



Co-Vice Chair, Rep. Yvonne Davis

Co-Vice Chair, Senator Jose Rodriguez

Co-Vice Chair, Rep. Rene Oliveira

LSG Floor Report For Postponed Business- Thursday, April 27, 2017

Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
HB 1351 By: Wray	Relating to the prohibition of local motor fuel taxes on compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas.	Ways & Means	<p>HB 1351 adds compressed natural gas (CNG) and liquefied natural gas (LNG) to the definition of motor fuels protected from additional sale, use, or distribution taxes imposed by a political subdivision.</p> <p>Current tax law protects gasoline, diesel fuel, and liquefied gas from additional excise or occupational taxes imposed by local municipalities. CNG and LNG were included in the definition of liquefied gas prior to legislation enacted in 2013, which created a new method of tax collection and dealer license requirements that effectively removed both CNG and LNGs from the definition of liquefied gas. HB 1351 would close a loophole that allows local entities to impose their own motor fuel taxes on CNG and LNG fuels, and would extend equal protections to all types of motor fuels.</p> <p>Currently, CNG and LNG is taxed at a \$0.15 per gallon and applies to the use of liquefied gas for powering motor vehicles on state highways. After deductions are made from diesel and liquefied gas taxes for the purposes of refunds and administrative costs, 1/4 of these taxes are deposited to the Available School Fund and the remaining 3/4 are deposited to the State Highway Fund. As more people move to our state and drive on Texas highways, the gradual increase of the motor fuel tax revenue directly translates to the State fuel tax deposits to the State Highway Fund (SHF). However, with the simultaneous highway construction costs rising, the State's purchasing power for road construction projects is reduced. While trucks carrying natural gases tend to weigh roughly 2,000 lbs. more than trucks carrying other types of fuel and 38% of major Texas roads in fair or poor condition, adequate funding for Texas roads is necessary to preserve state infrastructure and competitive commerce.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org

LSG Floor Report For General Calendar- Thursday, April 27, 2017

Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
------	---------	-----------	-----------------------	----------------

<p>HB 1101 By: Pickett/ Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to the authority of the chief appraiser of an appraisal district to require a person to file a new application to confirm the person's current qualification-z for the exemption from ad valorem taxation of the total appraised value of the residence homestead of a 100 percent disabled veteran.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>This bill prohibits property tax appraisal districts from requiring permanently disabled veterans to submit recertification documents to retain their exemptions. These veterans are certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, and their condition will not change in the future. Requiring them to submit extra paperwork to the appraisal district places an unnecessary burden on these individuals. HB 1101 streamlines the process and communicates the state's gratitude for the sacrifice of our veterans.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1003 By: Capriglione</p>	<p>Relating to investment of public funds.</p>	<p>Investments & Financial Services</p>	<p>This bill seeks to clarify the procedures for municipal governments to invest funds, bringing Texas statute in line with changes to the federal Securities and Exchange Commission's regulations. These changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorizing deposits to federally-insured accounts that earn interest • Removing minimum share values for money market mutual fund investments, and setting limitations on the duration of eligible funds (at least one year, or limited to investment-grade securities). • Mandating that public funds investment pools keep its portfolio's market value in line with its book value. • Including hedge funds in the list of permissible investment types while limiting the length of hedge contract agreements to 5 years. <p>HB 1003 will not substantively affect the way that local governments can invest public funds, instead giving them the ability to consider other methods. These options will allow those governments to develop prudent portfolios that meet the current federal requirements and safeguard the public's money.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Joel Kissell 210-382-4295 Joel@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2387 BY: Herrero</p>	<p>Relating to disclosure and use of certain information regarding the Crime Victims' Compensation Act.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 2387 would prohibit the Attorney General from disclosing information in Crime Victims' Compensation Act applications, documents, or any other records under state public information law and exempt these documents from disclosure, discovery, subpoena, or other means of legal compulsion for release. The instances in which the Attorney General can release information included in applications for compensation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By court order for good cause shown if the information is not available for another source; • With consent from the claimant or victim, or the person providing the information to the Attorney General; • To an employee or another person under the Attorney General's direction; • To another crime victims' compensation program; • To a person the Attorney General authorizes to receive the information for the purpose of conducting audits required by state or federal law; verification or health care services review or mental/physical examination or autopsy; to prevent, deter, or punish fraud; to assert subrogation or restitution rights; • As the Attorney General deems necessary, including presenting the information in court; or • In response to a subpoena issued in a criminal proceeding and requests an application for compensation. 	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>



