

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R8350 JXC-D

S.B. 981
By: Kolkhorst
Transportation
4/3/2017
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Some high speed rail systems are designed in a manner that makes them incompatible with their competitors. This incompatibility would make it not cost effective for a competitor to replace the original passenger rail network operator should their business fail, leaving Texas residents with a useless rail network.

S.B. 981 ensures that Texas travelers will benefit from competitive single-seat rail transportation. Under the bill, a modern passenger rail network designed to competitively offer single-seat service between Texas city-centers can be realized only if the various components of the Texas passenger rail network are compatible so that more than one source of high-speed rolling stock can use the infrastructure.

As proposed, S.B. 981 amends current law relating to the compatibility of a high-speed rail facility with multiple types of train technology.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Department of Transportation in SECTION 1 (Section 112.063, Transportation Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 112, Transportation Code, by adding Section 112.063, as follows:

Sec. 112.063. HIGH-SPEED RAIL TECHNOLOGIES. (a) Defines "high-speed rail" and "rail facility."

(b) Requires a private entity that constructs a rail facility for high-speed rail service to ensure that the facility is compatible with more than one type of train technology.

(c) Requires the Texas Department of Transportation to adopt rules as necessary to implement this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2017.