

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1333
By: Carona
Intergovernmental Relations
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

A 62-mile stretch of railroad right-of-way extending from Plano to southwest Fort Worth is generally referred to as the Cotton Belt Corridor. There is a public need for timely acquisition, design, construction, improvement, renovation, expansion, equipping, maintenance, and operation of passenger rail service in the Cotton Belt Corridor.

Existing methods of project procurement are not sufficient to develop this project due to the absence of adequate funding. However, a public-private partnership would enable an improved schedule for delivery, lower the cost of the project, and provide other benefits to the public.

A particular kind of public private partnership, known as a rail improvement district, could be created specific to this project and enable private entities or other persons to develop all or a portion of the Cotton Belt Corridor.

S.B. 1333 amends the Transportation Code to create a rail improvement district for the Cotton Belt Corridor.

As proposed, S.B. 1333 amends current law relating to the creation of the Cotton Belt Rail Improvement District and provides authority to impose an assessment and issue bonds.

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 Subtitle C, Title 4, Special District Local Laws Code, by adding Chapter 5010, as follows:

CHAPTER 5010. COTTON BELT RAIL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Sets forth standard language for the creation of the Waller County Improvement District No. 1 (district) in Collin, Dallas, and Tarrant Counties. Sets forth standards, procedures, requirements, and criteria for:

Creation, purpose, and approval of the district (Sections 5010.001-5010.008);

Size, composition, appointment, compensation and terms of the board of directors, including the creation of a local assessment advisory board and the appointment of its members (Sections 5010.051-5010.092);

Powers and duties of the district, including improvement projects (Sections 5010.101-5010.133);

General financial provisions and authority to impose a tax, issue bonds and obligations (Sections 5010.151-5010.206); and

Dissolution of the district (Section 2010.251-5010.253).

Prohibits the district from exercising the power of eminent domain, notwithstanding references made herein granting the district powers under other chapters of Texas law.

SECTION 2. Sets forth the initial boundaries of the district.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.