			<p>Should a subpoena request information within an application for compensation, the Attorney General must redact any confidential information, including the name, social security number, address, telephone number, or any other identifiable information of a crime victim. However, the court can still order the release of additional information. The effective date for HB 2387 is September 1, 2017 and applies only to information requests received on or after this date.</p> <p>Ensuring confidentiality for crime victims is paramount to the nature of criminal justice. Current statutes protect crime victims from open records requests, but vulnerable personal information is still available through subpoenas. For victims of domestic violence, confidentiality protects them from the threat of further violence committed at the hands of their abusers: In 2015, 158 women were killed by domestic partners, 78% of which occurred in the home. HB 2387 would ensure protection of sensitive information through the criminal justice system, and would serve to put a stop to the revictimization of claimants seeking compensation under the Crime Victims' Compensation Act for injustices done to them.</p>	
HB 2611 By: VanDeaver	Relating to broker agreements for the sale of real property by school districts.	Public Education	Currently if a school district wishes to sale real property they must follow the procedures delineated in the Texas Local Government Code 272. This process requires the property to have a certified appraisal and a proper notice for bidding be published in a countywide circulation. This process of notice and bidding does not always garner the same interest that a property would if it were listed in a multiple listing service. HB 2611 addresses this issue by allowing school districts to sale certain real property using a multiple-listing service. This bill does not eliminate a districts opportunity to utilize the notice and bidding procedures or subvert real estate laws. It gives districts an alternative way to dispose of property when the existing one fails to produce a buyer.	Will of the House Evaluated by: Arielle Day 225-588-1221 Arielle@Texaslsg.org
HB 3722 By: King, Ken/ Faircloth	Relating to funding adjustments for school districts that annex unacceptable school districts.	Public Education	<p>Current law incentivizes districts that annex failing districts by adjusting the new district's Tier 1 funding by the percentage of the students required by the annexation for 5 years. Since the law only adjusts Tier 1 funding, a Chapter 41 district is ineligible for this incentive. HB 3722 gives the Texas Education Agency the ability to authorize consolidation incentives or annexation incentives, whichever is greater, to a school in addition to their other funding regardless of whether they're Chapter 41 or 42.</p> <p>This bill essentially creates a simple benefit for wealthy districts. Wealthy districts enjoy a number of funding advantages over property poor districts under current law. Passing this legislation before rectifying elements of the system that create inequity is unfair to poor districts.</p>	Unfavorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 225-588-1221 Arielle@Texaslsg.org
HB 2059 By: Phillips	Relating to the expunction of certain convictions or arrests of a minor for certain alcohol-related offenses.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures	Currently the Alcoholic Beverage Code provides a procedure by which a person who was convicted for an Alcoholic Beverage Code violation as a minor can have their record expunged. HB 2059 allows for that procedure to include the expunction of arrest records. A person who was arrested as a minor for an offense related to alcoholic beverages may petition the court with original jurisdiction of the offense to have their arrest record expunged. Under current law, the procedure for the expunction of a record relating to an offense involving alcohol that did not result in a conviction is more time consuming and expensive than the procedures for expunction of records relating to an offense involving alcohol that did result in a conviction. This bill addresses that problem.	Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org
HB 578 By: Turner	Relating to certain leave policies for state employees.	General Investigating & Ethics	This bill expands the ability of agencies to approve emergency leave for reasons not specifically listed out in current statute, provided that the request originates with the employee. Emergency leave can only be granted to employees who will return afterwards, closing a loophole in code where leave could be used as severance for employees being fired. Reporting procedures for leave are strengthened, with agencies reporting to the Legislative Budget Board about any employees receiving more than one month's leave, defined as 168 hours. The comptroller's office is also required to established standardized reporting through CAPPs and any future	Favorable Evaluated by: Joel Kissell 210-382-4295 Joel@Texaslsg.org



			systems. HB 578 simultaneously makes agencies more responsive to their employees' needs and eliminates ambiguities in statute that allowed inappropriate uses of emergency leave.	
HB 2378 By: Larson	Relating to extensions of an expired permit for the transfer of groundwater from a groundwater conservation district.	Natural Resources	HB 2378 seeks to align the permitting renewal process for the transferring of groundwater out of a district with the operating permit renewal cycle. Adding subsections (j-1) and (j-2) to Chapter 36 of the Water Code would grant the transferring permit to not be shorter than the operating permit that is in effect of the time of the extension and for each additional term. An extended permit will be subject to the same conditions contained in the permit before its automatic extension. Combining the extension process of permits for transferring groundwater to the operating permit, will allow for a more streamlined approach to the permitting process for Groundwater Conservation Districts.	Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org
HB 279 By: Howard / Alvarado / Minjarez / Davis, Sarah / Blanco	Relating to the continuation of the women's health advisory committee.	Public Health	HB 279 extends the abolishment date for the of the women's health advisory committee (WHAC) from September 2017 to September 2019. WHAC was established in 2014 to provide recommendations to HHSC on the consolidation of major women's health programs. While this consolidation has been completed, it is critical that WHAC have ample time to evaluate the accessibility and effectiveness of women's health care services in Texas. At a time when the overall health of women is declining, it is imperative that Texas women have access to reliable, quality care. Some programs under the committee's jurisdiction, such as Healthy Texas Women, were rolled out as recently as June 2016. Extending the committee's abolishment date ensures that program implementation and effectiveness can be accurately measured, and that any necessary programmatic adjustments can be made.	Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org
HB 1266 By: Geren	Relating to notice for hearings and trial settings in criminal cases.	Criminal Jurisprudence	HB 1266 adds a requirement for trial courts to grant a motion for a continuance of a criminal action on an oral or written motion from the state or the defendant should the trial court set a hearing or trial and fail to notify the attorney for the state and the defendant, or the defendant's attorney, of the hearing/trial date at least three business days beforehand. The period between the date the trial begins and the date the judgment is entered is not applicable for the proposed three business day notice. This provision would only apply to criminal actions pending before a trial court on or after the effective date of September 1, 2017, regardless of when the offense was committed. HB 1266 seeks to codify what is already current practice in civil code for pre-trial motions. By failing to provide either the state or the defense adequate time to prepare for the hearing, the trial court leaves little time for both parties to contact witnesses. Provisions in HB 1266 seek to allow both the state and the defense a fair trial by allowing time for both parties to properly prepare for a case.	Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org
HB 743 By: Farrar / Bernal / González, Mary / Allen	Relating to social work services in public schools.	Public Education	Currently, there is not a definition for school social work services in the Texas Education Code. HB 743 addresses this by codifying the role of public school social workers and the services they may provide to a district's students and family. Many Texas school children are faced with significant obstacles to learning, such as: bullying, child abuse, substance abuse, gang violence, teen pregnancy, domestic violence, suicide, and other personal crises. A school social worker is uniquely trained to provide social work services that identify and address these complex problems and meet the needs of the whole child. This bill does not mandate a school to hire a school social worker; it provides school administrators with a clear definition of what role social workers can play.	Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org



