

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 763
By: Powell
Transportation
5/28/2021
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Urban air mobility (UAM) is a new, innovative mode of transportation that will streamline and modernize the future of mobility for passengers and cargo by relying on underutilized aerial transit routes. UAM will reduce the current burden on infrastructure, decrease traffic congestion, and lower harmful emissions.

This emerging industry will involve innovative vehicle designs and system technologies, new operational procedures, and embrace the sharing and services economy to enable a novel transportation service network. The UAM industry will also involve partnering with federal, state, and local governments to effectively incorporate UAM solutions into current transportation networks. The Dallas-Fort Worth area is expected to be an early test location for UAM in 2025, as well as a hub for commercial operations and investment. However, a survey of state, local, and federal law should occur, and stakeholders should be able to provide input in order to develop a safe and efficient regulatory system for UAM to operate in the state.

S.B. 763 will create the Urban Air Mobility Advisory Committee at the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to assess the current state law and any potential changes that are needed to facilitate the development of UAM operations and infrastructure in this state. The bill also directs TxDOT to appoint committee members from across the state representing law enforcement, transportation experts, the UAM industry, local governments, and the public. After holding meetings and conducting research, the committee will make recommendations to the legislature in September 2022 so the legislature can adopt laws in 2023 for the development and regulation of UAM operations and infrastructure in 2023 and beyond.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

S.B. 763 amends current law relating to the creation of the urban air mobility advisory committee.

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 A, Chapter 21, Transportation Code, by adding Section 21.004, as follows:

Sec. 21.004. URBAN AIR MOBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE. (a) Requires the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) to appoint an advisory committee to assess current state law and any potential changes to state law that are needed to facilitate the development of urban air mobility operations and infrastructure in Texas.

(b) Requires TTC to appoint to the advisory committee members to represent diverse geographic regions of Texas, state and local law enforcement, the urban air mobility industry, transportation experts, commercial airport representatives, vertical takeoff and landing operators, local governments, and the general public.

(c) Requires the advisory committee to hold public hearings in locations across the state or via electronic means, and to receive comments through an Internet website, by mail, and by other methods, if appropriate.

(d) Requires the advisory committee, not later than September 1, 2022, to report to TTC and to the members of the legislature the committee's findings and recommendations on any changes to state law that are needed to facilitate the development of urban air mobility operations and infrastructure.

(e) Provides that the advisory committee is abolished and this section expires January 1, 2023.

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