

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1914
By: Garcia
Transportation
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been reported that in a recent memorandum to state officials, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) stated, "Public officials in Texas may face a variety of threats. These threats can take the form of non-violent crimes such as vandalism, harassment, hacking, and stalking; or violent crimes such as kidnapping, assault, or even assassination. The motives associated with these threats are varied, including financial gain, radical ideology, revenge, or a psychological disorder. Some public officials are targeted for specific reasons, while others are targeted as symbols of the government. In some cases, the families or staff members of officials may also be affected by these threats." In addition, interested parties note that DPS recommends state officials maintain discretion and avoid calling attention to themselves.

Because of these potential threats, some Texans believe that the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles should be given the flexibility to design a new license plate for state officials that allows law enforcement personnel the ability to identify the driver as a state official during times of emergency without making the official's identity explicitly evident to the public. C.S.S.B. 1914, among other items, seeks to better protect the personal safety of state officials.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1914 amends the Transportation Code to remove the specification that the specialty license plates the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) is required to issue to a state official include the words "State Official."

C.S.S.B. 1914 revises a provision requiring TxDMV to issue specialty license plates depicting the State Capitol to instead require that TxDMV design and issue such plates relating to the State Capitol and to remove the specification that the plates depict the State Capitol. The bill authorizes TxDMV to design the license plates in consultation with the State Preservation Board. The bill requires the remainder of the fee for the issuance of the license plates after deducting TxDMV's administrative costs to be deposited to the credit of the Capitol fund, rather than the general revenue fund.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2013.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.S.B. 1914 may differ from the engrossed version in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and highlighted in a manner that indicates the substantial

differences between the engrossed and committee substitute versions of the bill.

SENATE ENGROSSED

SECTION 1. Subsection (a), Section 504.401, Transportation Code, is amended.

SECTION 2. Subsection (a), Section 504.603, Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The department shall design and issue specialty license plates relating to ~~[depicting]~~ the State Capitol. The department may design the license plates in consultation with the State Preservation Board.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Same as engrossed version except for recitation.

SECTION 2. Section 504.603, Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 504.603. TEXAS CAPITOL LICENSE PLATES.

(a) The department shall design and issue specialty license plates relating to ~~[depicting]~~ the State Capitol. The department may design the license plates in consultation with the State Preservation Board.

(b) After deduction of the department's administrative costs, the remainder of the fee for issuance of the license plates shall be deposited to the credit of the Capitol ~~[general revenue]~~ fund established under Section 443.0101, Government Code.

SECTION 3. Same as engrossed version.