

SUBJECT: Lease of computer equipment by county tax assessor-collectors

COMMITTEE: Transportation — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — Alexander, Siebert, Y. Davis, Edwards, Hamric, Hawley, Hill, Noriega, Uher
0 nays

WITNESSES: For — Luanne Caraway, Nelda Wells Spears, Tax Assessor-Collectors Association
Against — None
On — Darrel Hunt, Texas Department of Transportation

DIGEST: HB 2004 would allow the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to lease equipment to a county for use by the county tax assessor-collector in operating the county's automated vehicle registration and title system. The county could install the equipment in an office of the county or of an agent of the county, but the equipment would remain the property of TxDOT and would have to be used primarily for the registration and title system.

Under the agreement, TxDOT would have to charge the county an amount not less than the cost of providing the equipment and related services. Money collected under the lease would be credited to the state highway fund.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 2004 would allow counties to improve title and registration processing in an efficient and affordable manner. TxDOT requires counties to use a specific computer system to process titles and registrations. Many counties cannot afford to buy new equipment to meet these demands. Leasing equipment from TxDOT is the best option for counties with limited budgets to meet TxDOT requirements. The bill is necessary because counties do not have the statutory authority to lease equipment from the state.

Many counties cannot process titles and registrations efficiently because they do not have enough computer equipment to handle all requests. For example, much of the work done by county substations, private title services, and other alternative locations is recorded manually at first and entered into a computer at a central office later. Leasing equipment would increase the number of computers available for processing, eliminating duplication of efforts and providing customers with better service at alternative locations throughout counties.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition.