

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1091
By: Nichols
Transportation
6/11/2019
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Section 372.053, Transportation Code, authorizes a toll entity to establish a discount program for eligible veterans. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) administers the current discount program, to waive tolls for certain veterans on TxDOT-owned toll roads. Current law does not limit the number of plates a qualifying veteran may obtain, though Sections 504.202 and 504.315, Transportation Code, specify that vehicle registration should be for a veteran's own use.

In fiscal year 2017, on the Central Texas Turnpike System and Grand Parkway, a total of 6.8 million transactions qualified for the veteran toll discount. As of August 31, 2017, 315,899 plates were eligible for the discount. 69,825 veterans had more than one qualifying license plate, and of that number, 719 veterans had five or more qualifying plates.

S.B. 1091 would limit the number of plates that a veteran is allowed to register for purposes of receiving the discount program for eligible veterans to one and would recognize that the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles has a system in place to designate a primary plate and allow free passage for the specified plate for each qualifying veteran. (Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

S.B. 1091 amends current law relating to vehicles eligible for veteran toll discount programs.

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 372.053, Transportation Code, by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (a-1) and (a-2), as follows:

(a) Creates Subsection (a-1) from existing text of this subsection and makes no further changes to this subsection.

(a-1) Requires the program established under Subsection (a) to include free or discounted use of the entity's toll project by an electronic toll collection customer whose account relates to a vehicle registered under Section 504.202 (Veterans With Disabilities) or 504.315(f) (relating to plates issued to recipients of certain medals) or (g) (relating to plates issued to recipients of the Purple Heart). Makes a nonsubstantive change.

(a-2) Authorizes a toll project entity to limit to no more than two the number of transponders issued to a participant in the entity's waiver program for which free or discounted use of the entity's toll project is provided under Subsection (a-1). Requires a toll project entity that adopts a limit under this subsection to allow a participant to be issued one extra transponder on a demonstration of hardship by the participant, as determined by the entity.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.