

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 928  
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Transportation  
7/6/2017  
Enrolled

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

S.B. 928 will designate a heritage trail commemorating Tom Lea, Texas' venerable artist, muralist, author, and war correspondent who, as described by *Texas Highways* magazine, "helped to define the way the world would view the mythology of Texas for much of the 20th century." Tom Lea was born on the border of Texas and Mexico in 1907 and created timeless works of art and literature over his lifetime. Lea painted murals dramatizing Texas' history all throughout the state, and his novels *The Brave Bulls* and *The Wonderful Country* are widely considered to be classics of southwestern American literature.

Recognizing the breadth of Lea's work all across Texas, S.B. 928 includes 12 municipalities as part of the trail: Austin, College Station, Dallas, El Paso, Fredericksburg, Galveston, Hebbronville, Kingsville, Odessa, Seymour, Sweetwater, and Waco. The Texas Historical Commission, in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation, would designate segments of several Texas highways that connect these communities with ties to Lea's artwork or literature. Any markers erected along the highway segments or related marketing materials would be funded through private grants or donations.

Once officially recognized, the Tom Lea Trail will promote heritage tourism in many parts of the state, encourage regional pride, and spark statewide collaboration in drawing visitors to Texas. (Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

S.B. 928 amends current law relating to the establishment of the Tom Lea Trail.

### **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 A, Chapter 442, Government Code, by adding Section 442.019, as follows:

Sec. 442.019. TOM LEA TRAIL. (a) Requires the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to develop a Tom Lea Trail program to commemorate the life and art of Tom Lea.

(b) Requires that the program, at a minimum, include designation of locations that are historically significant to the life and art of Tom Lea; adoption of an icon, symbol, or other identifying device to represent a designation; the use of the icon, symbol, or other identifying device in promoting tourism around this state by THC and at designated locations; and the development of itineraries and maps to guide tourists to designated locations.

(c) Requires THC to adopt eligibility criteria for a designation and procedures to administer the program created under this section.

(d) Requires that a historic marker or sign relating to the life and art of Tom Lea that is erected or maintained pursuant to the adopted program be located not more

than five miles from a location designated under Subsection (b)(1) (relating to requiring that the program include designation of locations that are historically significant to the life and art of Tom Lea).

(e) Authorizes THC, as necessary, to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office and the Texas Department of Transportation to implement this section.

(f) Authorizes THC to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and other donations from any source to implement this section. Provides that THC is not required to promote or market the Tom Lea Trail unless THC receives funds raised from private entities for that purpose.

(g) Requires that certain provided segments of highway constitute the Tom Lea Trail.

(h) Provides that a reference to a municipal boundary means that boundary as it exists on September 1, 2017.

(i) Prohibits a designation of highway segments as the Tom Lea Trail from being construed as a designation under the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. Section 300101 et seq.).

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2017.