

SUBJECT: Use of flashing lights on emergency, other vehicles

COMMITTEE: Transportation — favorable, with amendments

VOTE: 7 ayes — Alexander, Bosse, Alonzo, Clemons, Edwards, Moreno, Siebert

0 nays

2 absent — Price, Uher

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — None

On — Charles Graham, Texas Department of Public Safety

DIGEST: HB 1830 would specify what type of vehicles may display and operate flashing red, blue, white or amber emergency lighting on public streets.

HB 1830, as amended, would eliminate a requirement that emergency vehicles equipped with alternately flashing red lights be police vehicles and would allow them to be any kind of emergency vehicles. These emergency vehicles could have rotating red, blue, amber or white lights.

Rotating or alternately flashing red lighting could be used only on a school bus, a church bus, or an authorized emergency vehicle. A tow truck, while under the direction of a law enforcement officer at the scene of an accident or while hooking up to a disabled vehicle in the roadway, could use rotating or alternately flashing amber lighting. Rotating or alternately flashing blue lighting could be used only by authorized emergency vehicles.

Rotating lights would be added to the current prohibitions against vehicles equipped with beacons, flashing and alternating lights. Persons could not operate motor vehicles that *display* these prohibited lights rather than vehicles that are equipped with them.

HB 1830 would take effect September 1, 1995.

HB 1830  
House Research Organization  
page 2

NOTES: The committee amended the bill to add amber and white to the lights that can be used by some emergency vehicles and to allow remove authorization for tow trucks to use white lights.