

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3486
By: Thompson, Senfronia
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been suggested that while the statewide alert systems used by the state to locate abducted children and other missing persons are essential to disseminating information quickly to keep Texans safe and informed, the scoreboard display system used to display this information along the state's roadways is outdated and unable to be properly maintained. The displays used under this system can only show words. Images, however, can be quickly comprehended and better capture motorists' attention. Providing for the use of signs that allow for the display of images would better convey critical information in situations that require urgency. H.B. 3486 seeks to modernize the display system by requiring the Texas Department of Transportation to enter into an agreement with a private entity regarding the use of dynamic message signs that can display digital images.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 3486 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to enter into an agreement with a private entity to provide information necessary for certain statewide alert systems through a system of dynamic message signs that are located across Texas and capable of displaying digital images useful in locating a missing individual. The bill requires the agreement to generate net revenue to the state and prohibits the use of tax revenue to fund the installation and operation of the dynamic message signs. The bill authorizes TxDOT to accept gifts and grants of money, equipment, or other resources necessary to install and operate the dynamic message signs. The bill expressly does not require TxDOT to enter into an agreement if TxDOT receives notice from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration that the use of the dynamic message signs would result in the loss of federal highway funding or other punitive actions taken against the state due to noncompliance with federal laws, regulations, or policies.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.