

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R4466 JAT-D

S.B. 1129
By: Bernsen
State Affairs
3/23/2001
As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, 44 states have scenic byways programs in place, many of which have been created or reorganized to match the National Scenic Byways Program designation criteria. State scenic byways programs protect and beautify America's roads and byways and provide economic opportunities in tourism and recreation. Federal law provides for a national scenic byways program including the designation of roads, grants and technical assistance, and eligible projects. As proposed, S.B. 1129 creates a byways program for Texas and creates a mechanism for receiving federal funds in compliance with federal law.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Department of Transportation in SECTION 1 (Section 221.004, Transportation Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 221, Transportation Code, by adding Section 221.004, as follows:

Sec. 221.004. SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM. (a) Requires the Texas Department of Transportation (department) to develop, implement, and administer a program to:

- designate as scenic byways, highways or portions of highways in the state highway system that have notable scenic, historic, cultural, natural recreational, or archaeological qualities;
- encourage and coordinate state actions and activities by other entities relating to those designated byways;
- enhance recreational, cultural, and archaeological resources along those byways;
- promote economic development along those byways; and
- educate residents and visitors of the history, culture, and natural beauty of this state.

(b) Requires the department to adopt rules for the administration of this section and the scenic byways program and structure the program under this section to maximize the amount of money available from the federal government for the program.

(c) Requires the rules adopted by the department under Subsection (b) to be consistent with 23 U.S.C. Section 162 and regulations adopted under that section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.

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