

By: Pickett, Smith of Harris

H.B. No. 630

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT  
2 relating to the authority of the Texas Department of  
3 Transportation, counties, regional tollway authorities, and  
4 regional mobility authorities to enter into funding agreements to  
5 expedite the entity's environmental review duties related to  
6 certain transportation projects.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

8 SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 222, Transportation Code,  
9 is amended by adding Section 222.005 to read as follows:

10 Sec. 222.005. AUTHORIZATION TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO  
11 EXPEDITE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW. (a) The department, a county, a  
12 regional tollway authority operating under Chapter 366, or a  
13 regional mobility authority operating under Chapter 370 may enter  
14 into an agreement to provide funds to a state or federal agency to  
15 expedite the agency's performance of its duties related to the  
16 environmental review process for its transportation projects,  
17 including those listed in the applicable metropolitan planning  
18 organization's long-range transportation plan under 23 U.S.C.  
19 Section 134.

20 (b) Except as provided by Subsection (c), an agreement  
21 entered into under this section:

22 (1) may specify transportation projects the  
23 applicable entity considers to be priorities for review; and

24 (2) must require the agency receiving money to

1 complete the environmental review in less time than is customary  
2 for the completion of environmental review by that agency.

3 (c) The department may enter into a separate agreement for a  
4 transportation project that the department determines has regional  
5 importance.

6 (d) An agreement entered into under this section does not  
7 diminish or modify the rights of the public regarding review and  
8 comment on transportation projects.

9 (e) An entity entering into an agreement under this section  
10 shall make the agreement available on the entity's Internet  
11 website.

12 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
14 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2011.