

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 160
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Transportation & Homeland Security
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Last year, a total of 342 train accidents occurred in Texas. Bexar County had the third highest number of such incidents among counties in Texas, behind Harris County and Tarrant County. In 2004, a collision of two trains near San Antonio spewed chlorine, killing four people and hospitalizing at least 30 people. In October of 2006, another derailment in San Antonio destroyed two homes after 17 boxcars jumped the tracks. These train accidents are putting Texas families in unnecessary danger in their own backyards.

H.B. 160 requires the Texas Department of Transportation to conduct a study to determine the economic feasibility of relocating tracks that carry freight trains with hazardous materials away from residential areas of this state.

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. (a) Requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to conduct a study to determine the economic feasibility of relocating freight trains that carry hazardous materials away from residential areas of the state in municipalities with a population over 1.2 million. Requires the study to include an evaluation of cost options for the relocation of freight trains from residential areas.

(b) Requires TxDOT to report the results of the study conducted under Subsection (a) of this section to the governor and the legislature not later than March 1, 2008.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.