

SUBJECT: Requiring appointment of an air mobility technology advisory committee

COMMITTEE: Transportation — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 12 ayes — Canales, Raney, Ashby, Davis, Gámez, Caroline Harris,
Landgraf, Lujan, Ordaz, Patterson, Perez, Romero

0 nays

1 absent — Lozano

WITNESSES: For — Rahul Sreenivasan, Texas 2036; Ben Ivers, The Boeing Company;
Emilien Marchand, Wisk Aero (*Registered, but did not testify*: Ray
Sullivan, Amazon; Martin Hubert, Bristow Group; Richard Lapin,
Bristow Group Inc.; Nadia Islam, City of San Antonio; Matthew Garcia,
Dallas Regional Chamber; Erica Mulder, DFW Airport; John Colyandro,
Ferrovial Veriports; Patrick Brophay, North Texas Commission; Juan
Antonio Flores, Port San Antonio; David Petersen, San Antonio Chamber
of Commerce; Martin C Gutierrez Jr, San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of
Commerce; Stephanie Matthews, Texas Association of Business; Ron
Hinkle, Texas Commercial Airports Association)

Against — None

On — Andrew Parks, Texas State Technical College; Terri Hall, Texas
TURF, Texans for Toll-free Highways (*Registered, but did not testify*:
Dan Harmon, TxDOT)

BACKGROUND: Some have suggested that additional study of advanced air mobility
technology in relation to state law could help Texas address increased
transportation challenges due to the state's rapidly growing population.

DIGEST: CSHB 2678 would require the transportation commission to appoint an
advisory committee to assess current state law and any potential changes
needed to facilitate the implementation of advanced air mobility
technology in the state. "Advanced air mobility" (AAM) would mean an

aviation transportation system that used highly automated aircraft to operate and transport passengers or cargo at lower altitudes for commercial, public service, private, or recreational purposes.

The commission would have to appoint committee members representing:

- diverse regions of the state;
- state and local law enforcement;
- the AAM industry;
- transportation experts;
- commercial airport representatives;
- vertical takeoff and landing operators and vertiport operators;
- local governments; and
- the general public.

The committee would be required to hold public hearings and receive comments online, by mail, and other methods as appropriate.

By November 1, 2024, the committee would have to submit to the commission and the Legislature a report including findings and recommendations on any changes to state law needed to facilitate the implementation of AAM technology. The committee would be abolished January 1, 2025.

CSHB 2678 also would require the Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to:

- review existing state aviation standards and guidelines, airport facility planning, and compatibility guidance to ensure that these factors were applicable to AAM;
- support the development of federal and industry standards for AAM technology that prioritized safety and designate a liaison to the Federal Aviation Administration for that purpose;
- develop a plan, or an update to the Texas Airport System Plan, that specified potential locations for and classifications of vertiports and

- other infrastructure related to AAM; and
- provide resources and assistance on the use of AAM technology and infrastructure to certain entities for the purpose of identifying governmental methods to integrate industry innovation and community vision and help promote advanced air mobility technology.

TxDOT, Texas Education Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Texas State Technical College System would collaborate with school districts, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders on educational opportunities related to AAM technology.

TxDOT and the other agencies would have to implement the applicable provisions of CSHB 2678 only if the Legislature appropriated money specifically for that purpose.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.