

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 858
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Transportation & Homeland Security
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) does not have the statutory authority to approve online courses for commercial driving schools. Currently, only public school driver education courses and parents who teach their children to drive can utilize online driving courses.

S.B. 858 authorizes the commissioner of education to approve online courses for commercial driving schools.

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 Subchapter H, Chapter 1001, Education Code, by adding Section 1001.3541, as follows:

Sec. 1001.3541. ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF INSTRUCTION FOR DRIVER EDUCATION COURSE. (a) Authorizes a driver education school to teach all or part of the classroom portion of an approved driver education course by an alternative method of instruction that does not require students to be present in a classroom if the commissioner of education (commissioner) approves the alternative method.

(b) Authorizes the commissioner to approve the alternative method only if the alternative method includes testing and security measures that the commissioner determines are at least as secure as the measures available in the usual classroom setting and the course, with the use of the alternative method, satisfies any other requirement applicable to a course in which the classroom portion is taught to students in the usual classroom setting.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 1001.151, Education Code, by adding Subsection (m), to authorize the commissioner to establish a fee for an application for approval to offer a driver education course by an alternative method of instruction under Section 1001.3541 in an amount the commissioner considers appropriate, not to exceed the amount sufficient to cover the costs of considering the application.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.