

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1198
By: Dean
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

On March 8, 2021, Kelly Hall, a constituent in House District 7, was killed when a trailer became unhitched on a highway near Tyler, Texas. About one year earlier, Kelly's brother was killed on a Texas highway in a similar accident involving an unhitched trailer. The Department of Public Safety report for the accident that killed Mrs. Hall showed that the trailer had not been properly attached to the hitch. H.B. 1198 seeks to address the lack of general public knowledge regarding how to properly attach a trailer, how to make sure a trailer is properly attached, and general trailer safety by requiring the Texas Department of Transportation to develop and implement a public safety campaign instructing the public on properly attaching a trailer and raising awareness of the consequences of failing to do so properly.

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. 1198 amends the Transportation Code to require the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to develop and implement a public awareness campaign to promote the proper attachment of a trailer to a passenger car and raise awareness regarding the potential consequences of failing to attach a trailer properly. The bill authorizes TxDOT, in implementing the campaign, to engage in online advocacy, issue public service announcements, and distribute materials relating to the campaign. TxDOT may pay the costs of the campaign and its administration from gifts, grants, or donations, matching funds, and other funds made available for that purpose, including available TxDOT revenue.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.