

SUBJECT: Addressing outdated requirements relating to driver's and learner licenses

COMMITTEE: Homeland Security and Public Safety — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Nevárez, Burns, Hinojosa, Holland, J. Johnson, Metcalf,  
Schaefer, Wray

0 nays

1 absent — P. King

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Skylor Hearn, Texas DPS)

BACKGROUND: Transportation Code, ch. 521 governs driver's licenses and certificates. Sec. 521.222 governs instruction permits for persons between 15 and 18 years of age that meet certain requirements. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) also is allowed to issue a permit to certain persons 18 years of age or older.

Sec. 521.121 requires a driver's license to include:

- a color photograph of the entire face of the holder;
- the full name and date of birth of the holder;
- a brief description of the holder; and
- the license holder's residence address, except for certain persons.

Sec. 521.1211 establishes that for driver's licenses of peace officers, an address in the municipality or county of the officer's residence is used instead of the address of license holder's actual residence.

Sec. 521.050 allows DPS to sell a magnetic tape of the names, addresses,

and dates of birth of all license holders contained in the department's basic driver's license record file to an approved purchaser.

Some have noted that there are a number of issues relating to driver's licenses and instruction permits that are outdated and should be addressed.

DIGEST: HB 3050 would make certain changes relating to driver's licenses and instruction permits.

**Learner license.** The bill would rename an instruction permit as a learner license and amend Government Code, ch. 521 to conform with the change. Provisions allowing for an instruction permit for certain persons over 18 years of age would be repealed, as would a provision that does not require an instruction permit to include a photograph.

**Photograph on driver's license.** The photograph on a driver's license would not have to be in color.

**Driver's license for peace officer.** Provisions relating to driver's licenses of peace officers would be extended to special investigators. For these licenses, DPS also could use an address in the county where the officer was employed instead of the address of his or her actual residence.

**Sale of license information.** In selling driver's license information, DPS could provide the information in any format prescribed by the department that was acceptable to the purchaser, rather than on a magnetic tape.

**Disclosure of abstract record.** The bill would repeal a provision prohibiting an abstract of a driving record or a statement that a record does not exist from being marked as certified if released through DPS' interactive system containing driving record information.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2017, and would apply only to a driver's license issued or renewed on or after that date.