

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2204
By: Oliveira
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties observe that, currently, a county assessor-collector or the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) may refuse to register a motor vehicle if the assessor-collector or TxDMV receives information that the owner of the vehicle has failed to pay certain fines owed to the county or to a municipality in the county. Interested parties contend that this enforcement tool needs to be strengthened. In response, H.B. 2204 seeks to require the county or municipality to impose a \$20 fee on a person owing such a fine and specifying that the fee may be used only to reimburse TxDMV or the county assessor-collector for certain expenses.

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. 2204 amends the Transportation Code to expand the authority of a county assessor-collector or the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to refuse to register a motor vehicle to include refusal to register a motor vehicle if the assessor-collector or TxDMV receives information that the owner of the vehicle failed to appear in connection with a complaint or citation relating to a county fine, fee, or tax. The bill authorizes a county or municipality to contract with the county assessor-collector to provide information to the assessor-collector or TxDMV necessary to make a determination relating to a county fine, fee, or tax that is past due, a failure to appear in connection with a complaint or citation relating to a county fine, fee, or tax, or an outstanding warrant from the municipality for failure to appear or failure to pay a fine on a complaint that involves the violation of a traffic law. The bill requires a county or municipality that has such a contract to impose an additional fee of \$20 to a person who fails to pay or to appear as described above. The bill authorizes the additional fee to be used only to reimburse TxDMV or the county assessor-collector for its expenses for providing services under the contract. The bill makes conforming and nonsubstantive changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.