

By: Schwertner, et al.
(Ashby)

S.B. No. 977

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the use of state money for high-speed rail operated by a private entity.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 199, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 199.003 to read as follows:

Sec. 199.003. USE OF STATE MONEY FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL.

(a) For the purposes of this section, "high-speed rail" means intercity passenger rail service that is reasonably expected to reach speeds of at least 110 miles per hour.

(b) Except as required by federal law or other state law, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. Section 4321 et seq.):

(1) the legislature may not appropriate money to pay for a cost of planning, facility construction or maintenance, or security for, promotion of, or operation of, high-speed rail operated by a private entity; and

(2) a state agency may not accept or use state money to pay for a cost described by Subdivision (1).

(c) A state agency shall prepare a semiannual report of each expense described by this section and submit a copy of each report to:

(1) the commission;

(2) the comptroller;

1 (3) the committee in each house of the legislature
2 with primary jurisdiction over transportation;

3 (4) the speaker of the house of representatives;

4 (5) the lieutenant governor; and

5 (6) the governor.

6 (d) This section is not intended to preclude or limit the
7 execution of the department's responsibilities under federal law or
8 other state law, including:

9 (1) regulatory responsibilities;

10 (2) oversight of transportation projects;

11 (3) environmental review;

12 (4) policy development;

13 (5) communication with public officials; or

14 (6) coordinating with a private entity that operates
15 or proposes to operate high-speed rail in the same manner that the
16 department coordinates with other entities that operate
17 transportation projects.

18 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.