

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2549
By: Davis, Yvonne
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note the constantly evolving needs of regional tollway authorities, such as the North Texas Tollway Authority. Those parties explain that with certain updates to state law, Texas stands to benefit from authorities that operate more efficiently. H.B. 2549 seeks to address this issue by revising provisions relating to regional tollway authorities.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2549 amends the Transportation Code, for purposes of remedies for the nonpayment of tolls of certain toll projects, to establish that a toll project for which a regional tollway authority provides tolling services under a tolling services agreement is considered a toll project of the authority and that the authority is considered the toll project entity with respect to all rights and remedies for such purposes regarding the toll project. The bill prohibits the authority from stopping, detaining, or impounding a motor vehicle for nonpayment of tolls on a toll project's active traffic lanes unless the tolling service agreement addresses that action.

H.B. 2549 changes the date by which the registered owner of a vehicle is required to pay an unpaid toll after an invoice for the unpaid toll is mailed by a regional tollway authority from not later than the 30th day after the date the invoice is mailed to not later than the 25th day after that date. The bill changes the date by which such a vehicle owner is required to pay the unpaid toll if the invoice was mailed to the incorrect address from not later than the 30th day after the date the invoice is mailed to the correct address to not later than the 25th day after that date.

H.B. 2549 removes the requirement for a court of the local jurisdiction in which an unpaid toll was assessed to collect the unpaid tolls, administrative fees, and third-party collection service fees incurred by a regional tollway authority on or before the date the fines and court costs are collected by the court and to forward the tolls and fees to the authority. The bill instead authorizes such a court to take such action. The bill removes the prohibition against the payment of the unpaid tolls and fees by the registered owner from being waived, except in the case of indigency, by the court. The bill authorizes the authority to provide information, including the invoice or notice of an unpaid toll, as an electronic record if the information recipient agrees to the electronic transmission of the information and on terms acceptable to the recipient. The bill changes from not later than March 31 of each year to not later than June 30 of each year the date

by which a regional tollway authority is required to file with the commissioners court of each county of the authority a written report on the authority's activities.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.