

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 4422  
By: Canales  
Transportation  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

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. C.S.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.

### **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**

C.S.H.B. 4422 requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in consultation with the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Texas Military Department, the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, local law enforcement agencies near the Texas-Mexico border, relevant transportation industry representatives as determined by TxDOT, and an independent nonprofit applied research and development organization selected by 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. The bill requires TxDOT to do the following as part of the study:

- select multiple Texas-Mexico international border crossings that serve commercial vehicles as determined by TxDOT;
- analyze current transportation routes for commercial vehicles from those selected border crossings onto the state highway system and identify ways to:
  - strengthen border security initiatives that support Operation Lone Star or similar state security efforts;
  - 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;

- 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 improve transportation efficiency and commercial motor vehicle connectivity; and
- reduce traffic congestion along transportation routes while mitigating safety concerns;
- 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;
- 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
- 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.

C.S.H.B. 4422 requires TxDOT to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the legislature a written report on the study findings and any TxDOT recommendations not later than December 1, 2024. The bill's provisions expire January 1, 2025.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

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

**COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 4422 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

Whereas the introduced included the Southwest Research Institute among the entities with which TxDOT is required to consult in conducting the study, the substitute does not include that institute and includes instead an independent nonprofit applied research and development organization selected by TxDOT, which was not included in the introduced. While both the introduced and the substitute require TxDOT to work in consultation with transportation industry representatives, the substitute includes a specification absent from the introduced that the representatives are determined relevant by TxDOT. The substitute also includes a specification absent from the introduced that the border crossings serving commercial vehicles selected for the study are as determined by TxDOT.

Whereas the introduced required the study to identify funding strategies and funding amounts to fill any gaps in transportation needs, the substitute requires the study instead to identify such 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.