

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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### Overview

This bill makes various changes in the laws governing highway rest areas to allow leases to public or private entities and sale of items at rest areas.

#### Section

- 1 Commercial establishments in rest areas.** Amends the law that prohibits commercial establishments within the right-of-way of a controlled-access highway by allowing acknowledgement signs under section 0. Changes a reference to tourist information centers to travel information centers.
- 2 Leases of rest areas.** Allows the Department of Transportation to make leases for highway rest areas.

**Subdivision 1. Lease agreements.** Allows the Department of Transportation to make lease agreements, through negotiations with public or nonprofit entities or best-value with private entities, relating to use of rest areas and travel information centers. Defines "private entities" as chambers of commerce, tourist bureaus, and other tourism and economic development agencies.

Allows leases to:

- be for up to 20 years,

## Section

- allow a lessee to operate a rest area wholly or partly,
- allow the lessee to sell products or services appropriate to the rest area,
- allow the lessee to make leasehold improvements with department approval.

Requires lease agreements to promote and encourage employment of needy elderly persons.  
Allows acknowledgement signs for lessee.

**Subd. 2. Lease revenues.** Requires lease revenue to be deposited in the safety rest area account.

**Subd. 3. Other law.** Specifies that the bill does not affect contracts made for operation of vending machines by the blind.

### **3 Sales at rest areas.** Regulates sales at rest areas.

**Subdivision 1. Sales authorized.** Allows the department to sell travel and tourism-related publications and maps and travel and tourism-related merchandise and services. Allows the department to rent or sell items for the convenience of rest area users, including lottery tickets, tickets to local attractions, and governmental permits and licenses. Allows the department to collect a service fee for tickets, permits, and licenses.

**Subd. 2. Advertising.** Allows the department to advertise availability of program or item offered at a rest area.

**Subd. 3. Software sales.** Allows the department to sell or license intellectual property and software products or services developed by a government unit, or custom-developed by a vendor for a government unit.

**Subd. 4. Revenues.** Requires money received for sales under this section to be deposited in the safety rest area account.

**Subd. 5. Competing merchandise.** Requires the department and State Services for the Blind to make an agreement defining and regulating sale of merchandise that competes with sales made by the blind.

### **4 Sponsorship.** Provides for sponsorship of rest areas.

**Subdivision 1. Sponsorship program.** Allows the department to make agreements for public or private sponsorship of rest areas by transportation and tourism-related entities. Allows acknowledgement signs on highways.

**Subd. 2. Revenue.** Requires deposit of revenue from sponsorships in the safety rest area account.

**Subd. 3. Prohibition.** Prohibits action under this section that would result in loss or

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repayment of federal funds.

**5 Sale of surplus property.** Provides for sale of surplus rest area property.

**Subdivision 1. Exception.** Provides that the department is not required to offer surplus rest area property under the general law that governs reconveyance of surplus highway property, if the land was acquired more than ten years before the sale.

**Subd. 2. Proceeds.** Requires proceeds from sale of surplus rest area land and buildings to be deposited in the safety rest area account. Appropriates the proceeds to the department for the actual cost of selling the property, real estate brokerage fees, fees, and any other expenditure authorized from that account.

**6 Safety rest area account.** Creates a safety rest area account.

**Subdivision 1. Established.** Creates a safety rest area account in the trunk highway fund.

**Subd. 2. Deposits.** Requires revenues from rest area leases, sponsorships, advertising, sale of surplus rest area property, and other rest area revenue to be deposited in the account.

**Subd. 3. Expenditures.** Appropriates money in the account to the commissioner of transportation. Allows the department to spend money in the account to fund rest areas, including administration, maintenance, operations, development, improvements, customer services, and other activities.

**7 Advertising program.** Repeals the law authorizing the department to establish a franchise program to lease space in travel information centers and rest areas, and substitutes an authorization to lease advertising space in them. Repeals a reference to the initial phase of the franchise program. Allows the department to make contracts to permit vendors to construct, operate, and maintain additional information structures on rest area land.

**8 Franchise agreements.** Repeals references to franchises for travel information at rest areas, and replaces them with references to agreements and vendors. Requires that revenues from travel information agreements be deposited in the safety rest area account. Allows the Department of Transportation and Office of Tourism to make an agreement to define distribution of revenues.

**9 Additional franchise provisions.** Deletes references to franchises for travel information at rest areas, and replaces them with references to agreements and vendors. Corrects a reference to federal law. Changes tourist information centers to travel information centers.

**10 Plans for public travel facilities.** Allows vending machines at rest areas to sell other items besides food, nonalcoholic beverages, and milk.

**11 Franchise agreements.** Deletes a reference to franchises in the law that exempts travel information agreements from general law on DOT leases.

**12 Franchise agreements.** Deletes a reference to franchises in the law that exempts travel information agreements from general law on leases of airspace or subspace over or under highways.

**13 Franchise agreements.** Deletes a reference to franchises in the law that exempts travel information agreements from general law that prohibits erection of permanent buildings on highway right-of-way.

**Section**

**14**      **Revisor instruction.** Directs the Revisor of Statutes to renumber statutes and correct cross-references.