

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R5105 BEE-D

H.B. 1693
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Transportation
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Many motorists are cited for failing to maintain financial responsibility. The court staff must verify insurance coverage, which at this time requires the court clerks to contact the insurance company for verification of the information presented by the motorist. Many insurance companies will not confirm coverage over the telephone due to security and privacy concerns. Clerks are often on the phone for some time trying to confirm coverage, only for the insurance company to refuse to confirm coverage.

H.B. 1693 provides municipal and justice courts access to the TexasSure database for verification purposes (read-only access) to allow citations to be quickly dismissed, referred to defensive driving class or deferred adjudication, saving the motorist and the court staff a large amount of time and money. TexasSure is already accessed by the county tax offices, for the same purpose: verifying insurance coverage. Tax offices are considered agents of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, thus their access is allowed by statute. Justice and municipal courts need the same access as afforded the tax offices.

H.B. 1693 amends current law relating to access to the financial responsibility verification program by justice and municipal courts.

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 N, Chapter 601, Transportation Code, by adding Section 601.455, as follows:

Sec. 601.455. ACCESS BY COURT. (a) Authorizes a justice or municipal court to access the verification program established under Subchapter N (Financial Responsibility Verification Program) to verify financial responsibility for the purpose of court proceedings.

(b) Requires that the costs associated with accessing the verification program under this section be paid out of the county treasury by order of the commissioners court or the municipal treasury by order of the governing body of the municipality, as applicable.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.