

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1467
By: Watson
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is authorized to enter into an agreement with one or more private entities to operate customer service centers and collect tolls for toll projects that are part of the state highway system. The parties further note that, under this authorization, TxDOT currently contracts with a private vendor to collect tolls for highways throughout Texas using an electronic transponder commonly known as a "TxTag." However, according to the parties, there is only one TxTag customer service center where TxTag customers can pay their bill or speak to a representative in person. The parties contend that entering into additional contracts with vendors such as grocery and convenience stores to assist with TxTag customer service and toll collection would provide more convenient options for TxTag customers who prefer to make in-person payments and that such vendors would be more likely to enter into such contracts if there were reasonable incentive to do so. S.B. 1467 seeks to address this issue by encouraging vendors to contract with TxDOT to provide customer and toll collection services to TxTag customers.

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. 1467 amends the Transportation Code to authorize a person that enters into an agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for purposes of providing services for a customer to pay an amount on an electronic toll collection customer account at a location other than a TxDOT office to collect from the customer a service charge in addition to the amount paid on the account. The bill requires the Texas Transportation Commission by rule to set the maximum amount of the service charge and caps the amount at \$3 for a payment transaction.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.