

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1831
By: Wentworth
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The El Camino Real de Los Tejas National Historic Trail, one of the oldest highways in Texas, is also among the most historic. Its historic significance dates back to when it became part of a network of roads used by Spanish explorers and representatives of the Spanish Crown to establish missions and presidios. In many places along the trail, Spanish names for roads and landscape features have been retained and are evidence of the Spanish heritage and the significant events that occurred along the trail. During Texas' struggle for independence from Mexico, El Camino Real served as a strategic corridor for critical supplies making their way along the trail for the Republic of Texas army, and it served as a path for Texas heroes such as Davy Crockett and Sam Houston, who helped lead the army to victory. Today, El Camino Real offers a unique reminder of our rich history and tradition all along its route.

To help preserve this storied piece of ancestry for generations to come, S.B. 1831 provides for the designation of the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail as a historic highway.

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

S.B. 1831 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Historical Commission to cooperate with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to designate, interpret, and market the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail as a Texas historic highway. The bill authorizes the commission and TxDOT, to supplement revenue available for those purposes, to pursue federal funds dedicated to highway enhancement. The bill prohibits a designation of the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail as a Texas historic highway from being construed as a designation under the federal National Historic Preservation Act. The bill specifies that TxDOT is not required to design, construct, or erect a marker unless a grant or donation of funds is made to TxDOT to cover the cost of the marker and requires money received for that purpose to be deposited to the credit of the state highway fund.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.