

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
86R5004 BEE-D

S.B. 1135  
By: Watson  
Transportation  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Statute prohibits a vehicle from following another vehicle too closely while in operation. Existing vehicle-to-vehicle technology is used globally and increasingly in the United States to allow tractor trailers to platoon for aerodynamic benefits.

The 85th Legislature authorized platooning in Texas for tractor trailers on limited access highways.

The ability to platoon buses could allow transit authorities to increase capacity with less disruption to traffic flow and enhance rider experience.

S.B. 1135 defines the criteria under which bus platooning would be authorized when transit vehicles are equipped with a connected braking system and the speed of each vehicle is automatically coordinated through the connected braking system. The bill also authorizes platooning for automated transit vehicles for the day when this technology is sufficiently advanced for operation in Texas.

As proposed, S.B. 1135 amends current law relating to the operation of public transit vehicles equipped with connected braking systems.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 545, Transportation Code, by adding Section 545.0621, as follows:

Sec. 545.0621. FOLLOWING DISTANCE FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC TRANSIT VEHICLES. (a) Defines "automated motor vehicle," "connected braking system," and "public transit vehicle."

(b) Provides that Sections 545.062(b) (relating to a requirement of operators of trucks or other motor vehicles to maintain a certain following distance), (c) (relating to a requirement of vehicles in a caravan or motorcade to maintain a certain following distance), and (d) (relating to authorizing the operator of a vehicle equipped with a connected braking system to be assisted by the system in maintaining a certain following distance) do not apply to an operator of a public transit vehicle that is following one or more other public transit vehicles if the vehicles are equipped with a connected braking system and the speed of each vehicle is automatically coordinated through the connected braking system.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter J, Chapter 545, Transportation Code, by adding Section 545.457, as follows:

Sec. 545.457. FOLLOWING DISTANCE FOR CERTAIN AUTOMATED MOTOR VEHICLES. (a) Defines "connected braking system" and "public transit vehicle."

(b) Provides that this section applies only to an automated motor vehicle that is a public transit vehicle.

(c) Provides that, notwithstanding Section 545.062 (Following Distance), an automated motor vehicle equipped with a connected braking system that is following another automated motor vehicle equipped with that system is authorized to be assisted by the system to maintain any desired distance between the vehicles.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2019.