

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
89R10553 AJZ-D

S.B. 1598  
By: Hagenbuch  
Transportation  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The bill amends Section 550.065 of the Transportation Code, relating to the release of collision report information. Law enforcement officers prepare vehicle collision reports, and the local law enforcement agency and TxDOT retain the report. This section of code governs the release of information from the collision report, and the purpose of the bill is to promote use of collision report information for law enforcement investigatory purposes.

Vehicle information, such as collision reports, can serve as an extremely useful tool when solving crimes. The bill expressly articulates that collision report information may be used for law enforcement investigatory purposes (in addition to current collision prevention purposes).

Additionally, the bill clarifies that collision report information may be released to "a person acting on behalf" of the law enforcement agency who is authorized by contract to obtain the information. In some cases, a law enforcement agency will contract with a service provider who offers records management, digitization, and dissemination of collision reports to authorized requestors on the agency's behalf—rather than managing this function with an internal employee. While the contracted service provider should be considered "an agent" of the law enforcement agency authorized to obtain collision report information, in practical application, the term "agent" has proven confusing and subject to differing interpretations.

Finally, the bill clarifies that a vehicle identification number (VIN) and specific collision information related to that vehicle may be released by a governmental entity to a contracted law enforcement service provider. A VIN is not confidential under Section 550.065 of the Transportation Code, but the statute refers only to the department releasing the VIN, creating confusion as to whether governmental entities may also release a VIN and specific collision information to a contracted service provider.

As proposed, S.B. 1598 amends current law relating to the release of motor vehicle collision report information.

### **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 550.065, Transportation Code, by amending Subsections (b), (c), and (f) and adding Subsection (e-1), as follows:

(b) Provides that, except as provided by certain subsections, collision report information is privileged and for the confidential use of certain entities, including an agency of the United States, this state, or a local government of this state that has use for the information for purposes of collision prevention or a criminal investigation conducted by a law enforcement agency, rather than for collision prevention purposes.

(c) Requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) or governmental entity, on written request and payment of any required fee, to release the information to;

(1) makes no changes to this subdivision;

(2) the law enforcement agency that employs the peace officer who investigated the collision and sent the information to TxDOT, including a person acting on behalf, rather than an agent, of the law enforcement agency who is authorized by contract to obtain the information;

(3) makes no changes to this subdivision; or

(4) any person directly concerned in the collision or having a proper interest therein, including certain persons, including an employee or authorized representative of a vehicle storage facility, as defined by Section 2303.002 (Definitions), Occupations Code, that stored a vehicle involved in the collision, rather than the accident.

(e-1) Authorizes the governmental entity, in addition to the information required to be released under Subsection (c), to release a vehicle identification number and specific collision information relating to that vehicle to a person described by Subsection (c)(2).

(f) Provides that TxDOT or the governmental entity when releasing information under certain provisions including Subsection (e-1) is prohibited from taking and is required to take certain actions. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Provides that, to the extent of any conflict, this Act prevails over another Act of the 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, relating to nonsubstantive additions to and corrections in enacted codes.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2025.