

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 581
By: Wentworth
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, only counties and municipalities can join an intermunicipal commuter rail district. The board of a district does not possess the authority to change the name of the district. A district may maintain intermodal and commuter rail facilities. Federal legislation distinguishes between types of passenger rail, leading some to conclude that currently, an intermunicipal commuter rail district cannot offer intercity or other passenger rail service. Intermunicipal commuter rail districts are created to provide commuter rail services between municipalities. In the early stages of development, these districts, among other things, study the feasibility of the rail, develop funding alternatives, and develop a preliminary work plan.

As proposed, S.B. 581 authorizes public entities that are located in a county that has become part of a district to also join the district and authorizes the board of an intermunicipal commuter rail district to change the name of the district. S.B. 581 provides that a district may offer intercity and other types of passenger rail services as well as intermunicipal service.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 2(c), Article 6550c-1, V.T.C.S., to authorize certain political subdivisions and other public entities to become a part of a district created under Subsection (b) of this section with the approval of the governing body of the political subdivision or public entity, including a public entity located in a county that has become a part of the district. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 3, Article 6550c-1, V.T.C.S., by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (i), as follows:

(b) Provides that the board is composed of certain members, including one member appointed by each public entity that has become a part of the district under Section 2 of this article. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(i) Requires the board to adopt a name for the district and authorizes the board by resolution to change the name of the district.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 4(e), Article 6550c-1, V.T.C.S., to authorize a district to acquire, construct, develop, own, operate, and maintain intermodal and commuter rail facilities, intercity or other types of passenger rail services, inside, or connect political subdivisions in, the district.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009

