

House Bill 2983
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 1. Section 228.055, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsection (d) and adding Subsection (d-1) to read as follows:

(d) It is an exception to the application of Subsection (a) or (c) if the registered owner of the vehicle is a lessor of the vehicle and not later than the 30th day after the date the notice of nonpayment is mailed provides to the department:

(1) a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under Section 228.054, with the name and address of the lessee clearly legible; or

(2) electronic data, other than a photocopy or scan of a rental or lease contract, that contains the information required under Sections 521.460(c)(1), (2), and (3) covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under Section 228.054.

(d-1) If the lessor provides the required information within the period prescribed under Subsection (d), the department may send a notice of nonpayment to the lessee at the address provided under Subsection (d) [~~shown on the contract document~~] by first class mail before the 30th day after the date of receipt of the required information from the lessor. The lessee of the vehicle for which the proper toll was not paid who is mailed a written notice of nonpayment under this subsection and fails to pay the proper toll and administrative fee within the time specified by the notice

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SECTION 1. Section 228.055, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsection (d) and adding Subsection (d-1) to read as follows:

(d) It is an exception to the application of Subsection (a) or (c) if the registered owner of the vehicle is a lessor of the vehicle and not later than the 30th day after the date the notice of nonpayment is mailed provides to the department:

(1) a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under Section 228.054, with the name and address of the lessee clearly legible; or

(2) electronic data, in a format agreed on by the department and the lessor, other than a photocopy or scan of a rental or lease contract, that contains the information required under Sections 521.460(c)(1), (2), and (3) covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under Section 228.054.

(d-1) If the lessor provides the required information within the period prescribed under Subsection (d), the department may send a notice of nonpayment to the lessee at the address provided under Subsection (d) [~~shown on the contract document~~] by first class mail before the 30th day after the date of receipt of the required information from the lessor. The lessee of the vehicle for which the proper toll was not paid who is mailed a written notice of nonpayment under this subsection and fails to pay the proper toll and administrative fee within the time specified by the notice

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of nonpayment commits an offense. The lessee shall pay a separate toll and administrative fee for each event of nonpayment. Each failure to pay a toll or administrative fee under this subsection is a separate offense.

SECTION 2. Sections 228.056(b) and (c), Transportation Code, are amended to read as follows:

(b) In the prosecution of an offense under Section 228.055(c), ~~(d-1)~~ [(d)], or (e):

(1) it is presumed that the notice of nonpayment was received on the fifth day after the date of mailing;

(2) a computer record of the department of the registered owner of the vehicle is prima facie evidence of its contents and that the defendant was the registered owner of the vehicle when the underlying event of nonpayment under Section 228.054 occurred; and

(3) a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document, or the electronic data provided to the department under Section 228.055(d), covering the vehicle on the date of the underlying event of nonpayment under Section 228.054 is prima facie evidence of its contents and that the defendant was the lessee of the vehicle when the underlying event of nonpayment under Section 228.054 occurred.

(c) It is a defense to prosecution under Section 228.055(c), ~~(d-1)~~ [(d)], or (e) that the motor vehicle in question was stolen before the failure to pay the proper toll occurred and had not been recovered before the

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of nonpayment commits an offense. The lessee shall pay a separate toll and administrative fee for each event of nonpayment. Each failure to pay a toll or administrative fee under this subsection is a separate offense.

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failure to pay occurred, but only if the theft was reported to the appropriate law enforcement authority before the earlier of:

- (1) the occurrence of the failure to pay; or
- (2) eight hours after the discovery of the theft.

SECTION 3. Section 284.0701, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsection (d) and adding Subsection (d-1) to read as follows:

(d) It is an exception to the application of Subsection (a) or (c) if the registered owner of the vehicle is a lessor of the vehicle and not later than the 30th day after the date the notice of nonpayment is mailed provides to the authority:

(1) a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under Section 284.070, with the name and address of the lessee clearly legible; or

(2) electronic data, other than a photocopy or scan of a rental or lease contract, that contains the information required under Sections 521.460(c)(1), (2), and (3) covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under Section 284.070.

(d-1) If the lessor provides the required information within the period prescribed under Subsection (d), the authority may send a notice of nonpayment to the lessee at the address provided under Subsection (d) [~~shown on the contract document~~] by first class mail before the 30th

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day after the date of receipt of the required information from the lessor. The lessee of the vehicle for which the proper toll was not paid who is mailed a written notice of nonpayment under this subsection and fails to pay the proper toll and administrative cost within the time specified by the notice of nonpayment commits an offense. The lessee shall pay a separate toll and administrative cost for each event of nonpayment. Each failure to pay a toll or administrative cost under this subsection is a separate offense.

