

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1308
By: Blanco
Transportation
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Trade with Mexico is a growing component of the Texas economy. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, trade between Mexico and Texas totaled almost half a trillion dollars in 2019, supporting nearly 400,000 jobs and thousands of small businesses and manufacturers. While the ports of entry between Texas and Mexico are crucial to the state's economy, increased traffic and multiple inspection points are contributing to significant delays at the border. These delays in border crossing times affect the United States and the Texas economy as the costs of transportation and trade increase, industry competitiveness and economic development decrease, and local communities are affected. C.S.S.B. 1308 seeks to address this issue by requiring the Department of Public Safety and the Texas Department of Transportation to conduct a study on the benefits of using certain motor vehicle technologies to alleviate traffic congestion at certain ports of entry in Texas.

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.S.B. 1308 requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Department of Public Safety (DPS), in consultation with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute and the appropriate federal agencies, to jointly conduct a study on the following:

- the potential benefits of using automated driving systems, connected driving systems, and other emerging technologies to alleviate motor vehicle traffic congestion at ports of entry between Texas and the United Mexican States; and
- the overall impact of using automated driving systems, connected driving systems, and other emerging technologies on the transportation industry workforce and the broader Texas economy, including the effects on driver and public safety.

The bill requires TxDOT and DPS jointly to submit a report on the results of the study to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the legislature not later than January 1, 2023. The bill's provisions expire September 1, 2023.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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

COMPARISON OF SENATE ENGROSSED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.S.B. 1308 may differ from the engrossed in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the engrossed and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute includes a requirement absent from the engrossed for the study to include the overall impact of using automated driving systems, connected driving systems, and other emerging technologies on the broader Texas economy.