
DIGEST

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Ortego

HB No. 415

Abstract: Requires the Dept. of Transportation and Development to adopt a supplement to the manual and specifications for a uniform system of traffic control devices which permits parish governing authorities to request bilingual guide signs on state and federal highways within their boundaries. Provides that the Council for the Development of French in La. act as an advisory authority to the department.

Present law requires the Dept. of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to adopt a manual and specifications for a uniform system of traffic control devices consistent for use upon highways within this state. Such uniform system is required to correlate with and so far as possible conform to the system then current as approved by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

Proposed law requires DOTD to adopt a supplement to the manual required by present law, subject to approval by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, which shall permit parish governing authorities to request bilingual guide signs on state and federal highways within their boundaries.

Proposed law requires that any such supplement require uniformity for all bilingual guide signs installed on state and federal highways.

Proposed law provides that DOTD shall coordinate with the Council for the Development of French in La. in developing the supplement.

Proposed law requires that the supplement shall provide a process by which a parish governing authority may make a request for bilingual guide signs.

Proposed law provides that this process shall, at minimum, require the parish governing authorities to identify the signs it wishes to be bilingual, the non-English language to be used on the bilingual guide signs, and the terms and spelling thereof of any such non-English terms to appear on the bilingual signs. DOTD shall have approval of the non-English terms and the spelling thereof, unless the submitted terms are in Louisiana French. The Council for the Development of French in La. (CODOFIL) shall approve terms submitted in Louisiana French or provide alternative Louisiana French terms.

Proposed law provides that DOTD shall bear the cost of the production and installation if a guide sign that a parish governing authority requests to be bilingual is set for replacement or

installation in the fiscal year that the request is made. However, the parish governing authority shall bear any increased cost in production or installation, or both, caused by the placement of the bilingual terms on the guide sign.

Proposed law provides that a parish governing authority shall bear the entire cost of the production and installation if a guide sign that the parish governing authority requests to be bilingual is not set for replacement or installation in the fiscal year that the request is made.

(Amends R.S. 32:235(A)(1); Adds R.S. 25:651(C)(7) and R.S. 32:235(A)(3) and (4))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works to the original bill.

1. Removed references to symbol dominate signage.
2. Modified a provision relative to the purpose of CODOFIL to authorize the approval and provision of Louisiana French terms on signage to be installed by DOTD on state and federal highways.
3. Removed that the supplement to be adopted by DOTD require the use of terms in Louisiana French and English on new and replacement guide signs on state and federal highways.
4. Instead provided that the supplement required to be adopted by DOTD permit parish governing authorities to request bilingual guide signs on state and federal highways within their boundaries, require uniformity for all bilingual guide signs, and provide guidelines to ensure such uniformity. Further provided that DOTD coordinate with CODOFIL in developing the supplement.
5. Required that the supplement to be adopted by DOTD provide a process by which a parish governing authority may make a request for bilingual guide signs, and for minimum standards for that process, including that the parish shall submit non-English terms to be used on bilingual guide signs to DOTD for approval. CODOFIL shall have approval of Louisiana French terms or provide alternative Louisiana French terms.
6. Added provisions that provide relative to payment for production and installation of bilingual guide signs requested by parish governing authorities.
7. Removed that the supplement shall require dominant language terms appear at the top of the sign and minority language terms appear at the bottom of the sign with all terms appearing in the same size font.
8. Removed part of proposed law requiring testing of bilingual guide signs in certain parishes enumerated in present law.