

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
79R1109 JD-D

S.B. 77
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Infrastructure Development and Security
3/15/05
As Filed

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current law prevents many unlicensed drivers from receiving the proper training and testing to be safe, licensed, and insured drivers. Thousands of people in Texas are driving without liability insurance because they cannot legally obtain a driver's license. The Automobile Insurance Agents of Texas estimate that 30 percent of Texas drivers are uninsured. According to the Department of Public Safety, 16 percent of car accidents in 2001 involved uninsured motorists. Unlicensed drivers are unable to obtain automobile insurance, which means they are more likely to pass the costs associated with an accident on to insured drivers, which, in turn, increases auto insurance costs.

As proposed, S.B. 77 allows all Texas residents to apply for a driver's license, giving every driver on the road access to testing and insurance. Ensuring that all Texas drivers have access to automobile insurance will help reduce the costs for all motorists. S.B. 77 also addresses concerns related to identity documents and terrorism.

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 Section 521.142, Transportation Code, by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (a-1) and (i), as follows:

- (a) Requires the Department of Public Safety (department) to accept certain documents as proof of an original license applicant's identity.

- (a-1) Provides that Subsection (a) does not require the department to accept an identity document issued by a country that has been designated by the United States secretary of state as a state sponsor of terrorism. Authorizes the governor or a person designated by the governor to make exceptions to the application of this subsection.

- (i) Sets forth guidelines for an applicant who does not have a social security number and is not eligible to be issued a social security number.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2005.