

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R551 TSS-D

S.B. 445
By: Hughes
Transportation
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Throughout the pandemic many independent school districts transitioned to virtual learning, leaving hungry many children who depended on the free and reduced lunch the schools provided. Many ISDs were quick to act and deployed their buses to certain stops to distribute meals to those children, yet using the stop alert system from the buses for this purpose is currently not allowed.

The proposed legislation will allow our school buses to use their alert systems to stop and permit a student or guardian to board and exit the bus for the distribution of the food.

As proposed, S.B. 445 amends current law relating to the use of a flashing warning signal light and certain other equipment by a person operating a school bus.

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

(c) Makes no changes to the first sentence of Subsection (c) (relating to the requirement that the operator of a bus activate all flashing warning signal lights and other equipment designed to warn others that the bus is stopping to load or unload children). Creates Subsection (c-1) from the second sentence of the existing text of Subsection (c).

(c-1) Creates this subsection from existing text. Prohibits a person from operating a light or other equipment described by Subsection (c), except when a school bus is being stopped or is stopped on a highway for certain reasons, including to distribute food to a student or the parent or guardian of a student. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2021.