

AN ACT

relating to a study by the Texas Department of Transportation of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor, including an evaluation of the feasibility of certain improvements to Interstate Highway 27.

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

SECTION 1. (a) In this Act:

(1) "Advisory committee" means the Ports-to-Plains Advisory Committee established under this section.

(2) "Department" means the Texas Department of Transportation.

(3) "Improvement" has the meaning assigned by Section 221.001, Transportation Code.

(4) "Port of entry" has the meaning assigned by Section 621.001, Transportation Code.

(5) "Ports-to-Plains Corridor" means the highways designated as the Ports-to-Plains Corridor under Section 225.069, Transportation Code.

(b) The department shall conduct a comprehensive study of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor. The study must evaluate the feasibility of, and the costs and logistical matters associated with, improvements that create a continuous flow, four-lane divided highway that meets interstate highway standards to the extent possible, including improvements that:

(1) extend Interstate Highway 27:

1 (A) from its southern terminus to Interstate
2 Highway 20;

3 (B) from Interstate Highway 20 to Interstate
4 Highway 10; and

5 (C) from Interstate Highway 10 to the port of
6 entry located in Laredo;

7 (2) extend Interstate Highway 27:

8 (A) from its northern terminus to Dumas;

9 (B) from Dumas to Stratford; and

10 (C) from Stratford to the Oklahoma state border;

11 and

12 (3) extend Interstate Highway 27:

13 (A) from its northern terminus to Dumas;

14 (B) from Dumas to Dalhart; and

15 (C) from Dalhart to the New Mexico state border.

16 (c) In conducting the study under Subsection (b) of this
17 section, the department shall:

18 (1) use the reports submitted to the department by the
19 advisory committee under Subsection (j) of this section; and

20 (2) hold quarterly public meetings on a rotational
21 basis in Amarillo, Laredo, Lubbock, and San Angelo to gather public
22 feedback on improvements or expansions to the Ports-to-Plains
23 Corridor.

24 (d) The department shall establish a Ports-to-Plains
25 Advisory Committee to assist the department in conducting the study
26 under Subsection (b) of this section.

27 (e) The advisory committee is composed of:

1 (1) the county judge, or an elected county official or
2 the administrator of the county's road department, as designated by
3 the county judge, of each county along the Ports-to-Plains
4 Corridor, including the counties along the possible extensions of
5 Interstate Highway 27 described by Subsection (b) of this section;
6 and

7 (2) the mayor, or the city manager or assistant city
8 manager, as designated by the mayor, of Amarillo, Big Spring,
9 Carrizo Springs, Dalhart, Del Rio, Dumas, Eagle Pass, Eldorado,
10 Lamesa, Laredo, Lubbock, Midland, Odessa, San Angelo, Sonora,
11 Sterling City, Stratford, and Tahoka.

12 (f) The advisory committee shall meet at least twice each
13 year on a rotational basis in Lubbock and San Angelo.

14 (g) The department, in conjunction with the advisory
15 committee, shall establish segment committees for each geographic
16 segment along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor as determined by the
17 department. The segment committees are composed of:

18 (1) volunteers who may represent:

19 (A) municipalities, counties, metropolitan
20 planning organizations, ports, chambers of commerce, and economic
21 development organizations along that segment of the
22 Ports-to-Plains Corridor;

23 (B) the oil and gas industry; and

24 (C) the trucking industry;

25 (2) department representatives; and

26 (3) any other interested parties.

27 (h) A segment committee established under Subsection (g) of

1 this section for a segment along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor shall
2 submit a report to the advisory committee providing input for the
3 study conducted by the department under Subsection (b) of this
4 section. The report must include:

5 (1) an examination of the ability of the energy
6 industry to transport products to market;

7 (2) an evaluation of the economic development impacts
8 of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor, including whether the improvement
9 or expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor would create
10 employment opportunities in this state;

11 (3) a determination of whether improvements or
12 expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor would relieve traffic
13 congestion in the segment;

14 (4) an examination of freight movement along the
15 Ports-to-Plains Corridor;

16 (5) a determination and prioritization of
17 improvements and expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor that are
18 warranted in order to promote safety and mobility, while maximizing
19 the use of existing highways to the greatest extent possible and
20 striving to protect private property as much as possible;

21 (6) a determination of the areas that are preferable
22 and suitable for interstate designation;

23 (7) an examination of project costs related to the
24 improvement or expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor; and

25 (8) an assessment of federal, state, local, and
26 private funding sources for a project improving or expanding the
27 Ports-to-Plains Corridor.

1 (i) Not later than June 30, 2020, each segment committee
2 established under Subsection (g) of this section shall submit to
3 the advisory committee the report described by Subsection (h) of
4 this section, including priority recommendations for improvement
5 and expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor.

6 (j) Not later than October 31, 2020, the advisory committee
7 shall review and compile the reports submitted by each segment
8 committee under Subsection (i) of this section and submit to the
9 department:

10 (1) the reports submitted by each segment committee;
11 and

12 (2) a summary and any recommendations based on those
13 reports.

14 (k) The advisory committee and each segment committee shall
15 conduct extensive public involvement campaigns for feedback on
16 preliminary recommendations made by the committees before
17 submitting the reports under Subsections (i) and (j) of this
18 section.

19 (l) Not later than January 1, 2021, the department shall
20 submit a report on the results of the study conducted under
21 Subsection (b) of this section to the governor, the lieutenant
22 governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the
23 presiding officer of each standing committee of the legislature
24 with jurisdiction over transportation matters.

25 (m) This Act expires August 31, 2021.

26 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
27 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as

H.B. No. 1079

1 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
2 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
3 Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1079 was passed by the House on April 24, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 143, Nays 1, 2 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 1079 on May 22, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 126, Nays 16, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1079 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 15, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 1.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor