

Amend CSHB 300 (house committee printing) be adding the following appropriately numbered SECTION to ARTICLE 1 of the bill and renumbering subsequent SECTIONS of that article accordingly:

SECTION 1.____. Subchapter H, Chapter 201, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 201.6041 to read as follows:

Sec. 201.6041. ALTERNATIVES TO TOLLING; REPORT. (a) Before the department may enter into a contract for the construction of a tolled highway project, the department must submit to the legislature a report summarizing the findings of the draft environmental impact statement or other similar statement under Section 201.604, as applicable, associated with the project that relate to the comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing the project as a tolled highway project instead of a nontolled highway project or any other alternatives.

(b) The report must demonstrate that:

(1) in preparing the draft environmental impact statement or similar document, as applicable, the department fully complied with the requirements of:

(A) the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. Section 4321 et seq.) or Section 201.604 of this code, as applicable; and

(B) applicable state and federal guidelines regarding the analysis of data and information;

(2) the department has afforded meaningful involvement to, and given consideration to input from, local elected officials and the public; and

(3) the selected tolled highway project is the most cost-effective and least environmentally harmful alternative.

(c) The department shall provide the report required by this section to:

(1) the lieutenant governor;

(2) the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(3) the presiding officer of the standing committees of the senate and the house of representatives with jurisdiction over transportation issues.

(d) A report under this section must be provided to the legislature not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year.

The department may not enter into a contract for the construction of a tolled highway project that is included in a report under this section before July 1 of the year that follows the year the report is provided.