

By: Raney, Oliverson, Hefner, Lambert, Wray,
et al.

H.B. No. 354

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the process for establishing speed limits on roads near
certain schools.

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

SECTION 1. Section 545.355(b), Transportation Code, is
amended to read as follows:

(b) The commissioners court of a county may declare a lower
speed limit of not less than:

(1) 30 miles per hour on a county road or highway to
which this section applies, if the commissioners court determines
that the prima facie speed limit on the road or highway is
unreasonable or unsafe; ~~or~~

(2) 20 miles per hour in a residence district, unless
the roadway has been designated as a major thoroughfare by a city
planning commission; or

(3) 15 miles per hour on a county road or highway
located within 500 feet of an elementary, secondary, or
open-enrollment charter school or an institution of higher
education, if approved under Section 545.357.

SECTION 2. Section 545.357, Transportation Code, is amended
to read as follows:

Sec. 545.357. CONSIDERATION OF ~~[PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER]~~
SPEED LIMITS WHERE CERTAIN SCHOOLS ARE LOCATED. (a) The governing
body of a municipality in which a public or private elementary or

1 secondary school, an open-enrollment charter school, or an
2 institution of higher education [~~as defined by Section 61.003(8) or~~
3 ~~(15), Education Code,~~] is located shall, on request of the
4 governing body of a school or institution of higher education, hold
5 a public hearing at least once each calendar year to consider prima
6 facie speed limits on a highway in the municipality, including a
7 highway of the state highway system, near the school or institution
8 of higher education.

9 (b) If a county road outside the state highway system is
10 located within 500 feet of a public or private elementary or
11 secondary school, an open-enrollment charter school, or an
12 institution of higher education that is not in a municipality, the
13 commissioners court of the county, on request of the governing body
14 of a school or institution of higher education, shall hold a public
15 hearing at least once each calendar year to consider the prima facie
16 speed limit on the road near the school or institution of higher
17 education.

18 (c) A municipal governing body or commissioners court, on
19 request of the governing body of a school or institution of higher
20 education, may hold one public hearing for all public and private
21 elementary and secondary schools, open-enrollment charter schools,
22 and institutions of higher education in its jurisdiction.

23 (d) The Texas Transportation Commission, on request of the
24 governing body of a school or institution of higher education,
25 shall hold a public hearing at least once each calendar year to
26 consider prima facie speed limits on highways in the state highway
27 system that are near public or private elementary or secondary

1 schools, open-enrollment charter schools, or institutions of
2 higher education.

3 (e) The municipal governing body, the commissioners court,
4 or the Texas Transportation Commission, as applicable, may not
5 reject a request for a prima facie speed limit by a public or
6 private elementary or secondary school, an open-enrollment charter
7 school, or an institution of higher education without first making
8 a written finding stating a reasonable basis for the rejection.

9 (f) The governing body of a school or institution of higher
10 education may appeal a rejection of a request for a prima facie
11 speed limit under this section to the district court of the county
12 in which the school or institution is located not later than the
13 90th day after the date the written finding is made. If the
14 governing body shows by clear and convincing evidence that the
15 rejection of the request was not based on accepted traffic
16 management principles, the district court may grant the requested
17 prima facie speed limit.

18 (g) The governing body of a school or institution of higher
19 education may consult with the Texas Department of Transportation,
20 the Texas Transportation Commission, and local transportation
21 authorities on the feasibility of a prima facie speed limit during
22 the acquisition and design of property for a public or private
23 elementary or secondary school, an open-enrollment charter school,
24 or an institution of higher education.

25 (h) In this section:

26 (1) "Governing body of a school or institution of
27 higher education" means:

1 (A) the board of trustees of the school district
2 in which a public elementary or secondary school is located;

3 (B) the governing body of a private elementary or
4 secondary school;

5 (C) the governing body of an open-enrollment
6 charter school; or

7 (D) the governing board of an institution of
8 higher education.

9 (2) "Institution of higher education" means an
10 institution of higher education or a private or independent
11 institution of higher education, as those terms are defined by
12 Section 61.003, Education Code.

13 (3) "Open-enrollment charter school" has the meaning
14 assigned by Section 5.001, Education Code.

15 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.