

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 562
By: Nichols
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that electric utilities throughout Texas regularly haul electric power poles for the routine maintenance of transmission and distribution lines as well as to repair damage to those lines after storms. These vehicles and their loads often require special permits because of their combined length and height. Currently, the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles requires haulers to purchase "over-length" permits that are good for 30, 60, or 90 days. The parties note that many utilities purchase the 90-day permit up to four times a year and contend that this is an inefficient way of administering those permits. The parties believe an annual permit, with its own requirements, would make permitting much more efficient for all involved. S.B. 562 seeks to address this issue by revising provisions related to permits for certain vehicles.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

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

S.B. 562 amends the Transportation Code to authorize the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to issue an annual permit that allows a person to operate over a state highway or road a vehicle or combination of vehicles that exceeds the length and height limits provided by law but limits the size of such vehicles to a maximum length of 110 feet and a maximum height of 14 feet. The bill requires an application for such a permit to be accompanied by a permit fee of \$960, with \$480 of that amount allocated to the general revenue fund.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.