

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3308
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Transportation
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that because some electric vehicles can be fueled with 100 percent American-made energy in the form of electricity and have no direct tailpipe emissions, the movement towards electric vehicles in Texas brings with it the potential to dramatically reduce dependence on foreign oil and clean up the air. Permitting electric vehicles to use high occupancy vehicle lanes could help promote this promising technology and increase consumer adoption of electric vehicles. Among other provisions, C.S.H.B. 3308 seeks to allow motor vehicles displaying an authorized "plug-in electric vehicle" insignia to use a high occupancy vehicle lane, regardless of the number of occupants, unless this use would impair the receipt of federal funds.

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

C.S.H.B. 3308 amends the Transportation Code to authorize a motor vehicle displaying a "plug-in electric vehicle" insignia issued by the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) in an easily readable location on the back of the vehicle to use a high occupancy vehicle lane regardless of the number of occupants in the vehicle unless the use would impair the receipt of federal funds.

C.S.H.B. 3308 requires TxDMV, at the time of registration or reregistration of a motor vehicle, to issue a specially designed "plug-in electric vehicle" insignia for a motor vehicle that is made by a manufacturer primarily for use on public highways, has not been modified from original manufacturer specifications, is rated at not more than 8,500 pounds unloaded gross vehicle weight, is acquired for use or lease by a consumer and not for resale, has a speed capability of at least 65 miles per hour, is propelled to a significant extent by an electric motor that draws electricity from a battery that has a capacity of not less than 4 kilowatt hours and is capable of being recharged from an external source of electricity, and is not a recreational vehicle that draws power from a battery or a hybrid engine solely for purposes other than propulsion.

C.S.H.B. 3308 requires TxDMV to issue a "plug-in electric vehicle" insignia to a person who applies to TxDMV on a form provided by TxDMV and submits proof that the motor vehicle being registered is a vehicle described by the bill's provisions. The bill authorizes TxDMV to charge a fee not to exceed \$20 per motor vehicle for the issuance of a "plug-in electric vehicle" insignia.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 3308 contains criteria not included in the original qualifying a motor vehicle for issuance of specially designed "plug-in electric vehicle" insignia if it is acquired for use or lease by a consumer and not for resale and is not a recreational vehicle that draws power from a battery or a hybrid engine solely for purposes other than propulsion. The substitute differs from the original in those same criteria by qualifying for such insignia a vehicle that has a speed capability of at least 65 miles per hour, rather than a vehicle with a maximum speed capability of at least 65 miles per hour as in the original, and is propelled to a significant extent by an electric motor that draws electricity from a battery that has a capacity of not less than 4 kilowatt hours, rather than not less than 3.4 kilowatt hours as in the original.

C.S.H.B. 3308 contains a provision not included in the original authorizing TxDMV to charge a fee not to exceed \$20 per motor vehicle for the issuance of a "plug-in electric vehicle" insignia.