<p>HB 1424 By: Murphy/ Workman</p>	<p>Relating to the operation of an unmanned aircraft over certain facilities or sports venues; creating a criminal offense.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 1424 creates a Class B misdemeanor offense for the operation of drones over a local, state, or federal correctional or detention facility, as well as a sports venue. Persons flying drones over a county jail, facilities operated by or under contract with TDCJ, operated/under contract with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, or facilities operated/under contract with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement would commit a Class B misdemeanor unless committed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A federal, state, or local government entity, or an individual under contract with or under the direction/on behalf of the entity, • A law enforcement agency, or an individual under contract with or under the direction/on behalf of the entity, or • An individual operating a drone for a commercial purpose if authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration. <p>The provisions prohibiting drone operation over a sports venue refers to an arena, automobile racetrack, coliseum, stadium, or other type of facility primarily used for professional or amateur sports or events with a seating capacity of 30,000 or more people. Drone operation for both correctional facilities and sports venues prohibits operation less than 400 feet above ground level, and the same provisions listed above for correctional facilities apply, with added protections for an owner of the sports venue or anyone with prior written consent of the sports venue owner.</p> <p>HB 1424 as an effective date of September 1, 2017 and applies only to offenses committed on or after this date. Innovations in technology have created a new avenue for abuse by individuals wishing to transport contraband to minimal security correctional facilities. There is currently no enforcement mechanism for people flying drones in high volume spaces.</p>	<p>Will of the House Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1284 By: Thompson, Senfronia</p>	<p>Relating to the licensing and regulation of a journeyman lineman.</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>This bill clarifies the licensing and regulation of a journeyman lineman as well as matters relating to the journeyman lineman examination. Currently, there are parts of the journeyman lineman licensing exam that require the person testing to be proficient in areas related to electrical work that are not within the purview of a journeyman lineman’s job. HB 1284 requires the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation to remove test barriers and to make the test more reflective of the work performed by journeyman lineman. The intent of this bill is to remove barriers for entry into the journeyman license occupation to ensure greater accessibility for individuals pursuing a journeyman lineman license.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1655 By: King, Phil</p>	<p>Relating to the reporting of certain offenses committed by members of the Texas military forces.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 1655 seeks to clarify the notification and reporting requirements for domestic violence incidents, offenses against the person, and offenses constituting family violence committed by members of the Texas military forces. The bill specifies that the court clerk must provide written notice of the conviction or deferred adjudication to the staff judge advocate general’s office. HB 1655 applies only to judgements of conviction entered, or deferred adjudication granted, on or after September 1, 2017.</p> <p>Current statute requires reporting notifications to be sent to the Joint Force Headquarters and does not specify to exactly whom to send the notice within such a large office as the Headquarters. Adding clarifying language for notifying the staff judge advocate general’s office of domestic violence incidents and family violence offenses committed by Texas military forces, including the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, and Texas State Guard, ensures the information will be disseminated appropriately within the criminal justice system.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1469 By: Bailes</p>	<p>Relating to qualifications for certain teachers employed by certain open-enrollment charter schools.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>This bill revises the qualifications for a person to teach a noncore vocational course in an open enrollment charter school that serves youth referred to or placed in a residential trade center by a local or state agency. The current qualification includes a baccalaureate</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295</p>



