

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
85R13797 BPG-D

S.C.R. 42  
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Transportation  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Among states with populations greater than five million, the State of Texas has the nation's second-highest rate of traffic deaths per capita.

Every day, 10 people die on Texas roads, and 50 suffer debilitating, life-changing injuries in traffic accidents. Federal transportation laws already require each state to develop a strategic highway safety plan that focuses the efforts of all safety partners on the highest priority needs, but what Texas requires is the unification of stakeholders in support of an overarching program designed to end acceptance of traffic mayhem as a normative occurrence.

In 1997, Sweden adopted Vision Zero, a systems approach to enhancing traffic safety. It places core responsibility for crashes on overall system design, addressing safety through infrastructure design, vehicle technology, and enforcement. As a result of this bold initiative, the Scandinavian nation now has one of the lowest annual rates of road deaths in the world, with only 3 out of 100,000, roughly a quarter of the rate in the United States.

Other European countries have significantly reduced fatalities through Vision Zero initiatives, and Spain more than halved its number of traffic deaths. In the United States, Vision Zero has proven effective in many places, reducing fatalities by 40 percent or more in Minnesota, Utah, and Washington State. New York City achieved a tremendous reduction in pedestrian fatalities, which in 2014 fell to the lowest number since records began about a century ago.

Vision Zero is based on four principles: ethics, responsibility, system safety, and mechanisms for change. Human life and health are paramount, providers and regulators of road traffic systems share responsibility with users, and systems should take account of human fallibility to minimize opportunities for error and the harm done when mistakes occur. Finally, providers and regulators must do their utmost to guarantee the safety of all citizens, cooperating with road users, and all three elements must be prepared to undergo necessary change.

Loss of life is not an acceptable price to pay for mobility, and the state must take a more comprehensive approach to traffic safety, guided by a zero-fatality goal.

### **RESOLVED**

That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby direct the Texas Department of Transportation to adopt a Vision Zero strategy to reduce traffic fatalities and injuries.

That the Texas secretary of state forward an official copy of this resolution to the chair of the board and the executive director of the Texas Department of Transportation.