

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R108 JD-D

S.B. 132
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Transportation & Homeland Security
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

As cities in Texas grow more populated, traffic congestion becomes a greater problem. Using mass transit vehicles to bypass traffic congestion on roads and highways on improved shoulders is a potential solution to the problem of growing traffic congestion. By allowing public transportation to use the shoulders on state highways, regardless of traffic conditions, the number of cars on streets or state highways during peak hours may potentially be lowered. Current law, however, provides only for emergency vehicles, bicycles, and stranded vehicles to use the shoulders on state highways.

As proposed, S.B. 132 allows mass transit motor bus vehicles to operate on the improved shoulders of state highways during periods of traffic congestion. This would remove mass transit vehicles from high traffic corridors² or segments of our highways that are prone to congestion, allowing the remaining traffic to flow more smoothly.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to any state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 455, Transportation Code, by adding Section 455.006, as follows:

Sec. 455.006. MOTOR BUS-ONLY LANE PROGRAM. Requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and in conjunction with certain transportation authorities and counties and municipalities, to establish and operate a motor bus-only lane program (program) on state highways that have shoulders of sufficient width. Sets forth certain requirements for the program. Requires TxDOT to initiate the program as soon as practicable and to submit a report to the Legislature no later than December 31, 2007, regarding TxDOT's progress with the program. Requires TxDOT to submit a final report to the legislature regarding the program, as part of the Sunset Advisory Commission's evaluation of TxDOT, no later than December 31, 2008.

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