

- SUBJECT:** Increasing axle weight limits for over-the-road buses
- COMMITTEE:** Transportation — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — Canales, Bernal, Y. Davis, Goldman, Krause, Leman, Martinez, Ortega, Raney, Thierry, E. Thompson
- 0 nays
- 2 absent — Landgraf, Hefner
- WITNESSES:** For — Sean Hughes, Megabus; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Dominic Manuele, Coach USA/Megabus; Bill Kelberlau)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jimmy Archer, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles; Chris Nordloh, Texas Department of Public Safety; Michael Lee, Texas Department of Transportation)
- BACKGROUND:** 42 U.S.C. sec. 12181 defines an over-the-road bus as a bus characterized by an elevated passenger deck located over a baggage compartment.
- Transportation Code sec. 621.101 limits a vehicle operating on a public highway or at a port of entry between Texas and Mexico to a single axle weight of 20,000 pounds and a tandem axle weight of 34,000 pounds, including all enforcement tolerances.
- Some have suggested that over-the-road buses are designed to be heavier than traditional buses, which can lead to over-the-road buses being improperly cited for exceeding the state's standard tandem axle weight limit.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 1493 would specify that an over-the-road bus could be operated on a public highway in the state or at a port of entry between Texas and Mexico only if the gross weight and tires of the bus conformed to existing

statutory regulation and:

- the single axle weight was not heavier than 24,000 pounds; or
- the tandem axle weight did not exceed the maximum tandem axle weight under Transportation Code sec. 621.101 by more than 20 percent.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.