

- SUBJECT:** Registration requirements for border-zone commercial vehicles
- COMMITTEE:** Transportation — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Pickett, Phillips, Y. Davis, Guillen, Harper-Brown, McClendon, Merritt, T. Smith, W. Smith
- 0 nays
- 2 absent — Callegari, Dunnam
- WITNESSES:** For — Les Findeisen, Texas Motor Transportation Association
- Against — None
- On — Rebecca David, Texas Department of Transportation; David Palmer, Texas Department of Public Safety
- BACKGROUND:** Transportation Code, sec. 648.101 exempts foreign-owned or controlled commercial vehicles from Texas vehicle registration laws while they are operating in a commercial zone along the Texas-Mexico border. In order to qualify for this exemption, foreign vehicles must remain in Texas no longer than one or two days, be registered in their country or state of origin, satisfy financial responsibility requirements, and originate from a country or state that provides the same registration exemption to vehicles registered in Texas.
- DIGEST:** HB 782 would require Texas-based leasing companies that operate along the border to register in Texas vehicles leased to foreign carriers. A foreign commercial motor vehicle controlled, but not owned, by a person or entity that was not a citizen or resident of the United States would not be exempt from registration.
- Commercial vehicles registered in Canadian provinces would be exempt from Texas registration laws in a border commercial zone if those provinces had reciprocal exemption for Texas vehicles.
- The bill would take effect September 1, 2009.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 782 would remove the burden of having to comply with complicated vehicle registration exemption requirements from truckers who transport goods across the border on trailers they do not own. Vehicle owners would be responsible for ensuring that their vehicles met the requirements for exemption from Texas registration laws. Foreign truckers no longer would be penalized for pulling a leased trailer that did not comply with Texas registration laws. The owners of Texas-based leasing facilities who lease the vehicles that they own to foreign motor carriers would be responsible for keeping their trailers properly registered in Texas.

The bill would encourage trade by easing the flow of goods across the Texas-Mexico border. More truckers would be inclined to transport cargo if they did not have to worry about penalties associated with leased trailers that did not meet Texas registration exemption requirements.

This bill would clarify the intent of HB 313 by Pickett, enacted by the 80th Legislature, which set requirements for exemption from Texas registration for commercial vehicles operating along the Texas-Mexico border.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.