

SUBJECT: Vehicle registration fee to fund the automated title and registration system

COMMITTEE: Transportation — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 7 ayes — Alexander, Y. Davis, Edwards, Hamric, Hill, Noriega, Uher  
0 nays  
2 absent — Siebert, Hawley

WITNESSES: For — None  
Against — None  
On — Darrel Hunt, Texas Department of Transportation

DIGEST: CSHB 3014 would add a fee of \$1 to the cost of vehicle registrations in counties that have implemented the new automated registration and title system of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The fee would be used by TxDOT to operate and maintain the automated system, to provide for automated production of registration insignia, and to provide for self-service registration at county tax assessor-collector offices and at off-site registration locations. TxDOT would be required to adopt rules governing the use of an automated registration process.

The bill would take effect September 1, 1999.

SUPPORTERS SAY: An automated title and registration system would be more efficient for motorists to obtain and renew vehicle titles and registrations. Automated systems in other states have greatly reduced the turnaround time for customers. The automated system would work especially well at kiosks in shopping malls and other off-site locations, where motorists could register through credit card payments in a convenient and efficient manner.

An automated system would be effective against theft and fraud. Criminals have stolen pre-printed vehicle registration books and produced fraudulent registration documents to trade on the black market. An automated system would produce registrations much more difficult to steal or reproduce.

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The fee would have a negligible impact on motorists while providing an initial \$8.6 million to operate and maintain the system, according to the fiscal note. Only motorists in counties where the system was functioning would be charged. There would be no impact on general revenue.

OPPONENTS  
SAY:

No apparent opposition.

NOTES:

The committee substitute would restrict the collection of the fee to counties where the automated title and registration system has been implemented.