

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 4422
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Border Security
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Since 2021, Texas has spent over \$4 billion on Operation Lone Star. Yet, the state has not studied how the modernization of transportation infrastructure can amplify the state's efforts on the border. H.B. 4422 seeks to harmonize Texas' border security efforts with the efforts to streamline the movement of commercial motor vehicles in and around Texas-Mexico border crossings. This legislation requires the Texas Department of Transportation to conduct a study on the transportation infrastructure that connects Texas-Mexico border crossings to the state highway system in an effort to increase safety and efficiency in commercial motor vehicle connectivity. The study will focus on multiple border crossings and identify strategies to strengthen border security, support law enforcement response efforts, maximize safety, reduce traffic congestion, and enhance infrastructure and road technology.

H.B. 4422 amends current law relating to a study on enhancing border security outcomes through public safety, technological, and transportation infrastructure improvements near Texas-Mexico border crossings.

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. DEFINITION. Defines "department."

SECTION 2. STUDY. (a) Requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to conduct a study on public safety, border security, and transportation infrastructure from Texas-Mexico border crossings onto the state highway system to ensure safe, efficient, and streamlined commercial motor vehicle connectivity that amplify Operation Lone Star efforts.

(b) Requires TxDOT to conduct the study in consultation with:

- (1) the Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas;
- (2) the Texas Military Department;
- (3) the Texas A&M Transportation Institute;
- (4) local law enforcement agencies near the Texas-Mexico border;
- (5) representatives of county government from at least three noncontiguous counties that are:
 - (A) adjacent to this state's international border with Mexico; or
 - (B) adjacent to a county described by Paragraph (A) of this subdivision;

(6) representatives of the transportation industry determined relevant by TxDOT; and

(7) an independent nonprofit applied research and development organization selected by TxDOT.

(c) Requires TxDOT, as part the study, to:

(1) select multiple Texas-Mexico international border crossings that serve commercial vehicles, as determined by TxDOT;

(2) analyze current transportation routes for commercial vehicles from border crossings selected under Subdivision (1) of this subsection onto the state highway system and identify ways to:

(A) strengthen border security initiatives that support Operation Lone Star or similar state security efforts;

(B) support law enforcement response efforts near border crossings to maximize oversight of border crossings, inspection of vehicles using the border crossing, and use of public safety resources;

(C) enhance transportation infrastructure and road technology near border crossings to maximize the safety of communities located near the border and people using the highways near the border and to improve transportation efficiency and commercial motor vehicle connectivity; and

(D) reduce traffic congestion along transportation routes while mitigating safety concerns;

(3) consider possible future transportation routes that will improve efficiency in the movement of commercial motor vehicles from border crossings onto the state highway system and enhance public safety, mitigate traffic congestion, and streamline commercial motor vehicle connectivity;

(4) assess current technologies used to promote border security efforts at commercial inspection facilities at or near border crossings and identify upgrades to existing technologies or alternative technologies that may improve border security efforts; and

(5) identify funding strategies and determine the amount of state money needed to improve the processing and flow of commercial motor vehicles at border crossings and improve transportation efficiency and commercial motor vehicle connectivity.

SECTION 3. REPORT. Requires TxDOT, not later than December 1, 2024, to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the legislature a written report on the findings of the study conducted under this Act and any recommendations of TxDOT. Requires that the report include a review of the anticipated effects of the security and public safety improvements recommended by the study on international trade efforts with Mexico.

SECTION 4. EXPIRATION. Provides that this Act expires January 1, 2025.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.