

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 771
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Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

While recent legislative efforts prohibiting texting while driving in school zones have proved vital to the safety of students in Texas, it has been reported that many cities needing to install the requisite signs in school zones are faced with costs well beyond their means. H.B. 771 seeks to address this issue by reducing the burden on these local entities.

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

H.B. 771 amends the Transportation Code to change the entities to which statutory provisions relating to the enforcement of an offense for the use of a wireless communication device in a school crossing zone or while operating a school bus with a minor passenger apply from a municipality, county, or other political subdivision to an applicable local authority. The bill replaces the requirement for the entity enforcing those provisions to post a compliant warning sign at the entrance to each school crossing zone in the entity's jurisdiction with a requirement for an applicable local authority enforcing those provisions in a school crossing zone in the authority's jurisdiction to post such a sign, or approve the posting of such a sign by a school or school district, at each entrance to the school crossing zone. The bill changes from the Department of Public Safety to the Texas Department of Transportation the entity required to adopt specified standards regarding the attachment of and information provided on the warning sign. The bill exempts an applicable local authority from the requirement to pay the costs associated with the posting of the signs if the authority enters an agreement providing otherwise.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.