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AN ACT

2 relating to the issuance and enforcement of motor carrier 3 overweight or oversize vehicle permits and motor carrier 4 registrations; providing administrative penalties.

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

SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE 6 FINDINGS AND PURPOSE. The legislature finds that as the economy of this state continues its 7 steady growth, significant increases in the amount of freight 8 moving on the roadways of this state have followed suit; that the 9 demand for oversize and overweight permits issued by the motor 10 carrier division of the Texas Department of Transportation has long 11 12 since surpassed the department's capacity to keep pace; and that 13 the department's inability to service the needs of the trucking 14 industry has resulted in extreme delays in the issuance of permits by the motor carrier division, which negatively impact not only the 15 motor carriers involved but also the shipping public they serve. 16 The purposes of this Act are to increase the fees charged for 17 permits issued by the motor carrier division of the Texas 18 Department of Transportation, to address enforcement efforts 19 against violators of the motor vehicle size and weight laws of this 20 21 state, and to provide a significant increase in revenue realized by 22 this state from increased permit fees, a portion of which will be used to address the growing problem of the untimely issuance of 23 oversize and overweight permits by retaining an increased number of 24

appropriate private sector service providers to perform necessary bridge and route inspections and a portion of which will be used to add at least 25 full-time employees to the number employed by the motor carrier division.

5 SECTION 2. Section 621.353(c), Transportation Code, is 6 amended to read as follows:

The comptroller shall send each fee collected under 7 (c) 8 Section 623.0111 [623.0112] for an excess weight permit to the counties designated on the application for the permit, with each 9 county shown on the application receiving an amount determined 10 according to the ratio of the total number of miles of county roads 11 maintained by the county to the total number of miles of county 12 roads maintained by all of the counties designated on the 13 14 application.

SECTION 3. Section 622.953(b), Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The overall gross weight of a single motor vehicle used to transport seed cotton or equipment used to transport or process seed cotton may not be heavier than <u>64,000</u> [59,400] pounds.

20 SECTION 4. Section 623.0111, Transportation Code, is 21 amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (c) to 22 read as follows:

(a) When a person applies for a permit under Section623.011, the person must:

(1) designate in the application each county in whichthe vehicle will be operated; and

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(2) pay in addition to other fees an annual fee in an

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1	amount determined according to the follo	owing table:	
2	Number of Counties Designated	Fee	
3	<u>1-5</u>	<u>\$175</u>	
4	<u>6</u> [1]-20	<u>\$250</u> [\$125]	
5	21-40	<u>\$450</u> [\$345]	
6	41-60	<u>\$625</u> [\$565]	
7	61-80	<u>\$800</u> [\$785]	
8	81-100	<u>\$900</u> [\$1,005]	
9	101-254	<u>\$1,000</u> [\$2,000]	
10	(c) Of the fees collected under S	Subsection (a) the following	
11	amounts shall be deposited to the ger	neral revenue fund and the	
12	remainder shall be deposited to the c	redit of the state highway	
13	<u>fund:</u>		
14	Number of Counties	Amount Allocated to	
15	Designated	General Revenue Fund	
16	<u>1-5</u>	<u>\$125</u>	
17	6-20	<u>\$125</u>	
18	21-40	<u>\$345</u>	
19	41-60	<u>\$565</u>	
20	61-80	<u>\$785</u>	
21	81-100	<u>\$900</u>	
22	101-254	<u>\$1,000</u>	
23	SECTION 5. Section 623.076, Transportation Code, is amended		
24	by amending Subsections (a) and (c) and adding Subsection (a-1) to		
25	read as follows:		
26	(a) An application for a permit	under this subchapter must	
27	be accompanied by a permit fee of:		

