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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/25/16
LAST UPDATED _____

SPONSOR Pirtle _____ **HB** _____

SHORT TITLE Commercial Driver Use of Mobile Devices _____ **SB** 171 _____

ANALYST Mulligan _____

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY16	FY17		
	N/A		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
 Administrative Office of the Courts

SUMMARY

SB 171 would amend the Motor Vehicle Code to provide for a new traffic violation, use of a handheld mobile communication device while driving a commercial motor vehicle. The bill would create the new offense as a “serious traffic violation”; elevate the status of the current offense of texting while driving to that category; and provide for monetary penalties for violations. The bill would also remove the offense of using a motor vehicle in the commission of a felony involving possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute from the list of offenses for which a commercial drivers license shall be revoked for life.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The bill likely would not have a notable fiscal impact on the Department of Public Safety’s (DPS’s) Motor Transportation Division (MTD), which currently carries out enforcement of the wide range of statutes governing commercial motor carriers, and it is unlikely that revenue generated from fines after conviction for the new offenses would meet or exceed additional financial costs associated with enforcement of the bill’s provisions. (At the time of this analysis, a response had not been received from DPS.)

However, broader financial and non-financial savings could result from enactment of the bill. Enforcement of a new prohibition on commercial driving while using a cell phone could lead to a reduction in the number of commercial motor vehicle crashes - and associated injuries, property damage, and costs - that occur as a result of this type of distracted driving.

The Administrative Office of the Courts indicates no fiscal impact.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

As noted, the bill would soften existing law by removing one offense currently on the books regarding revocation for life of commercial drivers licenses. Under the bill, the offense of using a motor vehicle in the commission of a felony involving possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute would no longer lead to the revocation of a commercial drivers license for life.

MM/jo