

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.S.B. 1064
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Transportation
4/7/2021
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, city and county governments with a fleet of motor vehicles in Texas must register the vehicles annually. The annual acquisition and distribution of plates, stickers, and registration cards is time-consuming and costly. Local governmental entities with fleets of thousands of motor vehicles find themselves performing renewals monthly throughout the calendar year. For example, Harris County has approximately 4,800 vehicles that require inspections and registration on an annual basis. Each month, county staff registers about 400 vehicles, including 300 passenger vehicles and 100 trailers and large trucks. Each week, Harris County spends approximately 32 hours on renewals. This workload includes receiving renewal notices, emailing departments that vehicles need an inspection, tracking incoming inspections, printing registration stickers, logging received registration stickers, and distributing stickers. In total, this amounts to 1,664 hours a year spent on the inspection and registration process alone.

S.B. 1064 eliminates this inefficient process by providing a semi-permanent process that allows local governmental entities to purchase registration cards for an extended renewal period of three years. The bill will help Texas local government to enjoy greater operational efficiency and avoid potential service disruptions.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 1064 amends current law relating to the extended registration of certain county fleet vehicles.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles in SECTION 1 (Section 502.0025, Transportation Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 502, Transportation Code, by adding Section 502.0025, as follows:

Sec. 502.0025. EXTENDED REGISTRATION OF CERTAIN COUNTY FLEET VEHICLES. (a) Defines "exempt county fleet."

(b) Requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV), notwithstanding the annual registration requirements of Sections 502.044(c) (relating to a certain registration period designated by TxDMV) and 502.453(a) (relating to authorizing the owner of a certain vehicle to annually apply for registration and an exemption from a registration fee), to develop and implement a system of registration to allow an owner of an exempt county fleet to register vehicles in the fleet for an extended registration period of not less than one year or more than eight years.

(c) Requires that a system of extended registration under this section allow the owner of an exempt county fleet to:

(1) select the number of years for registration under this section;

(2) register the entire fleet in the county of the owner's principal place of business;

(3) register the motor vehicles in the fleet that are operated most regularly in the same county; or

(4) register the entire fleet directly with TxDMV.

(d) Provides that a motor vehicle, semitrailer, or trailer registered under this section is subject to the inspection requirements of Chapter 548 (Compulsory Inspection of Vehicles) as if the vehicle, semitrailer, or trailer were registered without an extended registration period.

(e) Requires TxDMV to adopt rules to implement this section, including rules:

(1) regarding the suspension of an exempt county fleet's registration under this section if the owner of the exempt county fleet fails to comply with this section or rules adopted under this section; and

(2) establishing a method to enforce the inspection requirements of Chapter 548 for motor vehicles, semitrailers, and trailers registered under this section.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 502.453, Transportation Code, as follows:

Sec. 502.453. GOVERNMENT-OWNED VEHICLES; PUBLIC SCHOOL BUSES; FIRE-FIGHTING VEHICLES; COUNTY MARINE LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLES; U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY VEHICLES. (a) Authorizes the owner of a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer to apply for registration under Section 502.0025 or 502.451 (Exempt Vehicles), rather than to annually apply for registration under Section 502.451, and provides that the owner is exempt from the payment of a registration fee under Chapter 502 (Registration of Vehicles) if the vehicle meets certain criteria.

(b) Requires that an application for registration under this section or Section 502.0025 be made by a person having the authority to certify that the vehicle meets the exemption requirements prescribed by Subsection (a).

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2021.