H.B. No. 2093 1 (1)<u>\$60</u> [\$30] for a single-trip permit; 2 (2) \$120 [\$60] for a permit that is valid for a period 3 not exceeding 30 days; \$180 [\$90] for a permit that is valid for a period 4 (3) 5 of 31 days or more but not exceeding 60 days; (4) $\frac{240}{5240}$ [$\frac{120}{5120}$] for a permit that is valid for a period 6 7 of 61 days or more but not exceeding 90 days; or 8 (5) \$270 [\$135] for a permit issued under Section 623.071(c)(1) or (2). 9 (a-1) The following amounts collected under Subsection (a) 10 shall be deposited to the general revenue fund and the remainder 11 12 deposited to the credit of the state highway fund: Amount of Fee Amount Allocated to General Revenue Fund 13 14 \$60 (single-trip permit) \$30 15 \$120 (30-day permit) \$60 \$180 \$90 16 17 \$240 \$120 \$270 \$135 18 An application for a permit under Section 623.071(c)(3) 19 (c) or (d) must be accompanied by the permit fee established by the 20 commission for the permit, not to exceed <u>\$7,000</u> [\$3,500]. Of each 21 fee collected under this subsection, the department shall send: 22 (1) the first \$1,000 to the comptroller for deposit to 23 24 the credit of the general revenue fund; and (2) any amount in excess of \$1,000 to the comptroller 25 for deposit to the credit of the state highway fund. 26 27 SECTION 6. Section 623.077(a), Transportation Code, is

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1 amended to read as follows:
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(a) An applicant for a permit under this subchapter, other
than a permit under Section 623.071(c)(3), must also pay a highway
maintenance fee in an amount determined according to the following
table:

6	Vehicle Weight in Pounds	Fee	
7	80,001 to 120,000	<u>\$150</u> [\$50]	
8	120,001 to 160,000	<u>\$225</u> [\$75]	
9	160,001 to 200,000	<u>\$300</u> [\$100]	
10	200,001 and above	<u>\$375</u> [\$125]	

SECTION 7. Sections 623.096(a) and (b), Transportation
Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) The department shall collect a fee of \$40 [\$20] for each
permit issued under this subchapter. Of each fee, \$19.70 [30 cents]
shall be deposited to the credit of the general revenue fund and the
remainder deposited to the credit of the state highway fund.

(b) The department shall adopt rules concerning fees for each annual permit issued under Section 623.095(c) at a cost not to exceed <u>\$3,000</u> [\$1,500]. [Two percent of any fee adopted shall be deposited to the credit of the state highway fund.]

21 SECTION 8. Section 623.124, Transportation Code, is amended 22 to read as follows:

Sec. 623.124. FEE. (a) An application for a permit must be
accompanied by a fee of <u>\$15</u> [\$7.50].

25 (b) The department shall send each fee collected under this 26 section to the comptroller. Of each fee received from the 27 department, the comptroller shall deposit \$7.50 to the credit of

H.B. No. 2093 the general revenue fund and \$7.50 to the credit of the state 1 2 highway fund. SECTION 9. Section 623.144, Transportation Code, is amended 3 4 to read as follows: 5 Sec. 623.144. REGISTRATION OF VEHICLE. A permit under this 6 subchapter may be issued only if the vehicle is registered under 7 Chapter 502 for the maximum gross weight applicable to the vehicle 8 under Section 621.101 or has the distinguishing license plates as provided by Section 504.504 [502.276] if applicable to the vehicle. 9 SECTION 10. Section 623.149(a), Transportation Code, is 10 amended to read as follows: 11 The department may establish criteria to determine 12 (a) whether oil well servicing, oil well clean out, or oil well drilling 13 14 machinery or equipment is subject to registration under Chapter 502 15 or eligible for the distinguishing license plate provided by Section 504.504 [502.276]. 16 17 SECTION 11. Section 623.182, Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows: 18 Sec. 623.182. PERMIT FEE. 19 (a) The fee for a permit under this subchapter is \$100 [$\frac{$50}{}$]. 20 21 (b) The department shall send each fee collected under this subchapter to the comptroller. Of each fee received from the 22 department, the comptroller shall deposit \$50 to the credit of the 23 24 general revenue fund and \$50 to the credit of the state highway 25 fund. SECTION 12. Section 623.194, Transportation Code, 26 is amended to read as follows: 27

Sec. 623.194. REGISTRATION OF VEHICLE. A permit under this subchapter may be issued only if the vehicle to be moved is registered under Chapter 502 for the maximum gross weight applicable to the vehicle under Section 621.101 or has the distinguishing license plates as provided by Section <u>504.504</u> [<u>502.276</u>] if applicable to the vehicle.

