

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R2669 BEE-D

S.B. 2012
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Transportation
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 31 states require two license plates and 19 require one license plate. Texas is one of the 31 that require two license plates. Interested parties suggest that not only do two license plates impose additional expense on citizens, some vehicles simply do not provide a space for placement of a front license plate. As a result, owners of those vehicles must drill into the bumper or body of the vehicle in order to comply with the two license plate requirement. Further, if an individual does not wish to drill into the bumper to hang the license plate, the individual must display the license plate on the dashboard of the passenger side of the vehicle. Placement of the plate on the dashboard provides no measureable benefit to identification of the vehicle and adversely affects the driver's ability to safely operate the vehicle. Placement of the license plate in this location causes serious safety concerns as the reflection blocks the driver from clearly seeing through the passenger side windshield due to the reflection of the license plate.

S.B. 2012 seeks to remedy this by providing for an exemption to the two license plate requirement for vehicles that lack a dedicated area on the front bumper, due to the manufacturer failing to provide a location on the vehicle for placement of a front license plate.

As proposed, S.B. 2012 amends current law relating to the offense of operating certain vehicles without a license plate.

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 Section 504.943, Transportation Code, by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (b-1), as follows:

(b) Provides that a person commits an offense if the person operates on a public highway during a registration period a road tractor, a motorcycle, a trailer, a semitrailer, or a motor vehicle equipped by the manufacturer with not more than one area to display a license plate that does not display a license plate that meets certain requirements. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(b-1) Defines "area to display a license plate" for Section 504.943 (Operation of Vehicle Without License Plate) to mean a feature of the exterior front or rear of a motor vehicle to which a license plate is authorized to be fastened as required by rules regarding the placement of license plates adopted by the board of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (board) under Section 504.010(c) (relating to authority of the board to adopt rules regarding the placement of license plates for certain vehicles). Provides that the term does not include a feature to which a license plate may be fastened only after drilling through the exterior of the vehicle.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2021.