

**SUBJECT:** Allowing El Paso County to impose additional vehicle registration fee

**COMMITTEE:** Transportation — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 13 ayes — Canales, E. Thompson, Ashby, Bucy, Davis, Harris, Landgraf, Lozano, Martinez, Ortega, Perez, Rogers, Smithee

0 nays

**WITNESSES:** For — Sal Alonzo, El Paso County; Eduardo Calvo, El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Guadalupe Cuellar, City of El Paso; Adam Haynes, Conference of Urban Counties; Daniel Collins, County of El Paso; Thamara Narvaez, Harris County Commissioners Court; Ray Sullivan, HNTB; Tracey Borders, The Associated General Contractors of Texas Highway, Heavy, Utilities and Industrial Branch)

Against — Terri Hall, Texas TURF, Texans for Toll-free Highways; Don Dixon; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Matt Long, Fredericksburg Tea Party of Texas)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Roland Luna and Clint Thompson, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles)

**BACKGROUND:** Transportation Code sec. 502.402 allows certain counties that border Mexico and have a population over 250,000 to impose an additional vehicle registration fee of up to \$10, the revenues of which are sent to the regional mobility authority located in the county.

Some have called for allowing El Paso County to impose an additional vehicle registration fee, after receiving voter approval, to fund long-term priority transportation projects in the region.

**DIGEST:** HB 156 would allow certain counties to impose an additional vehicle registration fee of up to \$10 if approved by a majority of the qualified voters of the county at an election. The fee would be in addition to a fee

imposed under Transportation Code sec. 502.402.

The bill would apply to certain counties that bordered Mexico and contained a municipality that unilaterally created a regional mobility authority (El Paso County).

Revenue from the fee would have to be sent to the regional mobility authority to fund long-term transportation projects that were consistent with purposes specified in the Texas Constitution and included in a plan approved by the metropolitan planning organization that served the county.

The fee could take effect and be removed in accordance with current law authorizing optional county registration fees. The fee would be collected for a vehicle when other fees were collected. A vehicle exempt from vehicle registration fees also could be registered without payment of the additional fee.

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles would have to adopt rules to administer the additional registration fee.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2021.