			<p>degree, and this bill allows a person to be qualified if the person has demonstrated subject matter expertise related to the course and has received at least 20 hours of classroom management training.</p> <p>This bill does not lower the standard for academic teachers. It creates an exemption that helps charters hire people with industry knowledge and experience to teach noncore vocational courses (i.e. auto technology and culinary arts).</p>	Arielle@Texaslsg.org
HB 1704 By: Kuempel	Relating to the award of court costs and attorney's fees in actions to determine the applicability of certain local government regulations.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	<p>Gives courts the discretion to award court costs, and reasonable and necessary attorney's fees to the prevailing party in vested rights actions under Chapter 245, Local Government Code. Although the Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act, which authorizes the award of court costs and reasonable attorney's fees in action against cities, has been applied in vested rights proceedings for years, recent case law found that Chapter 245 does not authorize the court this discretion. This is inconsistent under the law between the Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act and the Vested Rights Statute.</p> <p>Permit rights determinations are generally contentious disputes between cities and developers. On the one hand, allowing courts to award associated costs and reasonable attorney's fees to prevailing parties in these actions would create consistency in Texas law, and might create more of an incentive for developers to litigate when they begin a costly project, but are halted by a city from completing it because of a new regulation or ordinance. Thus, this would help developers in situations where cities might not be complying with state law in development regulations. However, vested rights cases also involve developers bypassing new city rules that have been enacted; for example, a local ordinance to protect trees. This bill might then just be stirring up more litigation and awarding attorney's fees and court costs from taxpayer dollars in situations where the city is trying to regulate developer projects for the well-being of the city.</p>	Will of the House Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org
HB 2413 By: Burkett	Relating to certain identifying information regarding career school or college students.	Economic & Small Business Development	HB 2413 expands qualifications for protected student information to include information in the possession of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), career schools or colleges, or any other entity from which TWC receives student information. Currently, students at technical colleges or in vocational programs do not have their personal information protected; this information can include social security numbers, birth dates, and passport information. It is critical that students' sensitive information is protected regardless of what type of educational institution or career program they choose to enroll in.	Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org
HB 2332 By: Thompson, Ed	Relating to the creation of the Brazoria County Management District No. 1; providing authority to issue bonds; providing authority to impose assessments, fees, and taxes.	Special Purpose Districts	HB 2332 creates Brazoria County Management District No. 1 in an unincorporated area outside of the city of Alvin. The Management District will enhance economic opportunities in the area a supply recreational facilities. The implementation of a sales and use tax would be impose after voter approval. This bill lays out additional authorities, powers, taxes, and includes language for its dissolution. This bill does not create powers for eminent domain.	Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org
HB 1669 By: King, Tracy	Relating to appeals and complaints arising from school laws brought by parents and public school students; authorizing the award of attorney's fees.	Public Education	This bill grants the commissioner of education the authority to consider an appeal brought against a district by a parent or student relating to a complaint about a student's participation in an extracurricular activity that does not involve the violation of a guaranteed parental right frivolous. HB 1669 also authorizes the commissioner to order the parent or student to pay the district's attorney's fees if and when the appeal of the complaint is found to be frivolous. This bill also clarifies that the board of trustees is not required to address a complaint concerning a student 's participation in an extracurricular activity that does not involve a violation of the student's or parent's rights.	Favorable w/Amendments Evaluated by: Arielle Day 225-588-1221 Arielle@Texaslsg.org



