

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

9:00 AM

Capitol Extension, Room E1.016

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Transportation was held on Tuesday, December 18, 2012, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.016, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Robert Nichols, Chair
Senator Kirk Watson, Vice Chair
Senator Wendy Davis
Senator Rodney Ellis
Senator Juan Hinojosa

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Chris Harris
Senator Florence Shapiro
Senator Jeff Wentworth
Senator Tommy Williams

The chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. The following business was transacted:

Senator Nichols made introductory remarks to the Committee, including the introduction of Committee staff.

The Committee heard invited testimony only on the following Interim Charges:

- Examine the anticipated impacts of the Panama Canal expansion on Texas' cargo and shipping industry, intermodal facilities, roadways, and ports. Examine the implementation of the Houston Ship Channel Security District and determine if additional security districts are needed for other ports.

The roll was called during the testimony on the preceding charge, and a quorum was established.

- Study current state statutes and agency rules regulating oversize and overweight vehicles. Evaluate the public safety benefit of enforcing these regulations and effectiveness in preventing roadway damage, including the cost of repair and maintenance to

infrastructure associated with overweight vehicles. Provide recommendations that balance economic productivity, public safety, and protection and maintenance of roadways. Provide recommendations on the need for additional weights and measures training for law enforcement in this state.

- Study the potential for toll collection and enforcement tools to pursue toll scofflaws for Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and local toll project entities.
- Examine the need for additional natural gas fueling infrastructure to efficiently utilize Texas' vast domestic reserves of natural gas. Also, examine the future requirements for public and private electric vehicle charging stations and the impact of the increased usage of alternative-fueled vehicles. Include geographic balance in the evaluation of alternative-fuel infrastructure. Assess the impact that increasing numbers of electric vehicles will have on the state's electric grid.
- Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Transportation & Homeland Security, 82nd Legislature, Regular and Called Sessions, and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following:
 - Implementation of the Sunset Advisory Commission recommendations, statutory changes specified in TxDOT's sunset legislation and TxDOT's modernization efforts, including the use of public and private engineering services and the implementation and use of business performance measures;
 - Implementation of Proposition 12 funding provided by the fiscal year 2012-2013 Appropriations Act, including an assessment of the impact of this funding on the state's Top 50 list of congested roadway segments and the funding needed to advance each region's priorities in fiscal year 2014-2015.

All witnesses are shown on the attached list.

There being no further business, at 12:18 PM Senator Nichols moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Robert Nichols, Chair

Amy Jeter, Clerk

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