

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1729
By: Nichols
Homeland Security & Public Safety
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) has the authority to issue renewal and duplicate driver's licenses, election identification certificates, and personal identification certificates. As the state's population has increased, the demand for these services has also increased. Interested parties report that DPS has been unable to meet this growing demand and that Texans in many areas of the state experience an inconvenience in obtaining these services due to overcrowding at the local DPS office or the lack of a DPS office within the vicinity of the person's residence. S.B. 1729 seeks to address this issue by establishing a pilot program under which DPS may enter into an agreement with the commissioners court of certain counties for county employees to provide services relating to the issuance of renewal and duplicate driver's licenses and other identification certificates.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Department of Public Safety in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1729 amends the Transportation Code to authorize the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to establish a pilot program for the provision of renewal and duplicate driver's license, election identification certificate, and personal identification certificate services in not more than three counties with a population of 50,000 or less, not more than three counties with a population of more than 50,000 but less than 1,000,001, and not more than two counties with a population of more than 1 million. The bill authorizes DPS, under the pilot program, to enter into an agreement with a county commissioners court to permit county employees to provide services at a county office relating to the issuance of renewal and duplicate driver's licenses, election identification certificates, and personal identification certificates, including the following services: taking photographs; administering vision tests; updating those documents to change a name, address, or photograph; distributing and collecting information relating to organ donations; collecting fees; and performing other basic ministerial functions and tasks necessary to issue renewal and duplicate documents. The bill prohibits such an agreement from including training to administer an examination for driver's license applicants and requires a participating county to remit the fees collected for the issuance of a renewal or duplicate driver's license or personal identification certificate to DPS for deposit as required by statutory provisions relating to driver's licenses and certificates.

S.B. 1729 authorizes the county commissioners court to provide the license and certificate services through any consenting county office, authorizes a county office to decline or consent to provide such services by providing written notice to the commissioners court, and requires DPS to provide all equipment and supplies necessary to perform the services, including network connectivity. The bill requires DPS to adopt rules to administer the bill's provisions and authorizes a county that provides the license and certificate services to collect an additional fee of up to \$5 for each transaction provided that relates to driver's license and personal

identification certificate services only.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.