			<p>The intent of HB 1669 is to prevent the abuse of a district’s grievance process by reserving academic complaints for the commissioner and complaints regarding extracurricular activities for the board of trustees. Certain appeals and complaints brought to the commissioner have no legal basis. These kinds of complaints drain the district’s resources because the district is required to investigate the grievance, hold a hearing, conduct a thorough and detailed investigation, respond to public information request, and obtain an intervention from the district’s legal counsel. However, interested parties contend that this bill could have the unintended effect of limiting a parent’s or student’s ability to advocate effectively.</p> <p>An amendment that reduces the bill to only having the effect of clarifying that the board of trustees is not required to address a complaint concerning a student’s participation in an extracurricular activity that does not involve a violation of the student’s or parent’s rights creates a more favorable solution.</p>	
<p>HB 2356 By: Cospers / Shine</p>	<p>Relating to the applicability of the law governing the provision of state aid to certain local governments disproportionately affected by the granting of ad valorem tax relief to disabled veterans.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>This bill expands the range of municipalities that can qualify for reimbursement of lost property taxes resulting from an exemption for disabled military veterans. Currently, such reimbursement is only available to municipalities located in the same county as a military installation; HB 2356 includes adjacent counties as well. The process of receiving reimbursements is not automatic, as the municipalities must submit an application to the comptroller’s office demonstrating that they are disproportionately affected by the exemptions. The bill does not affect the property tax exemption for the veterans, only the ability of the local governments to seek relief from the state. This bill will mainly affect the region surrounding Fort Hood, home to one of the highest concentrations of veterans in the state.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2750 By: Hinojosa, Gina / Lozano / Raney / Clardy</p>	<p>Relating to requiring a public employer to give notice to new employees of the ability of certain employees to participate in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.</p>	<p>Government Transparency & Operation</p>	<p>HB 2750 seeks to help inform new and existing state employees on a program that would help alleviate the crushing student loan debt many Texans live with every day. Nationwide, between only the third and fourth quarter of 2016, there was a \$31 billion increase in student loan debt, which now totals \$1.31 trillion. For the first time, ever student debt surpasses total national credit card debt. The average monthly student loan payment is currently \$351, which is a significant share of income for most public employees. On average, the debt per student in Texas is estimated at \$27,000. Once a student completes the program the amount of spendable income they would have to put back into the Texas economy is immeasurable.</p> <p>This bill requires state employers as defined by Sec.620.001 to inform employees of their ability to participate in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program administered by the US Department of Education. The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program rewards employees who work in the nonprofit or public sectors and make 120 on- time payments on their Federal Direct Loans by forgiving the remainder of their debt. There is no cost associated with the bill and has the potential to provide financial relief to state employees who qualify.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Ana Ramon 210-382-4295 Ana@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1571 By: Paddie</p>	<p>Relating to energy savings performance contracts.</p>	<p>Energy Resources</p>	<p>HB 1571 addresses infrastructure and maintenance needs pertaining to performance contracting, by expanding contracts to account for costs that are avoided from installing new equipment. Performance contracting is a voluntary contract between a governmental entity and a contractor that guarantees savings from energy, or water conservation that occurs as a result of upgrading the entities existing facilities. HB 1571 amends Education Code related applicable to public and higher education, and Government code by striking the current definition of energy savings performance contracts, and replacing that language with the definition of energy savings contracts from Section 302.001, Local Government Code to provide clarity and uniformity amongst the market places. The bill permits the governing boards of public education, higher education, and state agencies to use any available money to pay the provider of the energy, or water conservation. The boards are not required to pay for these costs solely out of savings realized by their</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 214-659-3072 Fabeain@Texaslsg.org</p>



			agency. HB 1571 amends the Local Government Code by requiring that avoided anticipated costs be included in baseline calculations and net operating costs. The bill also removes the restrictions that prevent the governing body of local government from using money borrowed from the state to pay energy and water conservation providers.	
HB 2802 By: Larson	Relating to the review of river authorities by the Sunset Advisory Commission.	Natural Resources	HB 2802 repeals River Authorities from being reviewed through the sunset process. River Authorities already go through a management audit every 5 years and a financial audit each year. The cost of going through the Sunset Review can be up to 30% of their revenue. This bill would allow for the management and financial auditing already in place be the determining factor in their efficiency and eliminate duplicative review.	Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org
HB 1735 By: Faircloth	Relating to the powers and duties of certain election officers.	Elections	HB 1735 allows for an election judge or election clerk to be removed, replaced, or reassigned who causes disruption or willfully disobeys provisions within the Election Code in accordance with their duties. An oral warning will be given, and the appropriate measures will be, as described by statute, taken to fill their replacement. Elections judges will be replaced through an Emergency Appointment and be affiliated with the same political party of the prior judge. An election clerk will be appointed by the presiding judge and if application will be of the same party affiliation. This bill also requires members of the Early Voting Ballot Board and Central Counting Station Officers to take an oral oath and will be issued identification prior to performing duties as an election officer. This bill also sets forth a provision regarding the resolution of an incorrect ruling on a ballot by the early voting ballot board before the canvassing authority convenes through a petition to the district court to seek injunctive or other measure for remedy. Elections that are ordered by the governor or county judge the county clerk will confer and establish an agreement with each political party before submitting a petition.	Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org
HB 239 By: Hernandez/ White	Relating to a report regarding the confinement of pregnant inmates by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.	Corrections	HB 239 would require the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to conduct and prepare a report on the treatment and confinement of pregnant inmates in both facilities operated by or under contract with TDCJ. Information included in the report must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of TDCJ implementation of policies and procedures relating to providing adequate care to pregnant inmates while confined within the affiliated facilities, and any adopted policies regarding placement of inmates in administrative segregation (security detention, pre-hearing detention, protective custody, or temporary detention); • Data regarding health care provided to pregnant inmates, including availability of obstetrical or gynecological care, prenatal visits, mental health care, and drug abuse/chemical dependency treatment services; • A detailed summary of nutritional standards (including average caloric intake and other dietary information), work assignments, housing conditions, and situations in which pregnant inmates were restrained (including reasons the determination to use restraints was made), as applicable; and • The number of miscarriages between September 1, 2017 to September 1, 2018 while pregnant inmates were confined in a TDCJ-operated or contracted facility TDCJ must report the data findings to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, and each standing committee of each chamber in the Legislature with primary jurisdiction over matters relating to corrections. The bill has an effective date of September 1, 2017 and expires February 1, 2019.	Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org



