86R9233 BEE-D

By:  Johnson S.B. No. 538

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the issuance of a driver's license or personal identification certificate to a youth experiencing homelessness.

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

SECTION 1.  Subchapter R, Chapter 521, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 521.4265 to read as follows:

Sec. 521.4265.  EXEMPTION FOR YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS. (a) In this section, "youth experiencing homelessness":

(1)  means an individual who is at least 16 years of age and not older than 24 years of age and:

(A)  lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; or

(B)  has a primary nighttime residence that is:

(i)  a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations, including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill;

(ii)  an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or

(iii)  a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; and

(2)  does not include an individual who is imprisoned or otherwise detained in a correctional facility at the time an application is submitted for a driver's license or personal identification certificate.

(b)  Except as provided by Subsections (f) and (i), a youth experiencing homelessness is entitled to an exemption from the payment of fees under this chapter for the issuance of a driver's license or personal identification certificate.

(c)  For the purposes of this section, a person's status as a youth experiencing homelessness must be confirmed by a notarized affidavit from:

(1)  a case manager employed by:

(A)  a homeless shelter or transitional housing facility;

(B)  an organization that provides to youth experiencing homelessness or assists youth experiencing homelessness in obtaining services such as health services, mental or behavioral health services, substance abuse services, public assistance services, or employment services; or

(C)  a faith-based organization that provides benefits or services to youth experiencing homelessness;

(2)  a peace officer who is an official homeless liaison; or

(3)  a counselor or administrator at a school attended by the youth experiencing homelessness.

(d)  A person may not charge a fee for the affidavit described by Subsection (c).

(e)  An affidavit described by Subsection (c) may not be used for a driver's license or personal identification certificate application if the affidavit was signed more than 60 days before the date the application is submitted.

(f)  Subsection (b) does not apply to a person subject to the registration requirements of Chapter 62, Code of Criminal Procedure.

(g)  For each exemption granted under this section the department shall deposit to the credit of the Texas mobility fund an amount from the identification fee exemption account under Subsection (h) that is equal to the amount of the waived fee that would otherwise be deposited to the mobility fund.

(h)  The identification fee exemption account is created as an account in the general revenue fund of the state treasury. The fund consists of grants and donations made to the department for the purposes of this section. The department shall administer the account. Money in the account may be appropriated for the purposes of Subsection (g).

(i)  The department may not grant an exemption under this section if money is not available in the identification fee exemption account to meet the requirements of Subsection (g).

SECTION 2.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.