

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.C.R. 5
By: Shapleigh
Subcommittee on Border Affairs
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As Filed

DIGEST

Federal statutes require, as a condition for spending federal highway or transit funds in urban areas, the designation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in certain urban areas. An MPO is the policy advisory board that directs the future of transportation projects and systems in urbanized areas. MPOs along the border face special challenges because relationships with local governments on the Mexican side of the border are as important, in their case, as relationships with other Texas political subdivisions, given the international nature of their metropolitan areas. Processing the high volume of commercial and passenger traffic, while at the same time interdicting contraband and illegal immigrants, has contributed to congestion and air pollution along the border and has placed pressure on the infrastructure of local communities along both sides of the border. Cooperation with Mexican officials will be necessary for efforts by Texas and federal officials to relieve congestion at the border to be effective. Currently, federal law limits MPO membership to local elected officials, officials of local public transportation agencies, and certain state officials.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.C.R. 5 submits the following resolutions:

Authorizes the 77th Legislature to urge the United States Congress to amend federal law pertaining to membership policy on committees of MPOs and allow inclusion of persons representing another nation in order to enable MPOs along the border to work closely with their counterparts in Mexico. Provides that the secretary of state forward a copy of this resolution to the president of the United States, the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate of the United States Congress, and to all members of the Texas congressional delegation to request that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record.