

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2981
By: Hunter
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that, despite certain offenses relating to minors occupying the bed of an open-bed truck or trailer, there is a need for an offense relating to a person operating a motor vehicle with a person riding in a boat or personal watercraft being drawn by a vehicle. The parties further note that approximately 5,000 accidents have been reported involving a trailer drawn by a motor vehicle in parts of Texas where the tourist population swells during boating season. H.B. 2981 seeks to address this issue by establishing provisions relating to the operation on a highway or street of a motor vehicle that is drawing a boat or personal watercraft in or on which a person is riding and by providing a penalty.

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. 2981 amends the Transportation Code to create the offense of a person riding in or on a boat or personal watercraft drawn by a vehicle. The bill makes it an offense to operate a motor vehicle on a highway or street with another person occupying a boat or personal watercraft being drawn by the motor vehicle. The bill establishes a defense to prosecution that the person was operating the motor vehicle in a parade or in an emergency. The bill provides for the meanings of "boat" and "personal watercraft" by reference to the Parks and Wildlife Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.