit authorities, and municipal mass transportation departments in this state and the appropriate counties and municipalities, shall establish and operate a motor bus-only lane program for highways that are part of the state highway system and have shoulders of sufficient width.

(b) The program shall:

(1) provide for the use by motor buses of highway shoulders as a low-speed bypass of congested highway lanes;

(2) gain local operational experience with the conversion of existing highway shoulders to motor bus-only lanes during peak traffic periods; and

(3) take into consideration the following:

(A) safety;

(B) travel time and reliability;

- (C) driver and passenger perceptions;
- (D) level of service and maintenance; and
- (E) capital improvements.

(c) The department shall initiate the motor bus-only lane program as soon as practicable but not later than December 31, 2007.

SECTION 2. Section 542.002, Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 542.002. GOVERNMENT VEHICLES. A provision of this subtitle applicable to an operator of a vehicle applies to the operator of a vehicle owned or operated by the United States, this state, or a political subdivision of this state, except as specifically provided otherwise by this subtitle [~~for an authorized emergency vehicle~~].

SECTION 3. Section 545.058(c), Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) A limitation in this section on driving on an improved shoulder does not apply to:

(1) an authorized emergency vehicle responding to a call;

(2) a police patrol; [~~or~~]

(3) a bicycle; or

(4) a motor bus of a transportation entity described by Section 455.006 operating on a shoulder designated by the Texas Department of Transportation under that section.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this

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- 1 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
- 2 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.