

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87S30208 TBO-D

S.C.R. 3
By: Nichols et al.
Transportation
9/30/2021
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Each day, more than 26 million students rely on school buses for safe transportation, and many school districts have experienced difficulty in keeping up with this demand due to federal licensing requirements that have exacerbated the shortage of school bus drivers. Part 383 of the Code of Federal Regulations requires school bus drivers to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL), but the application process has included unnecessary obstacles to meeting this obligation. For example, the testing and training portions of the CDL application were previously handled by different third-party skills examiners, which limited applicants' ability to complete the exams if they did not have access to both a tester and a trainer. A recent change to this rule helps states streamline the process of obtaining a CDL by allowing the same examiner to both test and train an applicant, revealing that with less federal interference, states can license school bus drivers more efficiently.

According to a survey conducted by *School Bus Fleet Magazine*, most school districts have endured some degree of bus driver shortage, and data from the National Association for Pupil Transportation reveals that many school districts consider CDL requirements to be a major factor in their ability to recruit and retain bus drivers. One Texas school district has successfully overcome its shortage, but only through costly training programs that compensate new drivers as they complete the CDL application. School districts that provide valuable transportation services are burdened by a flawed federal system with inefficient licensing requirements, and Congress should solve this problem by allowing states to establish regulations according to their own needs.

RESOLVED

That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas, 3rd Called Session, hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to pass legislation that would grant licensing authority for public school bus drivers to the states.

That the Texas secretary of state forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.