

By: Blanco

S.B. No. 2022

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the denial of the registration of a motor vehicle based on certain information provided by a county to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles; authorizing a fee.

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

SECTION 1. Section 502.010, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Subsection (k) to read as follows:

(k) This section does not apply to a county described by Section 502.0101(a).

SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 502, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 502.0101 to read as follows:

Sec. 502.0101. SCOFFLAW IN CERTAIN COUNTIES. (a) This section applies only to a county that:

(1) borders the United Mexican States; and

(2) contains a municipality with a population of more than 500,000.

(b) In this section:

(1) a fine, fee, or tax is considered past due if it is unpaid 90 or more days after the date it is due; and

(2) registration of a motor vehicle includes renewal of the registration of the vehicle.

(c) Except as otherwise provided by this section, a county assessor-collector may refuse to register a motor vehicle if:

(1) the assessor-collector receives information from

1 the Department of Public Safety driver's license division or the
2 department that the owner of the vehicle:

3 (A) owes the county money for a fine, fee, or tax
4 that is past due; or

5 (B) failed to appear in connection with a
6 complaint, citation, information, or indictment in a court in the
7 county in which a criminal proceeding is pending against the owner;
8 and

9 (2) the identity of the owner of the vehicle has been
10 confirmed:

11 (A) through the Department of Public Safety based
12 on the owner's name, driver's license number, and date of birth; or

13 (B) through the department's motor vehicle
14 database by the last four digits of the owner's social security
15 number, last four digits of the vehicle identification number, and
16 license plate number.

17 (d) If the department or the Department of Public Safety
18 determines that a county assessor-collector is authorized to refuse
19 to register a vehicle under Subsection (c):

20 (1) the vehicle may not be registered through an
21 online system designated by the department under Section
22 [520.005](#)(d);

23 (2) the department shall refuse to register the
24 vehicle through an online system that is available to the public;
25 and

26 (3) the department or the Department of Public Safety
27 shall notify the county assessor-collector that the owner of the

1 vehicle owes the county money for a fine, fee, or tax that is past
2 due.

3 (e) Information that is provided to make a determination
4 under Subsection (c)(1) and that concerns the past due status of a
5 fine or fee imposed for a criminal offense and owed to the county
6 expires on the second anniversary of the date the information was
7 provided and may not be used to refuse registration after that
8 date. Once information about a past due fine or fee is provided
9 under Subsection (f), subsequent information about other fines or
10 fees that are imposed for a criminal offense and that become past
11 due before the second anniversary of the date the initial
12 information was provided may not be used, either before or after the
13 second anniversary of that date, to refuse registration under this
14 section unless the motor vehicle is no longer subject to refusal of
15 registration because of notice received under Subsection (g).

16 (f) The department shall develop and implement a system
17 through which a county may provide information to the department
18 necessary to make a determination under Subsection (d). The
19 department may charge a fee for the use of the system. The system
20 developed under this section must:

21 (1) verify in real time the information described by
22 Subsection (c)(1) by searching against the vehicle owner's driver's
23 license number, date of birth, or other information provided to the
24 department; and

25 (2) be used for the registration of a vehicle
26 conducted through the department's Internet website.

27 (g) A county that provides information under Subsection (f)

1 shall immediately notify the department regarding a person for whom
2 the county assessor-collector or the department has refused to
3 register a motor vehicle on:

4 (1) the person's payment or other means of discharge,
5 including a waiver, of the past due fine, fee, or tax; or

6 (2) perfection of an appeal of the case contesting
7 payment of the fine, fee, or tax.

8 (h) After notice is received under Subsection (g), the
9 county assessor-collector or the department may not refuse to
10 register the motor vehicle under Subsection (c) or (d).

11 (i) Except as otherwise provided by this section, a county
12 may impose an additional reimbursement fee of \$20 to:

13 (1) a person who fails to pay a fine, fee, or tax to the
14 county by the date on which the fine, fee, or tax is due; or

15 (2) a person who fails to appear in connection with a
16 complaint, citation, information, or indictment in a court in which
17 a criminal proceeding is pending against the owner.

18 (j) An additional reimbursement fee imposed under
19 Subsection (i) may be used only to reimburse the county
20 assessor-collector for providing services under this section.

21 (k) A municipal court judge or justice of the peace who has
22 jurisdiction over the underlying offense may waive an additional
23 reimbursement fee imposed under Subsection (i) if the judge or
24 justice makes a finding that the defendant is economically unable
25 to pay the fee or that good cause exists for the waiver.

26 (l) If a county assessor-collector is notified that the
27 court having jurisdiction over the underlying offense has waived

1 the past due fine or fee, including a reimbursement fee, due to the
2 defendant's indigency, the county may not impose an additional
3 reimbursement fee on the defendant under Subsection (i).

4 (m) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the
5 department:

6 (1) may collect from the Department of Public Safety
7 information necessary to implement this section, including a
8 vehicle owner's driver's license number or date of birth; and

9 (2) may not disclose any personal identifying
10 information collected under this section, including a vehicle
11 owner's driver's license number or date of birth.

12 (n) A county assessor-collector may not refuse to register a
13 motor vehicle under this section if the assessor-collector receives
14 information that the owner of the vehicle has an income that is less
15 than 250 percent of the applicable income level established by the
16 federal poverty guidelines.

17 (o) This section does not apply to the registration of a
18 motor vehicle under Section 501.0234, unless the vehicle is titled
19 and registered in the name of a person who holds a general
20 distinguishing number.

21 SECTION 3. The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles shall
22 implement the system required by Section 502.0101(f),
23 Transportation Code, as added by this Act, not later than September
24 1, 2026.

25 SECTION 4. Section 502.0101, Transportation Code, as added
26 by this Act, applies only to an application for motor vehicle
27 registration or registration renewal received by the Texas

1 Department of Motor Vehicles on or after the effective date of this
2 Act. An application for registration or registration renewal that
3 was received before the effective date of this Act is governed by
4 the law in effect on the date the application was received, and the
5 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

6 SECTION 5. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) of this
7 section, this Act takes effect September 1, 2026.

8 (b) Section 3 of this Act takes effect September 1, 2025.