

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
84R5689 JRR-F

H.B. 3225
By: Murr (Garcia)
Transportation
5/14/2015
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Interested parties note that maneuvering through construction and maintenance work zones on roadways can be a challenge for drivers, especially with the many distractions caused by signs, equipment, workers, and other factors. Commercial motor vehicles traveling through work zones add to these challenges. Citing recent statistics relating to accidents involving such vehicles, both on the state highway system in general and in work zones in particular, the parties contend that the number of accidents involving these vehicles in work zones could be reduced if the larger commercial motor vehicles were restricted to using one designated lane in a work zone with at least two lanes available. Removing the conflict of the speed differential between passenger vehicles and large commercial vehicles traveling in the work zones could reduce the number of lane changes and passing maneuvers attempted by passenger vehicles trailing a larger, slower moving commercial motor vehicle in a work zone, thereby reducing the number of accidents.

H.B. 3225 seeks to address this issue by allowing the executive director of the Texas Department of Transportation, or the director's designee, to restrict a commercial motor vehicle to a specific lane of traffic in a construction or maintenance work zone for certain highways under certain conditions if it is determined to be necessary to improve safety.

H.B. 3225 amends current law relating to lane restrictions for certain motor vehicles in highway construction or maintenance work zones.

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 545.0653, as follows:

Sec. 545.0653. RESTRICTION ON USE OF HIGHWAY IN MAINTENANCE OR CONSTRUCTION WORK ZONE. (a) Defines "commercial motor vehicle," "construction or maintenance work zone," "department," and "executive director" in this section.

(b) Authorizes the executive director or the executive director's designee to restrict a commercial motor vehicle to a specific lane of traffic in a construction or maintenance work zone for a highway that is part of the state highway system if the executive director or the executive director's designee determines that, based on a traffic study performed by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to evaluate the effect of the restriction, the restriction is necessary to improve safety.

(c) Requires TxDOT to erect and maintain official traffic control devices necessary to implement and enforce a lane restriction imposed under this section. Prohibits a lane restriction from being enforced until the appropriate traffic control devices are in place.

(d) Authorizes the executive director or the executive director's designee to rescind a lane restriction imposed under this section at any time that the executive director or the executive director's designee determines that the restriction is no longer necessary to improve safety.

(e) Provides that a lane restriction imposed under this section expires when the lane that is subject to the restriction is no longer in a construction or maintenance work zone.

(f) Requires TxDOT to remove traffic control devices erected under this section if the lane restriction is rescinded under Subsection (d) or expires under Subsection (e).

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2015.