



NEWS RELEASE

Senator Robert Nichols

Senate District 3 www.senate.state.tx.us (512) 463-0103

For Immediate Release
April 12, 2017

Contact: Sydni Mitchell
Tel: (512) 463-0103

Nichols Passes Ports Corridor Bill

Austin, TX – This week, Senator Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) passed Senate Bill 1524 from the Senate, which creates a permit to allow vehicles to carry oceangoing or international trade shipping containers within 30 miles of a port of entry, or an international bridge.

"This legislation will allow Texas to maintain its competitive edge, as we compete with other states such as Louisiana, Florida and New York, who allow for increased weights on their roads," said Senator Nichols. "I am grateful to the Lt. Governor and members of the Senate for supporting this important piece of legislation."

Since 1989, due to permitting requirements and weight allowances, industry has been faced with shipping partially empty containers that costs them extra money, especially on international trade. This causes them to not be as competitive as in other states and on the international market.

Senate Bill 1524 helps to solve this problem by creating an annual permit, which would allow ocean going containers to travel within 30 miles of a port of entry or an international bridge, with an allowed increased weight limit, and are required to have extra axles. They would be limited to only Texas Department of Transportation approved routes and the containers must be sealed with a U.S. customs seal. Applicants who want to haul containers covered under this bill would also be required to obtain extra training for a commercial driver's license.

"Thanks to leadership by Chairman Nichols and the Senate's passage of SB 1524, Texas is taking strides to cement its position as the nation's number one exporting state. Many of our exports move through Texas seaports in ocean-going containers and more than 70 percent of that freight is shipped by truck at one point or another. SB 1524 will make Texas manufacturers more competitive by allowing for more productive, safer trucks, while reducing truck miles and traffic congestion," said Tony Bennett, President & CEO, Texas Assoc. of Manufacturers.

"Senator Nichols developed a smart policy that will keep Texas competitive with other U.S. ports, and bring more jobs and more investment to our state," said Todd Staples, President of the Texas Oil and Gas Association. "This solution will reduce logistical cost for Texas business, while improving safety and reducing the impact on our public roads. Nichols demonstrated key leadership that will move Texas forward."

###