

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1738
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Transportation
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Public transit systems can be a barrier to travel for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The ability to board and use the system depends on the level of communication between the passenger and driver. In some cases, the passenger may be non-verbal, making the ability to communicate more difficult. This will impact how the directions to a drop off are conducted as well as pick up when ready. It also impacts the quality of care that passenger may receive if their operator cannot communicate effectively.

It is important that drivers and operators in public transit systems are trained to assist passengers with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It is equally important that drivers and operators of public transportation vehicles are also educated on how to communicate with those passengers. S.B. 1738 will provide for the training and education for bus drivers and operators in a transit authority so that they can effectively communicate with passengers with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

As proposed, S.B. 1738 amends current law relating to an education and training program on interacting with and supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for certain public transportation vehicle operators.

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 Subchapter C, Chapter 451, Transportation Code, by adding Section 451.114, as follows:

Sec. 451.114. REQUIRED EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM ON INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES: CERTAIN AUTHORITIES. (a) Provides that this section applies only to a rapid transit authority created before 1980 in which the principal municipality has a population of less than 1.9 million.

(b) Requires an authority to establish an education and training program on interacting with and supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for employees of the authority who operate vehicles used to provide public transportation services for the authority. Requires the program to include instruction relating to:

- (1) identifying and communicating with individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities; and
- (2) assisting an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability to safely enter and exit a vehicle used to provide public transportation services.

(c) Prohibits an authority, or a person with whom the authority contracts, from allowing an employee to operate a vehicle used to provide public transportation services for the authority unless the employee has completed the training program established by the authority under this section.

SECTION 2. Requires a rapid transit authority, not later than March 1, 2020, to establish the training program as required by Section 451.114, Transportation Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. (a) Effective date, except as provided by Subsection (b) of this section: September 1, 2019.

(b) Effective date, Section 451.114(c), Transportation Code, as added by this Act: September 1, 2020.