

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1023
By: Nichols
Transportation
5/23/2023
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In accordance with previous Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) rules, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has worked to ensure that load posting signs for on-system bridges are installed within 90 days and load posting signs for off-system bridges are installed within 180 days of when a determination is made that a load restriction is necessary. A change to the bridge load posting requirements by FHWA will now require load posting signs to be installed at all on-system and off-system bridges within 30 days of when a determination is made that a load restriction is required. Texas has an inventory of more than 55,000 vehicular bridges open to public traffic. There are roughly 36,000 on-system bridges and 19,000 off-system bridges. While TxDOT is responsible for oversight and compliance with these FHWA bridge load posting requirements, TxDOT currently has no authority to install bridge load posting signs on off-system bridges, nor does TxDOT have the authority to force local governments to do so.

S.B. 1023 amends Chapter 201, Texas Transportation Code, to authorize TxDOT to install off-system bridge load posting signs as required by federal rules.

S.B. 1023 amends current law relating to the establishment and posting of the maximum loads permitted on certain bridges.

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. Amends Section 201.8035, Transportation Code, by adding Subsection (c), as follows:

(c) Authorizes the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to post a notice required under Subsection (b) (relating to requiring a commissioners court or governing body to post notices on the road or highway approaching a bridge that state the maximum load for the bridge) for a bridge under the jurisdiction of a county or a municipality if TxDOT is required or authorized under federal law to post the notice. Requires that the notice be posted in accordance with federal law.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.