			In 2015, the 84th Legislature passed HB 1140 which required the Commission on Jail Standards to produce a similar report regarding the treatment and services available to pregnant inmates confined in county jails. HB 239 seeks to provide uniformity between county jails and TDCJ facilities for standard care for pregnant inmates. Recent data from TDCJ shows that the department has received 265 pregnant women: 80 women were released prior to giving birth and 39 women remain incarcerated and have yet to deliver, while 2 women experienced stillbirths. An estimated, 144 women in TDCJ-related facilities that gave birth through January 2017.	
HB 1156 By: Davis, Sarah / Minjarez / Laubenberg / Farrar / et al.	Relating to the unlawful restraint of a dog; creating an offense.	Public Health	<p>Inhumane tethering practices can cause grave health consequences for dogs including embedded collars, choking, and even death. Law enforcement agencies and animal rights advocates assert that current statute related to unlawful restraint of a dog is ambiguous and unenforceable due to contradictory sections and vague definitions, allowing dog abusers to repeatedly offend. HB 1156 completely rewrites Subchapter E of the Health and Safety Code to ensure there are clear, enforceable laws related to unlawful tethering. It outlines clear definitions for adequate shelter, collar, harness, restraint, and proper fit to make the law easily interpretable for both dog-owners and law enforcement. Major provisions of the new code include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandates that dogs have adequate shelter, shade from direct sunlight, and access to water when restrained • Bans the use of chains and other weighted restraints for tethering • Stipulates that items used for tethering must be five times the length of the dog or at least 10-feet and that the tether must be attached to a properly fitted collar or harness • Streamlines the enforcement process by removing the mandatory written warning 24-hour window (which allows offenders to rectify the violation, avoid a criminal penalty, and then repeatedly re-offend) • Creates offenses for tethering a dog in violation of this subchapter of a Class C misdemeanor (for first time offenses) or a Class B misdemeanor (for repeat offenses) <p>To ensure that the law isn't overly punitive, the bill outlines certain exceptions including dogs restrained on public camping sites, dogs restrained for the use of shepherding or herding livestock, and dogs left in open-air truck beds for no longer than the time required for the owner to complete a temporary task. Additionally, the bill explicitly states that it does not preempt local tethering ordinances, should those ordinances meet the minimum requirements of the law.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org
HB 104 By: White	Relating to notification provided to certain victims of criminal offenses.	Corrections	<p>HB 104 would create an optional notification procedure for victims of 3G felony offenses when a previously-incarcerated defendant is indicted of a subsequent offense of the same severity. 3G offenses are first-degree felonies that include capital murder, aggravated kidnapping, trafficking of persons, sexual assault, sexual performance of a child, drug offenses involving the use of a child in commission or taking place within 1,000 feet of a school, or offenses with affirmative finding regarding the use of a deadly weapon, and subsequently make the defendant ineligible for judge-ordered community supervision. The bill applies only to indicted defendants who have received a sentence for imprisonment at a facility operated by or under contract with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and were released (either on parole, to mandatory supervision, or following discharge of the sentence) as a result of a previous conviction of a 3G offense. The bill further requires the attorney representing the state in a criminal proceeding to notify an officer designated by TDCJ of the offense charged within 10 days after the new indictment.</p> <p>Should TDCJ receive notice of an indictment under this statute, the department must notify each victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim of the previous crime of the new offense charged in the indictment, upon the victim or family's request. A victim, guardian, or relative opting into this procedure must provide their address to TDCJ for notification purposes. The board or the department must provide confidentiality to the victim or family member's personal information, unless those opting in approve</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org



			<p>TDCJ to disclose of their name or address or if a court determines there is good cause for the information and issues an order for disclosure.</p> <p>Provisions in the bill require TDCJ to adopt rules to implement this notification process by November 1, 2017. The provision requiring notification to TDCJ applies only to criminal cases in which the indictment is presented on or after December 1, 2017. HB 104 has an effective date of September 1, 2017.</p> <p>For some victims of traumatic violent crimes, comfort and reassurance is knowing that you no longer have to live in fear of the person that caused you such pain. TDCJ reports that for FY16 alone, approximately 200,000 cases were filed by indictment. Victims and families' lives are forever changed by a crime committed against them, and the knowledge that a defendant has committed additional offenses can provide peace of mind. HB 104 serves to provide transparency and accountability to these victims by creating an opt-in notification program.</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

