

- SUBJECT:** Grants for natural gas stations within the Clean Transportation Triangle
- COMMITTEE:** Environmental Regulation — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Harless, Márquez, Isaac, Kacal, Lewis, Reynolds, E. Thompson, C. Turner, Villalba
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jennifer Brown Emerson, Clean Energy; Teddy Carter, Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners Association; Jim Dow, Pioneer Natural Resources; Doug Dubois, Jr., Texas Food and Fuel Association; Liza Firmin, Chesapeake Energy; Stephanie Gibson, Texas Retailers Association; Ami Hooper, League of Women Voters of Texas; Adam Mathews, IESI Progressive Waste Solutions; Mari Ruckel, Texas Oil and Gas Association; Stewart Snider, League of Women Voters of Texas; David Weinberg, Texas League of Conservation Voters)
- Against — None
- On — David Brymer, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (*Registered, but did not testify:* Cyrus Reed, Sierra Club)
- BACKGROUND:** SB 385 by Williams, enacted by the 82nd Legislature in 2011, established the Clean Transportation Triangle, a network of natural gas vehicle fueling stations along the interstate highways connecting Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, and Fort Worth. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality was authorized to use Texas Emission Reduction Program (TERP) funds to award grants for the construction of publicly accessible natural gas fueling stations.
- State highways within the triangle, which includes populated areas such as Bryan-College Station, are ineligible to receive the grants. Significant population growth and increasing transportation needs are expected within the area defined by the triangle. Commercial vehicles traveling between the nonattainment areas on interstate highways also travel on state highways.

SB 20, also enacted by the 82nd Legislature, also created the Clean Transportation Triangle program and contained duplicative language. SB 385 was enacted after SB 20 and therefore guides the program.

DIGEST:

CSHB 1115 would define “state highway system” and “United States highway system.” The bill would allow TCEQ to offer grants for construction of publicly accessible natural gas fueling stations along state highways within the triangular area defined by the interstate highways connecting Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and San Antonio.

Grant applicants would be required to certify during the grant application process that they were in compliance with the laws, rules, and requirements regarding the taxation of the fuel they intended to provide.

The bill would repeal Chapter 589 (SB 20), Acts of the 82nd Legislature.

The bill would take effect on September 1, 2013.