

SUBJECT: Establishing weight limits for certain natural gas or electric vehicles

COMMITTEE: Transportation — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 11 ayes — Canales, Raney, Ashby, Davis, Gámez, Caroline Harris, Landgraf, Lujan, Patterson, Perez, Romero

0 nays

2 absent — Lozano, Ordaz

SENATE VOTE: On final passage (April 14) — 25 - 5

WITNESSES: None (*Considered in a formal meeting on May 1*)

BACKGROUND: Transportation Code sec. 621.101 sets certain weight limits for vehicles and combinations of vehicles operating over or on public highways or at ports-of-entry between the Texas-Mexico border. Subsection (b-1) allows a vehicle or combination of vehicles powered primarily by natural gas to exceed any weight limitation under the section by an amount equal to the difference between the weight of the vehicle attributable to its natural gas tank and fueling system and the weight of a comparable diesel system, provided that the maximum gross weight may not exceed 82,000 pounds.

Concerns have been raised that electric trucks are currently limited to traveling on U.S. interstate highways in Texas if they exceed the 80,000 pound limit. Some have suggested that statute should be amended to create uniformity for energy efficient vehicles.

DIGEST: SB 1364 would revise Transportation Code sec. 621.101(b-1) to allow a vehicle powered primarily by means of electric battery power to exceed the applicable gross weight limitation by up to 2,000 pounds, provided the maximum gross weight of the vehicle could not exceed 82,000 pounds.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take

effect September 1, 2023.