

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 518
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Agriculture
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, Texas law allows certain farm vehicles and trailers to qualify for a reduced vehicle/trailer registration fee. Current statute specifies that any vehicle or trailer which is registered under this reduced fee may be used only by the owner of the vehicle or trailer, to transport items related to the owner's farm or ranch operation. Many farmers and ranchers unknowingly break the law by borrowing a friend's farm truck or trailer. S.B. 518 would remove requirements that only the owner of a farm-registered vehicle or trailer may use the vehicle or trailer.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 518 regulates the registration of certain farm vehicles and trailers.

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 502.163(a), Transportation Code, to provide that the registration fee for a commercial motor vehicle as a farm vehicle is 50 percent of the applicable fee under Section 502.162 if the vehicle will be used, rather than the vehicle's owner will use the vehicle, for commercial purposes only to transport agricultural products, rather than the person's own dairy or farm products, to market or another place for sale or processing, use, or consumption, rather than the vehicle's owner will use the vehicle. Deletes text regarding the owner's farm or ranch.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 502.276(c), Transportation Code, to authorize an owner who obtains a distinguishing license plate under Subsection (b) to operate temporarily on the highways a farm trailer or farm semitrailer with a gross weight of more than 4,000 pounds but not more than 34,000 pounds that is used exclusively to transport seasonally harvested agricultural products or livestock from the place of production to the place of processing, market, or storage or to transport farm supplies or equipment from the place of loading to the farm to be temporarily operated on the highways if the farm trailer or farm semitrailer bears a distinguishing license plate obtained under Subsection (b). Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 1999.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.