SECTION 4. Sections 284.0702(b) and (c), Transportation Code, are amended to read as follows:

(b) In the prosecution of an offense under Section 284.0701(c), ~~(d-1) [(d)],~~ or (e):

~~(1)[,]~~ a computer record of the department of the registered owner of the vehicle is prima facie evidence of its contents and that the defendant was the registered owner of the vehicle when the underlying event of nonpayment under Section 284.070 occurred; and

(2) a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document, or the electronic data provided to the authority under Section 284.0701(d), covering the vehicle on the date of the underlying event of nonpayment under Section 284.070 is prima facie evidence of its contents and that the defendant was the lessee of the vehicle when the underlying event of nonpayment under Section 284.070 occurred.

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(c) It is a defense to prosecution under Section 284.0701(c), (d-1) [~~(d)~~], or (e) that the vehicle in question was stolen before the failure to pay the proper toll occurred and had not been recovered before the failure to pay occurred, but only if the theft was reported to the appropriate law enforcement authority before the earlier of:

- (1) the occurrence of the failure to pay; or
- (2) eight hours after the discovery of the theft.

SECTION 5. Section 366.178, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsections (f) and (i) and adding Subsection (i-1) to read as follows:

(f) In the prosecution of a violation for nonpayment, proof that the vehicle passed through a toll collection facility without payment of the proper toll together with proof that the defendant was the registered owner or the driver of the vehicle when the failure to pay occurred, establishes the nonpayment of the registered owner. The proof may be by testimony of a peace officer or authority employee, video surveillance, or any other reasonable evidence, including a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document or the electronic data provided to the authority under Subsection (i) that shows the defendant was the lessee of the vehicle when the underlying event of nonpayment occurred.

(i) A registered owner who is the lessor of a vehicle for which a notice of nonpayment has been issued is not

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liable if, not later than the 30th day after the date the notice of nonpayment is mailed, the registered owner provides to the authority:

(1) a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document [lease agreement] covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment, with the [The] name and address of the lessee [must be] clearly legible; or

(2) electronic data, other than a photocopy or scan of a rental or lease contract, that contains the information required under Sections 521.460(c)(1), (2), and (3) covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under this section.

(i-1) If the lessor timely provides the required information under Subsection (i), the lessee of the vehicle on the date of the violation is considered to be the owner of the vehicle for purposes of this section. The lessee is subject to prosecution for failure to pay the proper toll if the authority sends a notice of nonpayment to the lessee by first-class mail not later than the 30th day after the date of the receipt of the information from the lessor.

SECTION 6. Section 370.177, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsections (e), (g), and (i) and adding Subsection (e-1) to read as follows:

(e) It is an exception to the application of Subsection (b) or (d) that the registered owner of the vehicle is a lessor of the vehicle and not later than the 30th day after the

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date the notice of nonpayment is mailed provides to the authority:

(1) a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under Subsection (a), with the name and address of the lessee clearly legible; or

(2) electronic data, other than a photocopy or scan of a rental or lease contract, that contains the information required under Sections 521.460(c)(1), (2), and (3) covering the vehicle on the date of the nonpayment under Subsection (a).

(e-1) If the lessor provides the required information within the period prescribed under Subsection (e), the authority may send a notice of nonpayment to the lessee at the address provided under Subsection (e) [~~shown on the contract document~~] by first class mail before the 30th day after the date of receipt of the required information from the lessor. The lessee of the vehicle for which the proper toll was not paid who is mailed a written notice of nonpayment under this subsection and fails to pay the proper toll and administrative fee within the time specified by the notice of nonpayment commits an offense. The lessee shall pay a separate toll and administrative fee for each event of nonpayment. Each failure to pay a toll or administrative fee under this subsection is a separate offense.

(g) An offense under Subsection (d), (e-1) [(e)], or (f) is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$250.

(i) In the prosecution of an offense under this section,

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proof that the vehicle passed through a toll collection facility without payment of the proper toll together with proof that the defendant was the registered owner or the driver of the vehicle when the failure to pay occurred, establishes the nonpayment of the registered owner. The proof may be by testimony of a peace officer or authority employee, video surveillance, or any other reasonable evidence, including:

(1) evidence obtained by automated enforcement technology that the authority determines is necessary, including automated enforcement technology described by Sections 228.058(a) and (b); or

(2) a copy of the rental, lease, or other contract document or the electronic data provided to the authority under Subsection (e) that shows the defendant was the lessee of the vehicle when the underlying event of nonpayment occurred.

SECTION 7. This Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

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