

** REVISION **

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOTICE OF FORMAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Transportation
Interim Charges 1-5 & Inquiries 1-3

TIME & DATE: N/A
Monday, August 17, 2020

PLACE: N/A

CHAIR: Rep. Terry Canales

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and challenges in scheduling public hearings at this time, the House Committee on Transportation is seeking written submissions from state agencies, interested parties, and the public on the interim charges and inquiries listed below. Submissions received in response to this request will be transmitted to members of the committee and posted on the House website.

Submission Guidelines:

- Submissions must be in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format.
- Please submit a separate document for each interim charge and inquiry to which you are responding.
- Submissions are requested to be limited to six (6) pages in length for each interim charge or inquiry.
- Submissions must be submitted via email to Dylan.Matthews_hc@house.texas.gov.
- Please include "Transportation RFI" and the interim charge and inquiry number(s) to which you are responding in the subject line of the email.
- Please include the following contact information in the body of the email: submitter name, organization or entity (if applicable and an authorized representative), mailing address, and telephone number.
- Please remove any personal identifying information from the document(s), such as your personal phone number, personal address, or personal email address.
- Comments received in response to this Formal Request for Information will be publicly posted on the House website.
- **The deadline for all submissions is Friday, September 18.**

Interim Charge 1: Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 86th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:

- **Interim Charge 1A:** HB 803 and SB 198, which relate to toll project financial reporting and use payments. Monitor the effectiveness of the tools available to Texas toll project entities for enforcing unpaid tolls while protecting customer rights.
- **Interim Charge 1B:** SB 282 and SB 962, which relate to the funding for the State Highway Fund. Study the current mix of user fee-based funding for the state highway system, including registration fees, tolls, and fuel tax, and determine if current funding generated is sufficient to maintain cost demands. Examine whether current legislative appropriations, including projections for Proposition 1 (severance tax) and Proposition 7 (sales tax) funds, are keeping pace with Texas' highway funding needs to accommodate population and economic development growth. Make recommendations for additional methods of funding or innovative tools that the state could utilize to deliver road infrastructure projects.
- **Interim Charge 1C:** SB 357, which relates to outdoor advertising signs. Monitor the Texas Department of Transportation's implementation of the new statutory requirements set forth in the legislation, including any related rulemaking.

Interim Charge 2: Study the state's transportation and road safety efforts in support of the Texas Transportation Commission's goal of ending traffic deaths in the state by 2050. Identify the most dangerous roads and transportation corridors in the state and determine opportunities to reduce high rates of traffic accidents and fatalities in these areas. Make recommendations to improve policies, funding strategies, program development, and agency coordination to ensure continuous improvements to road safety.

Interim Charge 3: Study the technology and safety aspects of autonomous and semi-autonomous vehicles, including predictive capabilities and the potential for dedicated freeway and surface lanes for public transportation, autonomous vehicles, and semi-autonomous vehicles. Make recommendations for optimizing state policy to prepare for varying vehicle technologies to ensure safety and traffic reliability on Texas roadways.

Interim Charge 4: Study the state's seaport infrastructure and the infrastructure at land ports of entry to facilitate international trade and economic growth. Examine seaport infrastructure and the auxiliary rail and roadway needs connected to each port as well as the port's ability to keep pace with oil and gas production. Make recommendations to maximize

the economic flow of goods and products to and from seaports and study the feasibility and economic impact of dredging and widening Texas ports in order to remain competitive in international trade. Examine the infrastructure at international border ports of entry in Texas and identify transportation-related impediments to international trade that negatively impact the state. Make recommendations to reduce border wait times, facilitate economic growth, and expedite trade. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on International Relations & Economic Development)*

Interim Charge 5: Monitor the State Auditor's review of agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction. The Chair shall seek input and periodic briefings on completed audits for the 2019 and 2020 fiscal years and bring forth pertinent issues for full committee consideration.

The Committee also seeks the following information related to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Inquiry 1: How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected state agencies, interested parties, and the public as it relates to transportation matters?

Inquiry 2: What transportation issues are anticipated to arise in the future as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Inquiry 3: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the ability of the transportation state agencies to accomplish their mission and to serve the public in an effective and efficient manner?

The Committee seeks responses to one or more of the above charges and inquiries from the following state agencies:

- Texas Department of Transportation
 - Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
 - Texas Department of Public Safety
 - Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
 - Texas A&M Transportation Institute
 - Texas State Auditor's Office
 - Legislative Budget Board
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