

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1116
By: Harper-Brown
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

There is concern that Texas law does not adequately address lidar (light detection and ranging) and radar (radio detection and ranging) jamming devices. Different than a traditional radar detector, a lidar or radar jamming device emits a laser or radio frequency signal that interferes with the operation of police lidar or radar by saturating its receiver with noise or false information. This interference may damage police equipment and hinders the ability of police officers to measure the speed of not only the vehicle equipped with the device, but also other speeding vehicles in the vicinity. These devices are active and not passive like traditional detectors. Many other states have laws that prohibit such radar jamming devices. H.B. 1116 seeks to make the use of radar interference devices, but not radar detectors, illegal.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1116 amends the Transportation Code to make it a Class C misdemeanor offense for a person to use, attempt to use, install, operate, or attempt to operate a radar interference device in a motor vehicle operated by the person or to purchase, sell, or offer for sale such a device. The bill creates an exception for such a device used by a law enforcement officer in the discharge of the officer's official duties. The bill defines "radar interference device" to include a radar jamming device, jammer, scrambler, or diffuser and to exclude a ham radio, band radio, or similar electronic device.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.