

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 78
By: Ortega
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Several counties, including El Paso County, are currently able to impose a \$10 optional vehicle registration fee for certain purposes. Current law also allows some of these counties to seek voter approval to impose up to an additional \$10 optional vehicle registration fee, bringing the total potential optional vehicle registration fee to \$20. These fees are sent to the regional mobility authority located in that county in order to fund long-term transportation projects. El Paso County would like the ability to impose the additional \$10 optional vehicle registration fee in order to fund priority projects in the region. Statutory permission is required for El Paso County to seek voter approval for the additional vehicle registration fee. H.B. 78 seeks to allow El Paso County, subject to voter approval, to impose up to an additional \$10 fee in order to fund long-term transportation projects which are approved by the metropolitan planning organization. This additional fee would be sent to the regional mobility authority located in the county to fund the long-term transportation projects which are included in a plan adopted by the metropolitan planning organization located in the county.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 78 amends the Transportation Code to authorize the commissioners court of a county that borders the United Mexican States and contains a municipality that unilaterally created a regional mobility authority to impose an additional vehicle registration fee capped at \$10, provided that the fee is approved at a referendum election held by the commissioners court for that purpose. The bill exempts from the additional fee a vehicle that may be registered without payment of a registration fee and sets out provisions regarding the effect, removal, and collection of the fee.

H.B. 78 requires the fee revenue collected to be sent to a regional mobility authority located in the county to fund certain long-term transportation projects in the county that are included in a plan approved by the metropolitan planning organization that serves the county. The bill requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to adopt rules necessary to administer registration for a vehicle being registered in a county imposing such a fee.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.