

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 119
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Transportation & Homeland Security
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

According to the National Safety Council, operators of a motor vehicle who use a wireless communication device to read, write, or send a text-based communication are more than eight times more likely to be involved in a vehicle crash.

Section 545.425 (Use of Wireless Communication Device; Offense), Transportation Code, prohibits the use of a wireless communication device by a motor vehicle operator only in a school crossing zone. A municipality, county, or other political subdivision must post a sign that complies with this provision. The operator is afforded an exemption if the communication made was for emergency purposes.

Enactment of this bill will create an offense for using a wireless communication device to read, write, or send a text-based communication while operating a motor vehicle throughout the state of Texas, as opposed to only in school crossing zones.

As proposed, S.B. 119 amends current law relating to the creation of an offense for certain uses of a wireless communication device while operating a motor vehicle.

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 545.425, Transportation Code, by amending Subsection (b-1) and adding Subsection (c-1), as follows:

(b-1) Requires a municipality, county, or other political subdivision that enforces Subsection (b) (relating to prohibiting the use of a wireless communication device within a school crossing zone), rather than this section, to post a sign that complies with the standards described by this subsection at the entrance to each school crossing zone in the municipality, county, or other political subdivision.

(c-1) Prohibits an operator from using a wireless communication device to read, write, or send text-based communication while operating a motor vehicle unless the vehicle is stopped.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2011.