

**SUBJECT:** Advisory committees for transportation agencies

**COMMITTEE:** Transportation — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — Alexander, Siebert, Edwards, Hamric, Hawley, Hill, Noriega, Uher  
0 nays  
1 absent — Y. Davis

**WITNESSES:** None

**BACKGROUND:** Government Code, chapter 2110 describes the regulations for establishing state agency advisory committees. Sec. 2110.004 requires reimbursement for advisory committee members to be prescribed only through the general appropriations act or the budget execution process.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 3716 would allow several agencies within the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to establish advisory committees to advise the agency on any matters within its jurisdiction. The bill would grant this authority to the Texas Transportation Commission, the Texas Turnpike Authority, the Texas Motor Vehicle Commission, and the Texas Automobile Theft Prevention Authority.

An agency creating an advisory committee under this bill would not have to adopt rules stating the purpose of the committee, describing the task of the committee, and describing the manner in which the committee would report to the agency, if the committee was established for a specific and immediate need and if it was dissolved before the first anniversary of the date it was created. Advisory committee members could not receive compensation for their work on a committee. However, the committee members, except for those serving under the Automobile Theft Prevention Authority, would be entitled to reasonable reimbursement for expenses incurred for committee work.

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

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

Several TxDOT agencies have created advisory committees by rule. These committees are useful for providing timely advice on specific problems. For example, the Automobile Theft Prevention Authority has a Border Studies Committee that advises the authority on measures to prevent the movement of stolen cars across the Texas-Mexico border. Transportation agencies need the statutory authority to establish advisory committees to ensure that agencies may use these committees without fear of violating state law.

The bill specifically would prohibit compensation for individuals who served on the advisory committees. Reimbursement for the expenses of committee members would be tied to the appropriations process, so the Legislature would have control over these expenditures.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.

**NOTES:**

The committee substitute made conforming and nonsubstantive changes to the original bill.

The companion bill, SB 865 by Lucio, has been referred to the Senate State Affairs Committee's Infrastructure Subcommittee.