<p>HB 2943 By: Larson / Price / Wu</p>	<p>Relating to the use of money in the state water pollution control revolving fund.</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p>	<p>HB 2943 codifies the utilization of money from the state revolving fund for conservation easements and other water quality projects. Funds accessed through the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, which are administered by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), can be used for projects relating to nonpoint source pollution, abatement, and water quality control. Through a program promoted by the TWDB, land maybe be acquisitioned to create conservation easements to that will have a measurable impact on water quality. When allocating money, the TWDB must consider the overall viability of the fund so that it remains in perpetuity. This bill also clarifies language so that it is consistent with the funding terms laid out in the Federal Act.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2328 By: Lucio III / Elkins</p>	<p>Relating to an expedited response by a governmental body to a request for public information.</p>	<p>Government Transparency & Operation</p>	<p>The bill would amend the Government Code to set expedited response procedures for public information requests (PIR) from a government body. HB 2328 would establish procedures that would require the public information officer who responds to the PIR under the provisions of the bill to have completed training regarding the responsibilities of the governmental body under this bill. Training and oversight will be offered and held by the Texas Attorney General's office.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Ana Ramon 210-382-4295 Ana@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 3018 By: Phelan</p>	<p>Relating to reciprocity requirements for nonresident insurance agents to offer or sell insurance policies issued by the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association.</p>	<p>Insurance</p>	<p>This bill would amend the Insurance Code to include language to require that the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association mandate any licensed agent, that is not a state resident, cannot sell any Texas windstorm and hail insurance policy under the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association Act with the exception that the agent's state of residence allows the agent, who is licensed in Texas, to act in the nonresident agent's state as an agent for that state's residual insurer of last resort for windstorm and hail insurance. HB 3018 simply adds the aforementioned reciprocity requirements to the Insurance Code.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org</p>



<p>HB 1934 By: Minjarez / Blanco / Cosper</p>	<p>Relating to temporary certification of an educator from outside the state who is the spouse of an active duty military service member.</p>	<p>Defense & Veterans' Affairs</p>	<p>This bill amends the Education Code to allow spouses of active duty service members to expedite their applications for teaching certificates. Military spouses have the great responsibility of supporting their service members who are often asked to move from state to state. Spouses who are educators are required to apply for certifications in each state they are moved to. The lengthy process in which it takes to obtain a teaching certificate can be cumbersome and ultimately leads to discouraging many military spouses from obtaining certifications in each move.</p> <p>This bill simply expedites the applications of military spouses to gain a teaching certificates, as well as expediting the documentation needed to gain said certificate. It also allows for those who are undergoing reexamination for a teaching certificates to receive a temporary certification while waiting for board review.</p> <p>In 2016, military spouse unemployment reached 18%, over three times the national rate. Many spouses need and want to work. This bill will not only support the wives and husbands of active duty service members who sacrifice their livelihoods to stand with their spouses, this will benefit school districts in need of teachers.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 Kylie@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 115 By: Guillen / Springer</p>	<p>Relating to the value of a residential dwelling that may be offered or awarded as a prize at a charitable raffle.</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>This bill raises the cap on the value of a residential dwelling offered or awarded as a prize at a charitable raffle that is purchased by the organization up from \$250,000 to \$2 million. The current cap significantly limits the amount of money charitable organizations can raise. This bill will help bring in additional money to nonprofit organizations.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 225-588-1221 Arielle@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2035 By: Walle / Minjarez / Thierry / Davis, Sarah / Howard</p>	<p>Relating to the continuation of the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>Texas' maternal mortality rate is alarmingly high; a 2016 study in <i>The Journal Of Obstetrics and Gynecology</i> revealed that it is not only higher than the national average, but is the highest in the developed world. Maternal deaths can be caused by cardiac events, drug overdose, mental illness (specifically postpartum depression), and other health issues. It is important to note that maternal mortality disproportionately impacts Black women; while Black women account for just 11% of total births in Texas, they constitute 30% of all maternal deaths.</p> <p>The DSHS Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force was formed in 2013 to study the causes of maternal mortality and morbidity and to make recommendations for ways to reduce incidence of pregnancy related deaths among Texas women. HB 2035 extends the abolishment date of the task force from 2019 to 2023 to ensure that they have ample time to fully investigate the causes of maternal mortality in Texas. The task force has already successfully reviewed over 40 maternal death cases since its inception, and has been able to identify risk factors associated with maternal death as well as make recommendations to the legislature on how to begin to tackle the issue. Extending the task force is critical to ensure that Texas women have the healthiest pregnancy outcomes possible.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 572 By: Stephenson /González, Mary</p>	<p>Relating to the disposal of pesticides.</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock</p>	<p>Requires the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Texas Environment Commission on Environmental Quality and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, to organize pesticide waste and pesticide container collection activities statewide. For several years, there has been no organized collection activity for Texans to responsibly dispose of pesticide waste and containers. From 1992 to 2010, the TCEQ administered the "Agricultural Pesticide Waste Collection Events", which properly disposed of 2,284 tons of agricultural waste pesticides. This was disbanded in a year of tight budgets, resulting in the accumulation of unwanted pesticides under unsafe storage conditions. Some farmers have been forced into breaking the law, as it is an offense to not properly dispose of</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org</p>



