

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R4032 DWS-D

S.B. 681
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DIGEST AND PURPOSE

In 1999, approximately 4.4 million truck crossings occurred through nine ports-of-entry from Mexico into Texas, a 250 percent increase since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was ratified. Currently, inspection and customs procedures at ports-of-entry are outdated and cannot keep up with the increase in border traffic resulting from NAFTA, leading to congestion in border cities and restricted movement of goods and people across the border. As introduced, S.B. 681 directs the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to study and identify activities in the pre-border crossing and primary inspection phases that could be automated via the development of Intelligent Transportation Systems for Commercial Vehicle Operations (ITS/CVO) at ports-of-entry along the Texas-Mexico border, including a cost-benefit analysis of the use of ITS/CVO technology. Dependent upon the study's findings, TxDOT is required to implement the ITS/CVO technology at certain locations in Texas, and coordinate with transportation officials of other jurisdictions to develop interoperability standards for the systems.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 201H, Transportation Code, by adding Section 201.614, as follows:

Sec. 201.614. INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS. Requires the Texas Department of Transportation (department) to study the feasibility of use of Intelligent Transportation Systems for Commercial Vehicle Operations (ITS/CVO) at international bridges, other appropriate locations at ports of entry from Mexico, and vehicle weight facilities operated by the state. Sets forth certain areas and analyses that the study must include. Requires the department, in conducting the study, to consult with customs brokers, freight forwarders, and domestic and Mexican motor carriers. Requires the department, to the extent the department considers appropriate based on the results of the study, to implement the use of ITS/CVO. Requires the department to coordinate with transportation officials of other jurisdictions to develop interoperability standards for the systems.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2001.