

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1698
By: Raney
Transportation
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Traffic-related congestion and mobility are growing concerns in the Bryan-College Station region, where congestion has increased by an average of nearly five percent each year for the last decade. A recent survey of College Station residents indicates that managing traffic congestion should be a very high priority in terms of city services, but there still remains a significant gap between city service importance and quality of available services in the area. Furthermore, the Bryan-College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization has identified several billion dollars worth of transportation needs for the area over the next 25 years. However, the organization only receives roughly \$13 million each year to address these problems. C.S.H.B. 1698 seeks to remedy this situation by providing for the imposition of an additional vehicle registration fee to be used for funding long-term transportation projects.

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

C.S.H.B. 1698 amends the Transportation Code to authorize any county that is part of a regional mobility authority to impose an additional county vehicle registration fee to be used for funding long-term transportation projects in the county. That fee must be approved by a majority vote at a referendum election ordered and held by the county commissioners court for that purpose, except in a county with existing authority to impose such a fee.

C.S.H.B. 1698 extends the authorization for a county commissioners court to increase its additional county vehicle registration fee to an amount above \$10 but capped at \$20 if approved at a referendum election to all counties eligible to impose such a fee. If a county that borders the United Mexican States and has a population of more than 250,000 has been authorized to increase the fee, 50 percent of the additional revenue collected is required to be sent to the county treasurer to be credited to the county road and bridge fund. That requirement does not apply to a county in which a vehicle is required to pass an emissions inspection.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1698 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The original authorized a county that has a population of more than 190,000 and not more than 1.5 million that is coterminous with a regional mobility authority to impose the additional county vehicle registration fee upon voter approval in a referendum election, whereas the substitute authorizes any county that is part of a regional mobility authority to impose the fee.

The substitute includes provisions absent from the original that do the following:

- extend the authorization to increase the additional county vehicle registration fee to an amount above \$10 but capped at \$20 if approved at a referendum election to all counties eligible to impose such a fee; and
- provide for 50 percent of the additional revenue from an increased fee imposed by a county that borders the United Mexican States and has a population of more than 250,000, other than a county in which a vehicle is required to pass an emission inspection, to be credited to the county road and bridge fund.