7 SECTION 13. Section 623.199(a), Transportation Code, is 8 amended to read as follows:

9 (a) The department may establish criteria to determine 10 whether an unladen lift equipment motor vehicle that because of its 11 design for use as lift equipment exceeds the maximum weight and 12 width limitations prescribed by statute is subject to registration 13 under Chapter 502 or eligible for the distinguishing license plate 14 provided by Section 504.504 [502.276].

15 SECTION 14. Section 623.001, Transportation Code, is 16 amended to read as follows:

17Sec. 623.001.DEFINITIONS [DEFINITION]. In this chapter:18(1) "Department"[, "department"] means the Texas

19 Department of Transportation.

20 (2) "Shipper" means a person who consigns the movement
21 <u>of a shipment.</u>
22 (3) "Shipper's certificate of weight" means a document

23 described by Section 623.274.

24 SECTION 15. Chapter 623, Transportation Code, is amended by 25 adding Subchapter N to read as follows:

26SUBCHAPTER N. ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS27Sec. 623.271. ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT. (a) The

1	department may investigate and, except as provided by Subsection
2	(f), may impose an administrative penalty or revoke an oversize or
3	overweight permit issued under this chapter if the person or the
4	holder of the permit, as applicable:
5	(1) provides false information on the permit
6	application or another form required by the department for the
7	issuance of an oversize or overweight permit;
8	(2) violates this chapter, Chapter 621, or Chapter
9	<u>622;</u>
10	(3) violates a rule or order adopted under this
11	chapter, Chapter 621, or Chapter 622; or
12	(4) fails to obtain an oversize or overweight permit
13	if a permit is required.
14	(b) The notice and hearing requirements of Section 643.2525
15	apply to the imposition of an administrative penalty or the
16	revocation of a permit under this section as if the action were
17	being taken under that section.
18	(c) It is an affirmative defense to administrative
19	enforcement under this section that the person or holder of the
20	permit relied on the shipper's certificate of weight.
21	(d) The amount of an administrative penalty imposed under
22	this section is calculated in the same manner as the amount of an
23	administrative penalty imposed under Section 643.251.
24	(e) A person who has been ordered to pay an administrative
25	penalty under this section and the vehicle that is the subject of
26	the enforcement order may not be issued a permit under this chapter
27	until the amount of the penalty has been paid to the department.

(f) This subsection applies only to a vehicle or combination 1 2 that is used to transport agricultural products or timber products 3 from the place of production to the place of first marketing or 4 first processing. In connection with a violation of a vehicle or combination weight restriction or limitation in this chapter, 5 6 Chapter 621, or Chapter 622, the department may not impose an 7 administrative penalty against a person or the holder of an overweight permit if the weight of the vehicle or combination 8 9 involved in the violation did not exceed the allowable weight by 10 more than three percent. Sec. 623.272. ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY FOR FALSE INFORMATION 11 ON CERTIFICATE. (a) The department may investigate and impose an 12 administrative penalty on a shipper who provides false information 13 14 on a shipper's certificate of weight that the shipper delivers to a 15 person transporting a shipment. 16 (b) The notice and hearing requirements of Section 643.2525 17 apply to the imposition of an administrative penalty under this 18 section as if the action were being taken under that section. 19 (c) The amount of an administrative penalty imposed under this section is calculated in the same manner as the amount of an 20 21 administrative penalty imposed under Section 643.251.

