

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2461
By: Pickett
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note a need to update certain processes relating to motor vehicle registration to address confusion and better reflect current practices. H.B. 2461 seeks to provide for such updates.

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 this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2461 repeals Transportation Code provisions relating to the designation of a registration period by a person who owns more than one motor vehicle or trailer and relating to the calculation of additional vehicle registration fee amounts retained by a county tax assessor-collector. The bill amends the Transportation Code to change the frequency of the fee for an extended registration of a commercial fleet vehicle from an annual fee to a one-time fee and requires such a fee and a one-time license plate manufacturing fee for the extended registration of commercial fleet vehicles to be deposited to the credit of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) fund.

H.B. 2461 revises the conditions under which a vehicle registration application is submitted by an owner of a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer through a county assessor-collector other than the assessor-collector of the county in which the owner resides. The bill establishes that if the office of that assessor-collector is closed or may be closed for a protracted period of time the application is submitted through a county assessor-collector who is willing to accept the application. The bill removes provisions establishing procedures for registering a vehicle if the county in which the owner resides is declared a disaster area. The bill establishes that a receipt for the renewed registration of a vehicle generated by an online registration system approved by TxDMV is proof of the vehicle's registration until the 31st day after the date of renewal on the receipt. The bill waives the fees for a replacement vehicle registration insignia and a replacement license plate if the county assessor-collector determines that the vehicle owner paid for a prior replacement registration insignia for the same registration period, or for a prior replacement license plate for the same vehicle, respectively, and the insignia or plate was mailed to the owner but not received by the owner.

H.B. 2461 authorizes the rules adopted by TxDMV to carry out the International Registration Plan to require an applicant to register under the federal unified carrier registration system or a

similar federal registration program that replaces that system before the applicant applies for registration under the International Registration Plan.

H.B. 2461 changes the classification of license plates issued to certain farm vehicles, drilling and construction equipment, and oil well servicing and drilling machinery from specialty to distinguishing and prohibits a distinguishing license plate from being renewed by an owner of a farm trailer or farm semitrailer with a gross weight of more than 4,000 pounds but not more than 34,000 pounds that is used for certain purposes unless the vehicle's owner provides a registration number issued by the comptroller of public accounts or the vehicle is owned by a farmers' cooperative society or a marketing association. The bill clarifies that a commercial farm motor vehicle registration may not be issued or renewed unless the vehicle's owner provides a registration number issued by the comptroller.

H.B. 2461 changes the day a county assessor-collector is required to credit certain amounts to the county road and bridge fund from each Monday to each Tuesday. The bill revises the process by which vehicle registration fees are deposited by a county assessor-collector into an interest-bearing account by authorizing such a county assessor-collector to deposit those fees in accordance with statutory provisions relating to the general disposition of vehicle registration fees in such an account or certificate in the county depository and to send the fees to TxDMV not later than the 34th day after the date the fees are due under those provisions. The bill removes provisions relating to depositing fees collected under statutory provisions relating to the financial responsibility program.

H.B. 2461 includes a motor home among the vehicles eligible to be registered with a veterans with disabilities specialty license plate. The bill removes the authorization for a county assessor-collector collecting vehicle registration fees on behalf of a county that has been declared as a disaster area to retain the commission for fees collected and specifies that the authorization for a county assessor-collector collecting such fees on behalf of a county assessor-collector whose office is closed applies to an office that may be closed. The bill includes in the definition of "apportioned license plate" for vehicle registration purposes a license plate issued in lieu of a motor bus license plate to a motor carrier in Texas who proportionally registers a vehicle owned or leased by the carrier in one or more other states.

H.B. 2461 amends the Natural Resources Code to make conforming changes.

H.B. 2461 repeals Sections 502.1585 and 502.1981, Transportation Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.