

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 2200
By: Hancock
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Safety service patrols (SSPs), sometimes referred to as courtesy patrols, roadside assistance programs, roadside safety patrols, highway emergency response operators, Tow and Go, or motorist assistance programs, are operated by contractors, law enforcement, private companies, and tollway authorities. SSPs operating on highways and arterial roadways in Texas provide free traffic management and support transportation departments in clearing minor crashes from area roadways and assisting motorists in need. Specific services offered by SSPs vary, but their common goal is to ensure the safety of the traveling public by minimizing the effect that incidents and stalled vehicles have on the operation of the transportation network. Texas state law does not currently permit TxDOT to use sponsorships for SSP programs. S.B. 2200 seeks to address this issue by allowing companies to give TxDOT money to run these programs in exchange for displaying the sponsor's logo on the roadside assistance vehicles.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Transportation Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 2200 amends the Transportation Code to authorize the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to enter into an agreement with a donor to publicly acknowledge donations made to TxDOT and prohibit the public acknowledgment from containing comparative or qualitative descriptions of the donor's products, services, facilities, or companies. If a person makes a donation to TxDOT's roadside assistance and safety service patrol program, TxDOT may post an acknowledgment of the donation on a vehicle or equipment TxDOT uses for the program. The bill authorizes the Texas Transportation Commission to adopt rules for the acknowledgment of donations.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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