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22 <u>Sec. 623.273. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF. (a) The attorney</u> 23 <u>general, at the request of the department, may petition a district</u> 24 <u>court for appropriate injunctive relief to prevent or abate a</u> 25 <u>violation of this chapter or a rule or order adopted under this</u> 26 <u>chapter.</u>

27 (b) Venue in a suit for injunctive relief under this section

1 is in Travis County. 2 (c) On application for injunctive relief and a finding that a person is violating or has violated this chapter or a rule or 3 4 order adopted under this chapter, the court shall grant the 5 appropriate relief without bond. 6 (d) The attorney general and the department may recover 7 reasonable expenses incurred in obtaining injunctive relief under this section, including court costs, reasonable attorney's fees, 8 investigative costs, witness fees, and deposition expenses. 9 Sec. 623.274. SHIPPER'S CERTIFICATE OF WEIGHT. (a) The 10 department shall prescribe a form to be used for a shipper's 11 certificate of weight. The form must provide space for the maximum 12 weight of the shipment being transported. 13 14 (b) For a shipper's certificate of weight to be valid, the 15 shipper must: 16 (1) certify that the information contained on the form 17 is accurate; and (2) deliver the certificate to the motor carrier or 18 19 other person transporting the shipment before the motor carrier or other person applies for an overweight permit under this chapter. 20 SECTION 16. Section 21 643.001, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Subdivision (7-a) to read as follows: 22 (7-a) "Unified carrier registration system" means a 23 24 motor vehicle registration system established under 49 U.S.C. Section 14504a or a similar federal registration program that 25 26 replaces that system. SECTION 17. Section 643.002, Transportation Code, 27 is

1 amended to read as follows:

2 Sec. 643.002. EXEMPTIONS. This chapter does not apply to: motor carrier operations exempt from registration 3 (1)4 by the Unified Carrier Registration Act of 2005 (49 U.S.C. Section 14504a) or a motor vehicle registered under the single state 5 registration system established under 49 U.S.C. Section 14504(c) 6 7 when operating exclusively in interstate or international 8 commerce;

9 (2) a motor vehicle registered as a cotton vehicle 10 under Section <u>504.505</u> [502.277];

(3) a motor vehicle the department by rule exempts because the vehicle is subject to comparable registration and a comparable safety program administered by another governmental entity;

(4) a motor vehicle used to transport passengers operated by an entity whose primary function is not the transportation of passengers, such as a vehicle operated by a hotel, day-care center, public or private school, nursing home, or similar organization;

20 (5) a vehicle operating under a private carrier permit
21 issued under Chapter 42, Alcoholic Beverage Code; or

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(6) a vehicle operated by a governmental entity.

23 SECTION 18. Section 643.251(a), Transportation Code, is 24 amended to read as follows:

(a) The department may impose an administrative penalty
against a motor carrier required to register under Subchapter B
that violates <u>this chapter</u> [Subchapter B or C or Section 643.151,

643.152, 643.153(a)-(f), or 643.155] or a rule or order adopted under this chapter [those provisions or Section 643.003. The department shall designate one or more employees to investigate violations and administer penalties under this section]. SECTION 19. The heading to Section 643.252, Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows: Sec. 643.252. ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS [SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION OF REGISTRATION]. SECTION 20. Section 643.252(a), Transportation Code, amended to read as follows: (a) The department may suspend, [or] revoke, or deny a registration issued under this chapter or place on probation a motor carrier whose registration is suspended if a motor carrier: (1)fails to maintain insurance or evidence of financial responsibility as required by Section 643.101(a), (b), (c), or (d); fails to keep evidence of insurance in the cab of (2) each vehicle as required by Section 643.103(b); (3) fails to register a vehicle requiring registration; (4) violates any other provision of this chapter; knowingly provides false information on any form (5) filed with the department under this chapter; or (6) [(5)] violates a rule or order adopted under this chapter [Section 643.063]. SECTION 21. Subchapter F, Chapter 643, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 643.2525 to read as follows:

