

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

C.S.S.B. 517
By: Bivins
Education
4-3-97
Committee Report (Substituted)

DIGEST

Currently, Texas law does not state whether or not 15 passenger vans may be used to transport students. Some school districts may be unclear about the legality of using 15 passenger vans to transport students on certain routes. This bill requires school buses to be used for school bus routes that have 15 or more students and authorizes the use of passenger vans for routes that have fewer than 15 students.

PURPOSE

As proposed, C.S.S.B. 517 requires school buses to be used for school bus routes that have 15 or more students and authorizes passenger vans to be used for routes that have fewer than 15 students.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 34.003, Education Code, by amending Subsections (b) and (c) and adding Subsections (d)-(e), to provide that only school buses or motor buses may be used to transport 15 or more, rather than 10 or more, students. Deletes a provision requiring school buses or motor buses to be chartered from motor bus companies, or district-owned buses meeting the safety standards prescribed for vehicles used by motor bus companies. Provides that passenger cars or passenger vans may be used to transport fewer than 15, rather than 10, students. Requires the operator of the vehicle to ensure certain conditions apply in all circumstances in which passenger cars or passenger vans are used to transport students. Defines "passenger van" and "motor bus." Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 34.004, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 34.004. **STANDING CHILDREN.** Prohibits a school district from requiring or allowing a child to stand on a school bus or passenger van that is in motion.

SECTION 3. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 1997-1998 school year.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

SECTION 1.

Amends SECTION 1 to delete the heading regarding operation of school buses. Deletes proposed changes to Subsection (a). Deletes proposed Subsections (d) and (e), establishing responsibilities of the operator of a passenger van or passenger car. Redesignates proposed Subsections (f) and (g), regarding the definition of "passenger van" and "motor bus" as Subsections (d) and (e).