

By: Lavender

H.B. No. 3424

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to maintenance and operation of travel information centers by the Texas Department of Transportation.

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

SECTION 1. Effective September 1, 2013, Section 156.251(d), Tax Code, is amended to read as follows:

(d) An amount equal to the amount of revenue derived from the collection of taxes imposed by this chapter at a rate of one-half of one percent shall be allocated in the general revenue fund to be used for media advertising and other marketing activities of the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office and for the operation of travel information centers by the Texas Department of Transportation. Section 403.095 [~~Division of the Texas Department of Commerce. Section 403.094(h)~~], Government Code, does not apply to funds described in this section. [~~This subsection takes effect October 1, 1994.~~]

SECTION 2. 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

1 assist the traveling public and stimulate travel to and within this
2 state.

3 (b) The department may:

4 (1) transfer to a local government the operation of a
5 travel information center located in the local government's
6 boundaries; or

7 (2) issue a request for proposals to private and
8 nonprofit entities for the operation of a travel information
9 center.

10 (c) The department may maintain and operate the center as a
11 rest area without staff if:

12 (1) a local government does not assume the operation
13 of a travel information center under Subsection (b)(1); or

14 (2) the department finds none of the offers from its
15 request for proposals acceptable or is unable to comply with
16 federal law in issuing a contract under Subsection (b)(2).

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

19 SECTION 3. Section 204.004, Transportation Code, is amended
20 to read as follows:

21 Sec. 204.004. PAYMENT OF COSTS. The department may pay from
22 highway revenues the cost, including the administration and
23 operation cost, of:

24 (1) developing, publishing, and distributing
25 material; ~~and~~

26 (2) maintaining ~~and operating~~ travel information
27 centers; and

1 (3) maintaining and operating a travel information
2 center as an unstaffed rest area under Section 204.003(c).

3 SECTION 4. Section 204.009, Transportation Code, is amended
4 to read as follows:

5 Sec. 204.009. SALE OF PROMOTIONAL ITEMS AND COMMERCIAL
6 ADVERTISING SPACE. (a) The department may sell promotional items
7 such as calendars, books, prints, caps, light clothing, or other
8 items approved by the commission that advertise the resources of
9 this state.

10 (b) The department may sell commercial advertising space in
11 a travel information center if the advertising is displayed solely
12 within the travel information center and is not legible from the
13 highway.

14 (c) If the department sells commercial advertising space
15 under Subsection (b), the department shall set rates for commercial
16 advertising and other services available at a travel information
17 center at a level that generates receipts approximately sufficient
18 to cover the cost of its travel and information operations.

19 (d) All proceeds from the sale of the items and commercial
20 advertising space shall be deposited in a separate account in [to
21 the credit of] the state highway fund for the department's use in
22 its travel and information operations.

23 (e) [~~(e)~~] Section 403.095, Government Code, does not apply
24 to money deposited under this section.

25 (f) The department may not engage in any activities
26 authorized under this section that would decrease the amount of
27 federal highway funding available to the department.

1 SECTION 5. Except as otherwise provided by this Act:

2 (1) this Act takes effect immediately if it receives a
3 vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
4 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution; and

5 (2) if this Act does not receive the vote necessary for
6 immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2013.