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1	Sec. 643.2525. ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING PROCESS. (a) If the	
2	department determines that a violation has occurred for which an	
3	enforcement action is being taken under Section 643.251 or 643.252,	
4	the department shall give written notice to the motor carrier by	
5	first class mail to the carrier's address as shown in the records of	
6	the department.	
7	(b) A notice required by Subsection (a) must include:	
8	(1) a brief summary of the alleged violation;	
9	(2) a statement of each administrative sanction being	
10	taken;	
11	(3) the effective date of each sanction;	
12	(4) a statement informing the carrier of the carrier's	
13	right to request a hearing; and	
14	(5) a statement as to the procedure for requesting a	
15	hearing, including the period during which a request must be made.	
16	(c) If not later than the 26th day after the date the notice	
17	is mailed the department receives a written request for a hearing,	
18	the department shall set a hearing and give notice of the hearing to	
19	the carrier. The hearing shall be conducted by an administrative	
20	law judge of the State Office of Administrative Hearings.	
21	(d) If the motor carrier does not timely request a hearing	
22	under Subsection (c), the department's decision becomes final on	
23	the expiration of the period described by Subsection (c).	
24	(e) The administrative law judge shall make findings of fact	
25	and conclusions of law and promptly issue to the director a proposal	
26	for a decision as to the occurrence of the violation and the	
27	administrative penalties or sanctions.	

1	(f) In addition to a penalty or sanction proposed under
2	Subsection (e), the administrative law judge shall include in the
3	proposal for a decision a finding setting out costs, fees,
4	expenses, and reasonable and necessary attorney's fees incurred by
5	the state in bringing the proceeding. The director may adopt the
6	finding and make it a part of a final order entered in the
7	proceeding.
8	(g) Based on the findings of fact, conclusions of law, and
9	proposal for a decision, the director by order may find that a
10	violation has occurred and impose the sanctions or may find that a
11	violation has not occurred.
12	(h) The director shall provide written notice to the motor
13	carrier of a finding made under Subsection (g) and shall include in
14	the notice a statement of the right of the carrier to judicial
15	review of the order.
16	(i) Before the 31st day after the date the director's order
17	under Subsection (g) becomes final as provided by Section 2001.144,
18	Government Code, the motor carrier may appeal the order by filing a
19	petition for judicial review contesting the order. Judicial review
20	is under the substantial evidence rule.
21	(j) A petition filed under Subsection (i) stays the
22	enforcement of the administrative action until the earlier of the
23	550th day after the date the petition was filed or the date a final
24	judgment is rendered by the court.
25	(k) If the motor carrier is required to pay a penalty or cost
26	under Subsection (f), failure to pay the penalty or cost before the
27	61st day after the date the requirement becomes final is a violation

H.B. No. 2093 1 of this chapter and may result in an additional penalty, revocation 2 or suspension of a motor carrier registration, or denial of renewal 3 of a motor carrier registration. 4 (1) A motor carrier that is required to pay a penalty, cost, 5 fee, or expense under this section or Section 643.251 is not 6 eligible for a reinstatement or renewal of a registration under 7 this chapter until all required amounts have been paid to the depa<u>rtment.</u> 8 9 (m) If the suspension of a motor carrier's registration is probated, the department may require the carrier to report 10 regularly to the department on any matter that is the basis of the 11 12 probation. Any violation of the probation may result in the imposition of an administrative penalty or the revocation of the 13 14 registration. 15 (n) All proceedings under this section are subject to Chapter 2001, Government Code. 16 17 SECTION 22. Section 643.254(a), Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows: 18 (a) To investigate an alleged violation of this chapter or a 19 rule or order adopted under this chapter [Subchapter B, C, or D], an 20 21 officer or employee of the department who has been certified for the purpose by the director may enter a motor carrier's premises to 22 inspect, copy, or verify the correctness of a document, including 23 24 an operation log or insurance certificate. SECTION 23. Subchapter F, Chapter 643, Transportation Code, 25 26 is amended by adding Section 643.255 to read as follows: 27 Sec. 643.255. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF. (a) The attorney general,

