|  |
| --- |
| BILL ANALYSIS |

|  |
| --- |
| H.B. 573 |
| By: Raymond |
| Homeland Security & Public Safety |
| Committee Report (Unamended) |

|  |
| --- |
| **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**  Currently, first responders in Texas, including police officers, firefighters, ambulance drivers, and emergency medical services personnel, must pay a driver's license fee like others in the general public. Waiving these fees would provide financial support for our first responders. H.B. 573 seeks to exempt qualifying first responders from the requirement to pay the fees for the issuance of an original or renewal driver's license. |
| **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. 573 amends the Transportation Code to exempt the following first responders from the payment of any fee for the issuance of an original or renewal driver's license if at the time of the application for the license the person submits to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) satisfactory evidence that the person is a qualifying first responder:   * a peace officer whose duties include responding rapidly to an emergency; * fire protection personnel; * a volunteer firefighter who performs firefighting duties on behalf of a political subdivision and who is not serving as a member of the legislature or holding a statewide elected office; * an ambulance driver; or * an individual certified as emergency medical services personnel by the Department of State Health Services.   H.B. 573 requires DPS to do the following with respect to the Texas Mobility Fund:   * establish a record of the amount of the waived fees that would otherwise be deposited to the credit of the fund; and * on or before the fifth workday of each month, using available funds, remit to the comptroller of public accounts for deposit to the credit of the fund general revenue in an amount equal to the amount of the waived fees in the preceding month.   H.B. 573 applies only to a driver's license application submitted on or after the bill's effective date. |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE**  September 1, 2023. |