



82nd Session Select Interim Charges Relating to Transportation & Homeland Security

January 13, 2012

Transportation & Homeland Security Committee

- Examine the impact of border violence and illegal trafficking on the Texas economy, including the infringement on Texas property rights. Make recommendations for enhancing border security and maximizing federal resources targeted for this purpose.
- Analyze the financial and personnel situation at 911 or emergency call centers across the state. Determine if call centers can be run more efficiently and effectively. The committee shall consider the oversight of local and county officials in their findings and recommendations.
- Study the appropriate role of Texas state military forces in enhancing the safety of all Texans, and make recommendations for improving the coordination, accountability, and effectiveness of all components of our state military forces, including the national, state, and air guards. Identify limitations on the forces providing border security and other operations, and make recommendations for better coordination with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. (Joint Charge with the Veteran Affairs and Military Installations Committee)
- Examine the anticipated impacts of the Panama Canal expansion on Texas' cargo and shipping industry, intermodal facilities, roadways, and ports. Examine the implementation of the Houston Ship Channel Security District and determine if additional security districts are needed for other ports.
- Analyze both near-term and long-term planning process documents for Metropolitan Planning Organizations and evaluate the impact of the current plans on congestion mitigation, specifically the state's 100 most-congested roadway segments.
- Study current state statutes and agency rules regulating oversize and overweight vehicles. Evaluate the public safety benefit of enforcing these regulations and effectiveness in preventing roadway damage, including the cost of repair and maintenance to infrastructure associated with overweight vehicles. Provide recommendations that balance economic productivity, public safety, and protection and maintenance of roadways. Provide recommendations on the need for additional weights and measures training for law enforcement in this state.

- Study the potential for toll collection and enforcement tools to pursue toll scofflaws for Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and local toll project entities.
- Examine the need for additional natural gas fueling infrastructure to efficiently utilize Texas' vast domestic reserves of natural gas. Also, examine the future requirements for public and private electric vehicle charging stations and the impact of the increased usage of alternative-fueled vehicles. Include geographic balance in the evaluation of alternative-fuel infrastructure. Assess the impact that increasing numbers of electric vehicles will have on the state's electric grid.
- Review and make recommendations regarding best practices for traffic-flow management to meet future statewide transportation needs. This study should consider a full range of options, including implementing employee flex time at all state agencies, park & ride, telecommuting, and rail.
- Study and make recommendations regarding the methods of financing for capital investment in the state's transportation system. Examine ways to prevent further wear on our roadways and reduce congestion in the system. Consider the long-term impact of the accumulation of debt for transportation projects, as well as the total cost of vehicle ownership as a result of varying levels of congestion and road maintenance. Educate and inform the public regarding the seriousness of the transportation challenges to better engage the public in forming a solution. (Joint Charge with Senate Finance Committee)
- Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Transportation & Homeland Security, 82nd Legislature, Regular and Called Sessions, and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following:
 - Implementation of the Sunset Advisory Commission recommendations, statutory changes specified in TxDOT's sunset legislation and TxDOT's modernization efforts, including the use of public and private engineering services and the implementation and use of business performance measures;
 - Implementation of Proposition 12 funding provided by the fiscal year 2012-2013 Appropriations Act, including an assessment of the impact of this funding on the state's Top 50 list of congested roadway segments and the funding needed to advance each region's priorities in fiscal year 2014-2015;
 - Progress of the Texas Department of Public Safety's Driver License Division efforts to enhance driver license processing, including technology and staff improvements, establishment of mega centers, additional mobile offices, and increased number of temporary visitor document processing staff.