

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1017  
By: Paxton  
Transportation  
7/22/2013  
Enrolled

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The State of Texas operates 12 travel information centers that provide travelers with tourism information and rest areas. The Legislative Budget Board (LBB) *Government Effectiveness and Efficiency Report* indicates a decline in the use of travel counselors and approximately one percent of out-of-state travelers currently utilize a travel information center during their trip.

S.B. 1017 follows the LBB recommendation to shift the source of funding for the travel information centers to increase the revenue available in the state highway fund to be used for transportation projects.

S.B. 1017 amends current law relating to the funding and administration of travel and information operations by the Texas Department of Transportation.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 204.003, Transportation Code, as follows:

Sec. 204.003. TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTERS. (a) Creates this subsection from existing text. Requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to maintain and operate travel information centers, rather than maintain and operate travel information centers at the principal gateways to this state, to provide highway information, travel guidance, and descriptive material designated to assist the traveling public and stimulate travel to and within this state.

(b) Authorizes TxDOT:

(1) to enter into an agreement with:

(A) another state agency for the operation of a travel information center; or

(B) a local government, including a commission created under Chapter 391 (Regional Planning Commissions), Local Government Code, for the operation of a travel information center that is located within the boundaries of the local government; and

(2) to issue a request for proposals to private or nonprofit entities for the operation of a travel information center.

(c) Authorizes TxDOT to sell commercial advertising space at a travel information center if the advertising is not visible from the main traveled way of the highway. Requires TxDOT, if TxDOT sells commercial advertising space, to set rates for the advertising and other services available at a travel information

center at a level that generates receipts approximately sufficient to cover the cost of its travel and information operations.

(d) Prohibits TxDOT from engaging in an activity authorized under Subsection (c) or another provision of this chapter that would decrease the amount of federal highway funding available to TxDOT.

SECTION 2. Amends the heading to Section 204.009, Transportation Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 204.009. SALE OF PROMOTIONAL ITEMS, ADVERTISING, AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 204.009, Transportation Code, by adding Subsection (a-1) and amending Subsection (b), as follows:

(a-1) Authorizes TxDOT to enter into an agreement for the acknowledgement of donations if the acknowledgement does not contain comparative or qualitative descriptions of the donor's products, services, facilities, or companies.

(b) Requires that all proceeds from the sale of the items and advertising under this chapter and all donations acknowledged under this section be deposited to the credit of a separate account in the state highway fund. Provides that money in the account is dedicated for TxDOT's use in its travel and information operations.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.