Texas is the ONLY state in the nation that does not have a Scenic Byway Program.

House Bill 1908:
- Creates a State Scenic Byway Program under TxDOT which would allow for local communities to apply for and receive federal grants if qualified; and
- Designates 30 already statutorily protected roadways from the construction of new billboards. These roadways will automatically qualify to be a part of the state scenic byway program, if passed.

The purpose of this legislation is to (1) increase tourism along Texas roadways; and (2) preserve the state’s most scenically, culturally, or historically significant roadways and adjacent communities.

To qualify for federal funding, communities along designated scenic byways must exhibit one of more of six core intrinsic qualities — scenic, natural, historic, recreational, archaeological, or cultural — contributing towards a unique travel experience; and may not erect a new billboard along these roadways.

**Key points to consider:**
- This bill does not create any new stretches of roadways that cannot have billboards.
- Designating a stretch of road as a ‘Scenic Byway’ does not create a burden for the local communities. Designation as a ‘Scenic Byway’ is just that, a designation. The pursuit of federal funding as a Scenic Byway must be a community-led effort, requiring local buy-in and would do so by applying through TxDOT.

Some of the most common uses of scenic byway funds are used for tourism purposes like a welcome center or beautification efforts.

Scenic Byways bring significant economic benefit to local communities and are a critical part of America’s travel and tourism industry, which generated $2.9 trillion in economic impact in 2019, according to the U.S. Travel Association. For example, the Blue Ridge Parkway generated **$1.4 billion** in economic output and supported **16,300 jobs** in North Carolina and Virginia in 2019, according to the National Park Service. During the same year, the Natchez Trace Scenic Parkway brought **$13.1 million** in economic output to Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi, supporting **161 jobs**.
Existing Protected Highways

- Central Texas
- East Texas
- South Texas
- West Texas