

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 4465
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Transportation & Homeland Security
5/15/2009
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Many states have welcome signs to designate the state boundary on highways entering the state. Current Texas law mandates that similar welcome signs be placed on the borders of Texas to welcome people driving into the state. There is no current Texas law that requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to erect a Texas flag at an official international port-of-entry.

This bill requires TxDOT to erect a "Welcome to Texas" sign to designate the state boundary on an interstate, United States, or state highway entering Texas, authorizes the inclusion of a phrase acknowledging the presidencies of Texans on a "Welcome to Texas" sign, and requires TxDOT to erect and maintain a Texas flag on an interstate, United States, or state highway that originates at an official port-of-entry along an international border. The bill requires the Texas flag to be at least as large as any foreign flag flown at the foreign port-of-entry operating on the other side of the border.

H.B. 4465 amends current law relating to "Welcome to Texas" signs on highways entering Texas and to the placement of Texas flags at international ports-of-entry.

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. Repealer: Section 201.617 (Mitigation of Adverse Environmental Impacts), Transportation Code, as added by Chapter 474 (H.B. 137), Acts of the 79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter O, Chapter 201, Transportation Code, by adding Section 201.979, as follows:

Sec. 201.979. "WELCOME TO TEXAS" SIGNS. (a) Requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to erect a "Welcome to Texas" sign to designate the state boundary on an interstate, United States, or state highway entering the state.

(b) Requires that a "Welcome to Texas" sign erected by TxDOT include the following elements: a depiction of the state flag and the phrase "Drive Friendly - The Texas Way."

(c) Authorizes a "Welcome to Texas" sign to also include the phrase "Welcome to Texas - Proud Home of Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush."

(d) Requires that a "Welcome to Texas" sign erected by TxDOT, notwithstanding Subsection (c) above, if the president of the United States is a resident of Texas, include the phrase "Welcome to Texas - Proud Home of President [insert name of the president of the United States]."

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter O, Chapter 201, Transportation Code, by adding Section 201.980, as follows:

Sec. 201.980. TEXAS FLAGS AT INTERNATIONAL PORTS-OF-ENTRY. (a) Requires TxDOT to erect and maintain a Texas flag to designate the state boundary at an appropriate location at or near each interstate, United States, or state highway originating at an official port-of-entry along an international border.

(b) Requires that a Texas flag flown under this section be visible from the international port-of-entry and be equal in size or larger than the flag of any foreign nation flown at the port-of-entry operating on the other side of the international border.

(c) Authorizes TxDOT to contract with any governmental or private entity for the care and maintenance of any Texas flag flown under this section.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2010.