

By: Lavender

H.B. No. 3423

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the operation of state travel information centers by private and nonprofit entities.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 204.003, Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 204.003. TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTERS. (a) In this section, "travel information center" means an information center located at a principal gateway of this state that provides ~~[The department shall maintain and operate travel information centers at the principal gateways to this state to provide]~~ highway information, travel guidance, and descriptive material designed to assist the traveling public and stimulate travel to and within this state.

(b) The department shall issue a request for proposals to private and nonprofit entities for the operation of a travel information center.

(c) The department shall maintain and operate the center as a rest area without staff if the department finds none of the offers from its request for proposals acceptable or is unable to comply with federal law in issuing a contract under this section.

(d) This section does not apply to a travel information center located at the State Capitol.

SECTION 2. Section 204.004, Transportation Code, is amended

1 to read as follows:

2 Sec. 204.004. PAYMENT OF COSTS. (a) The department may pay
3 from highway revenues the cost, including the administration and
4 operation cost, of:

5 (1) developing, publishing, and distributing
6 material; and

7 (2) maintaining and operating travel information
8 centers.

9 (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a)(2), the department may
10 not pay from highway revenues the cost, including the
11 administration and operation cost, of operating a travel
12 information center on or after August 31, 2014, provided that the
13 department may pay for the cost of maintaining and operating a
14 travel information center as an unstaffed rest area.

15 SECTION 3. The Texas Department of Transportation shall
16 initiate the process of contracting the operation of travel
17 information centers to a private or nonprofit entity not later than
18 September 1, 2013. The department shall contract for the operation
19 of travel information centers or cease staffing the travel
20 information centers as required by Section 204.003, Transportation
21 Code, as amended by this Act, not later than August 31, 2014.

22 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
23 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
24 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
25 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
26 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.