H.B. No. 2093 at the request of the department, may petition a district court for 1 2 appropriate injunctive relief to prevent or abate a violation of this chapter or a rule or order adopted under this chapter. 3 4 (b) Venue in a suit for injunctive relief under this section 5 is in Travis County. 6 (c) On application for injunctive relief and a finding that a person is violating or has violated this chapter or a rule or 7 order adopted under this chapter, the court shall grant the 8 9 appropriate relief without bond. (d) The attorney general and the department may recover 10 reasonable expenses incurred in obtaining injunctive relief under 11 this section, including court costs, reasonable attorney's fees, 12 investigative costs, witness fees, and deposition expenses. 13 SECTION 24. Section 645.001, Transportation Code, 14 is 15 amended to read as follows: Sec. 645.001. FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER [SINCLE STATE] 16 17 REGISTRATION. The Texas Department of Transportation may [shall], to the fullest extent practicable, participate in <u>a federal motor</u> 18 carrier registration program under the unified carrier 19 registration system as defined by Section 643.001 or the single 20 21 state registration system established under 49 U.S.C. Section 14504. 2.2 SECTION 25. Section 645.003, Transportation Code, 23 is 24 amended to read as follows: 25 Sec. 645.003. ENFORCEMENT RULES. The department shall adopt rules that are consistent with federal law providing for [+ 26 27 [(1)] administrative penalties and sanctions for a

failure to register as required by the unified carrier registration 1 2 system or single state registration system or for a violation of this chapter or a rule adopted under this chapter in the same manner 3 4 as Subchapter F, Chapter 643 [Section 643.251; and 5 [(2) suspension and revocation of registration in the 6 same manner as Section 643.252]. 7 SECTION 26. The following laws are repealed: 8 (1) Sections 643.251(d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), (m), (n), (o), (p), (q), and (r), Transportation Code; and 9 (2) Sections 643.252(c), (d), and (e), Transportation 10 Code. 11 SECTION 27. (a) Subchapter N, Chapter 623, Transportation 12 Code, as added by this Act, applies only to a violation that occurs, 13 14 or information that is provided to the Texas Department of 15 Transportation, on or after the effective date of this Act. (b) Section 643.2525, Transportation Code, as added by this 16 17 Act, applies only to a violation for which an enforcement action under Section 643.251 or 643.252, Transportation Code, is commenced 18 on or after the effective date of this Act, regardless of when the 19 violation occurred. An action commenced under Section 643.251 or 20 643.252, Transportation Code, before the effective date of this Act 21

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is governed by the law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

(c) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (d) of this section, the changes in law made by this Act relating to the amount or disposition of a fee collected by the Texas Department of

1 Transportation in connection with a permit for an overweight or 2 oversize vehicle apply only to a permit that is applied for on or 3 after the effective date of this Act.

4 (d) The changes in law made by this Act relating to the amount or disposition of a fee collected by the Texas Department of 5 6 Transportation do not apply to a permit for an overweight or oversize vehicle applied for in connection with the delivery of 7 pre-stressed concrete girders and beams under a construction 8 contract for a public road or bridge infrastructure project 9 executed before the effective date of this Act. The amount and 10 disposition of the fee for the permit is governed by the law in 11 effect at the time the construction contract was executed, and the 12 former law is continued in effect for that purpose. 13

14 SECTION 28. This Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2093 was passed by the House on May 9, 2007, by the following vote: Yeas 135, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting; that the House refused to concur in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 2093 on May 25, 2007, and requested the appointment of a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the House adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 2093 on May 28, 2007, by the following vote: Yeas 142, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

H.B. No. 2093 I certify that H.B. No. 2093 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 22, 2007, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays O; at the request of the House, the Senate appointed a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the Senate adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 2093 on May 27, 2007, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor