

SUBJECT: Parking in the Capitol Complex

COMMITTEE: House Administration — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 7 ayes — Goolsby, Luna, Chisum, Hawley, Maxey, Tillery, West  
0 nays  
4 absent — Alvarado, Bailey, Hamric, Telford

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 3 — 31-0

WITNESSES: For — None  
Against — None  
On — Rick Crawford, State Preservation Board

DIGEST: CSSB 1301 would establish a committee to regulate parking and traffic issues in the Capitol Complex, authorize bonds for additional parking facilities, allow the installation of state parking meters, and define the responsibilities of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the City of Austin in enforcing parking in the Capitol Complex area.

CSSB 1301 would create a Transportation Planning Committee, made up of one representative each from DPS, the City of Austin, the Capital Metro Transit Authority, the General Services Commission, the State Preservation Board, and the University of Texas at Austin. The committee would coordinate transportation within the Capitol Complex area, and it could develop and recommend agreements and understandings for its member agencies relating to such transportation issues as parking, vehicle traffic, and the location of mass transit terminals or light rail facilities in the Capitol area.

CSSB 1301 would authorize financing for the construction of certain parking facilities for visitors and state employees in the Capitol Complex. It would authorize the issuance of bonds for the construction and operation of a garage or similar parking facility for visitors to the Capitol, as well as

comparable parking facilities for state employees. The bill would designate specific locations for the future construction of such facilities. Under the bill, the State Preservation Board could set and collect a parking fee for use of the visitor's lot, with proceeds going to the Capitol fund. The board could issue revenue bonds for such projects and would be required to transfer the amount necessary to service the debt on no more than one-half of the total amount of bonds issued.

CSSB 1301 would also authorize the State Preservation Board, in cooperation with DPS, to install parking meters in designated areas within the Capitol Complex. The bill would give DPS responsibility for operation and maintenance of the installed meters and enforcement of parking violations for metered spaces. The bill would prohibit the installation, operation, or maintenance of meters accepting only quarters. Half of the funds collected from installed meters would have to be deposited in the Capitol fund, while the other half would go to the state parking fund.

Under the bill, DPS would enforce parking rules in the various Capitol Complex facilities and could issue administrative citations for violations. In addition, DPS could impose all safety and security measures necessary to protect persons and property within the Capitol Complex.

The bill would allow DPS and the City of Austin to execute an interlocal cooperation agreement to help define their individual responsibilities for traffic and parking control and security within the Capitol area, including any private property located there. The City of Austin could continue to operate, maintain, and receive any revenue from meters located along either side of the Capitol Complex perimeter, provided that the City exercised actual control of those meters as of January 1, 1997. No meters operated by the city in those areas could accept only quarters.

CSSB 1301 would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house.

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

CSSB 1301 would institute short- and long-term measures to deal with the parking and traffic problems in the Capitol Complex area. It would authorize control techniques, including meters and enforcement measures, provide for new facilities to accommodate traffic, and set up a committee of

all interested parties to cooperatively develop innovative ways of meeting traffic needs or implementing alternative transportation options. Parking already is a significant problem in this area, and the situation will only deteriorate unless measures are taken now.

Currently, more 15,000 state employees are assigned to some 10,000 available parking spaces. The resulting overflow has meant that some state employees use street parking within the Capitol area, often putting them in direct competition with Texas citizens and tourists who are visiting or conducting business at the Capitol. In addition, confusion over the scope of jurisdiction between the City of Austin and DPS has resulted in minimal or non-enforcement of parking regulations over much of the last year, meaning all users took advantage of street parking spaces for far longer periods than the two-hour posted limit.

CSSB 1301 would allow the construction of facilities to supply almost 2,200 additional parking spaces for employees, and 750 new spaces for visitors. The cost of these new facilities would be paid for by the issuance of bonds, as well as through funds raised by the installation of parking meters within the Capitol Complex area and other Preservation Board revenue-generators, such as the Capitol gift shop and cafeteria.

Installing parking meters would serve the two-fold purpose of raising funds that the state could use to improve the overall transportation conditions within the Capitol area, and would discourage state employees from using street parking as a no-cost alternative to locating a space within their assigned parking facility. The changes proposed by the bill also would help visitors to the Capitol more easily obtain parking, since they would be virtually assured of a two-hour space.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

CSSB 1301 would impose parking meters across a large area of the Capitol Complex, placing an unwelcome burden upon the numerous visitors to the Capitol area. Many of these areas previously had no charge for parking to enjoy the Capitol area.

NOTES: The fiscal note anticipates a net negative impact to general revenue funds of approximately \$2.8 million through fiscal 1999.

The committee substitute banned use of meters accepting only quarters, authorized the State Preservation Board to operate visitor parking facilities, created the Transportation Planning Committee, and authorized financing and construction of other parking facilities for state employees and visitors.