

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 499
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Transportation
5/14/2015
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, members of the public transportation advisory committee advise the Texas Transportation Commission on the needs of the state's public transportation providers, including the allocation of public transportation funds, and comment on rules involving public transportation. Members of the advisory committee do not have term limits and serve at the pleasure of the appointing officer. Interested parties contend that the committee's lack of term limits has eroded its oversight by the appointing officers, which reduces accountability of the members and overall effectiveness of the committee.

H.B. 499 seeks to implement term limits with the goals of increasing effectiveness and efficiency in the work of the advisory committee. It also clarifies the appropriate qualifications of appointed members.

H.B. 499 amends current law relating to the public transportation advisory committee.

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 Sections 455.004(b) and (c), Transportation Code, as follows:

(b) Requires the members of the public transportation advisory committee to be appointed by the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives, who are required to each appoint:

(1) one member who represents a diverse cross-section of public transportation providers and may be employed by a transit provider or organization representing transit providers;

(2) one member who represents a diverse cross-section of transportation users and may not be employed by a transit provider or organization representing transit providers; and

(3) one member who represents the general public and who may be on the staff of a metropolitan planning organization or rural transportation planning organization but may not be employed by a transit provider or organization representing transit providers.

(c) Provides that members serve for staggered terms of six years, with the terms of three members expiring on February 1 of each odd-numbered year. Requires that a vacancy on the committee be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for that position. Deletes existing text providing that a member serves at the pleasure of the officer who appointed the member. Makes no further change to this subsection.

SECTION 2. (a) Provides that the terms of the public transportation advisory committee members serving on the effective date of this Act expire January 31, 2017.

(b) Provides that the changes in law made by this Act to Section 455.004(b), Transportation Code, apply only to a member of the public transportation advisory committee with a term beginning on or after the effective date of this Act. Makes application of this Act prospective.

(c) Authorizes a member of the public transportation advisory committee with a term beginning before the effective date of this Act, notwithstanding the changes in law made by this Act, to be reappointed to the committee under Section 455.004, Transportation Code.

(d) Requires the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives each to appoint three members to the committee, in accordance with Section 455.004, Transportation Code, as amended by this Act, for terms beginning February 1, 2017, with one member having a term expiring February 1, 2019, one member having a term expiring February 1, 2021, and one member having a term expiring February 1, 2023.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2015.