

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 88
By: West
Criminal Justice
2-13-97
As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, in Texas, a person who completes an approved basic driver's education course can obtain a fully privileged license as young as age 16. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, drivers 16 and 17 years of age have more than twice the average number of fatal accidents in their first year of driving and have more than four times as many accidents per mile driven as do experienced adult drivers. Many states are adopting a graduated driver's licensing program to help the novice driver slowly gain knowledge, skill, and experience over a period of time under controlled conditions. States which have adopted a graduated licensing program, including California, Maryland and Oregon, have reported a 5 to 16 percent reduction in accidents for drivers aged 15 to 17. The goal of S.B. 88 is to reduce the number of fatal accidents caused by juvenile drivers by establishing a graduated licensing program in Texas.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 88 outlines the provisions relating to a graduated driver's licensing program.

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 521.001(3), Transportation Code, to provide that the term "driver's license" includes an immediate license. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 521.123, Transportation Code, to set forth terms that require the Department of Public Safety (department) to redesignate each original, renewed, or duplicate driver's license issued by the department to a person under 18 years of age. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 521.203, Transportation Code, to prohibit the department from issuing a Class A or B driver's license to a person under 18 years of age unless the person has held an intermediate or hardship license for one year before the application date, completed a driver training course approved by the Texas Education Agency, and is ineligible under Section 521.204(b).

SECTION 4. (a) Amends Section 521.204, Transportation Code, to conform to Section 25, Chapter 1009, to set forth the terms by which the department may place restrictions on a minor attempting to obtain a driver's license and to make a conforming change.

(b) Repealer: Section 25, Chapter 1009, Acts of the 74th Legislature, Regular Session, 1995.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 521.222(c), Transportation Code, to provide that the minimum age of a person accompanying the holder of an instruction permit to operate a motor vehicle on the highway is 21 rather than 18 years of age.

SECTION 6. Chapter 521K, Transportation Code, by adding Section 521.2221, as follows:

Sec. 521.2221. INTERMEDIATE LICENSE. Sets forth the terms by which the department is authorized to issue an intermediate license to a person.

SECTION 7. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 8. Effective date: January 1, 1998.

SECTION 9. Emergency clause.