

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2357  
By: Harris, Cody  
Transportation  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

More than a decade ago, plans were announced for a high-speed rail project connecting Dallas to Houston. This project was slated to run through East Texas, and eminent domain notices went out to landowners impacted by the proposed route. However, little progress has been made on this project. With operations halted, it is impossible for East Texas landowners, many of whom have received these eminent domain notices, to ascertain the true status of the project. Meanwhile, their land remains under a cloud of possible seizure which depresses land values and inhibits needed capital investment. After a decade of uncertainty, these landowners deserve transparency. H.B. 2357 seeks to require an entity that proposes a high-speed rail project to disclose certain information to the Texas Department of Transportation each year that the project is included in the Texas Rail Plan, including timelines for the project, and to provide for the posting of that information online.

### **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. 2357 amends the Transportation Code to require an entity that proposes a high-speed rail project that is reasonably expected to reach speeds of at least 110 miles per hour to submit the following information to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) each year that the project is included in the Texas Rail Plan:

- the proposed method of financing of the construction or acquisition of the project, including the following:
  - the extent to which funds for financing are currently available; and
  - for any securities to be issued:
    - the approximate terms of sale and total fixed charges of the securities;
    - whether the securities issued will be underwritten by industries to be served by the proposed line; and
    - an explanation of how the fixed charges will be met;
- a recent balance sheet;
- a present value determination of the project's full costs of the proposal;
- if construction is proposed, the costs for each year of the construction;
- a proposed schedule for completion of the project, including timeline for permitting, funding, and land acquisition;
- ridership projections and methodology;

- the proposed route;
- an organization chart of the entity's management and staff; and
- a disclosure of any current or planned foreign investment in the project.

The bill requires TxDOT to make the submitted information available to the public on its website.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.