

By: Canales

H.B. No. 3514

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the operation of a program by the Texas Department of Transportation to allow a real property owner to plant or replace vegetation in a right-of-way.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 202, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 202.0585 to read as follows:

Sec. 202.0585. VEGETATION IN RIGHT-OF-WAY. (a) Subject to Subsections (b) and (c), the department by rule shall develop and implement a program to allow an owner of real property abutting or adjoining property acquired by the department for the right-of-way of a road in the state highway system to:

(1) plant vegetation or replace existing vegetation in the right-of-way if the owner determines that the new vegetation will enhance the aesthetic appeal of the property; or

(2) replace existing vegetation in the right-of-way if the vegetation to be replaced reduces the visibility of the property.

(b) The program may authorize an owner of real property described by Subsection (a) to plant or replace existing vegetation only in the right-of-way, including the outer separation, located within 500 feet of the property.

(c) An owner of real property who plants or replaces vegetation in the right-of-way in accordance with this section:

1           (1) is responsible for all costs associated with the  
2 planting or replacement of vegetation;

3           (2) may use only vegetation adapted to local  
4 conditions;

5           (3) must contract with a landscaping professional  
6 approved by the department to plant or replace the vegetation; and

7           (4) may not interfere with any public utility  
8 infrastructure located in the right-of-way.

9           (d) The rules adopted by the department under Subsection (a)  
10 may not impair or relinquish the state's right to use the  
11 right-of-way when needed to construct or reconstruct the road for  
12 which it was acquired.

13           (e) Use by the owner of adjoining or abutting real property  
14 under this section is not abandonment of the right-of-way by the  
15 department.

16           (f) This section does not require a utility, as defined by  
17 Section [203.091](#), that performs work in the right-of-way to replace  
18 vegetation or provide compensation to an owner of real property for  
19 replacing vegetation if the removal of vegetation is necessary to  
20 perform the work.

21           SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.