

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1102
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Transportation
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Due to the increased weight of their fuel systems, natural gas trucks weigh more than comparable diesel trucks, sometimes weighing up to 2,000 pounds more. This means that full-load carriers operating natural gas trucks often must reduce their loads. As a result, carriers operating natural gas trucks can experience revenue losses of up to two to three percent per load, and may not be able to carry some bulk loads that are carried in fixed load trailers that cannot be easily changed. To address this, Congress passed the FAST Act in December of 2015, which allows states to exempt the added weight of natural gas fuel tanks, up to 2,000 pounds, from interstate weight limits.

Since passage of the FAST Act, many states have enacted legislation extending the exemption on both their interstate and local highways.

S.B. 1102 addresses this issue by establishing provisions relating to increasing weight limitations for natural gas powered motor vehicles that align with current federal law by allowing eligible vehicles a weight exemption that may not exceed 82,000 pounds gross vehicle weight.

As proposed, S.B. 1102 amends current law relating to weight limitations for natural gas motor vehicles.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 621.101, Transportation Code, by adding Subsection (b-1), as follows:

(b-1) Authorizes a vehicle or combination of vehicles that is powered by an engine fueled primarily by natural gas, notwithstanding any other provision of this section, to exceed any weight limitation by an amount that is equal to the difference between the weight of the vehicle attributable to the natural gas tank and fueling system carried by that vehicle and the weight of a comparable diesel tank and fueling system, provided that the maximum gross weight of the vehicle is prohibited from exceeding 82,000 pounds.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2017.