			<p>pesticides as this poses serious hazards to public health and the environment, including surface and groundwater resources and wildlife habitats.</p> <p>It is expensive to store and dispose of pesticide waste. HB 572 sets up the Pesticide Disposal Fund: a fund in the state treasury outside the general fund and shall be administered by the Department of Agriculture. The fund max is 400,000 collected from the company product's registration fees. Money in the fund may only be appropriated for the purposes of the pesticide waste and pesticide container collection activities.</p>	
<p>HB 740 By: Burkett</p>	<p>Relating to the issuance and renewal of licenses and registrations for certain child-care facilities and the amount of the fees for those licenses.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>CSHB 740 amends the Human Resources Code to reinstate previous provisions for Child Care Licensing (CCL) and renewal processes. In the 84th Legislative Session, sunset provisions were set in place for DFPS to change CCL and renewal fees to be up to the discretion of the executive commissioner. The department would also require child placement facilities to go through an annual renewal process, rather than have a permanent permit.</p> <p>This bill reinstates the original licensing fees of \$35 for the initial license as well as the \$100 annual fee. Likewise, this would recall the expiring permit so that child care facilities would not have to undergo an annual renewal process. This bill would does not repeal any stipulations regarding inspections and violations of child placing facilities. Licenses would still remain revocable by those facilities found to be in violation of any safety rules or other statute. Allowing for more regulated standards can help for more child care facilities to maintain the licensing and incentivize more facilities to open, while maintaining accountability.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 Kylie@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2994 By: Ashby / Clardy / Phillips / Stephenson / Blanco</p>	<p>Relating to workforce continuing education offered by public junior colleges.</p>	<p>Higher Education</p>	<p>HB 2994 adds workforce continuing education provisions for high school students and adults. Workforce continuing education provides a variety of training and learning opportunities to help individuals develop professionally, and discover a pathway to a fulfilling career. HB 2994 mandates that workforce continuing education courses at public junior colleges be included in the contact hours that determine a public junior college's share of state appropriated funds. The bill also allows public junior colleges to collaborate with a school district, organization, or person operating a high school, to offer workforce continuing education courses to students that are at least 16 years old. HB 2994 allows public junior colleges to waive all, or parts of tuition and fees charged to a student in continuing education if the student is enrolled in high school, is 16 years of age or older, or is under the age of 18 and is incarcerated. College costs for facilities, instructors, equipment, or any other expenses occurring inside a correctional facility are funded by the federal government. Expenses that occur outside a correctional facility will be funded by public, or private entities. Workforce continuing education courses play a vital role in the future of students. By providing the workforce option</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 Fabeain@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1859 By: Simmons</p>	<p>Relating to certain rental-purchase agreements.</p>	<p>Business & Industry</p>	<p>Creates a new disclosure in rental purchase agreements for rent-to-own consumers in situations where the merchandise is not displayed or offered to consumers as rental-purchase. These types of situations have increased as recent developments in the industry have allowed consumers to enter into such agreements outside of traditional rent-to-own stores, so that a consumer can visit a large department store, for example, and still enter into a rent-to-own transaction for some of the merchandise.</p> <p>Rent-to-own transactions have been recognized in Texas law since 1985 and are regulated by Chapter 92 of the Business and Commerce Code. HB 1859 does not change the contracts of rental purchase agreements, which allows consumers to obtain an item on a rental basis with the option to secure ownership. This bill only mandates that in these types of situations outside of traditional rent-to-own stores, there must be a disclosure which includes: the cash price of the property, the amount of periodic rental payments if they enter into such an rental agreement, and the total number and amount of periodic rental payments that would be necessary to acquire</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org</p>



			ownership. The disclosure must also make clear that this is not a credit transaction. This disclosure would clarify issues of confusion, which is good for the consumers and good for the rent-to-own industry.	
HB 1755 By: Neave	Relating to jury summons questionnaires.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	Current statute requires counties to send with a jury summons a written questionnaire that provides the court with background information on the potential juror. This bill allows counties the option to send either the paper questionnaire <i>or</i> a postcard with an electronic link to an online version of the questionnaire. Counties that send the postcard instead of the multiple page paper questionnaire in an envelope would save hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars. In Dallas county, the estimates are \$225,000 in taxpayer savings, amounting to a 50% reduction in costs. As it currently stands in Dallas County, ¾ of people summoned for jury duty do not fill out the paper questionnaire and wind up filling it out electronically at the courthouse. Sending a postcard with a link to fill out the questionnaire online is a much more cost-effective approach for counties such as Dallas County. Taxpayer dollars saved may be spent on other necessary services for working Texas families. In counties where this may not be the best practice, HB 1755 does not mandate any obligation to partake as this would be an optional approach to jury summons questionnaires.	Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4294 Serena@Texaslsg.org
HB 2321 By: Turner/ Howard	Relating to low-income vehicle repair assistance, retrofit, and accelerated vehicle retirement programs and local initiative projects.	Environmental Regulation	<p>HB 2321 seeks to make necessary modifications of the LIRAP and LIP programs for continuing viability. The Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program(LIRAP) offers financial aid, to qualifying participants, to either repair or replace vehicles to meet emissions requirements. Under this bill, LIRAP assistance would increase grants and modernize other stipulations for vehicle repair or replacement.</p> <p>For counties that participate in LIRAP and implement Local Initiatives Projects(LIP) 50% of the fees made available from vehicle emissions testing must be used for LIRAP by the counties. The cap is lifted for the allocation of LIP funding and removes the local matching funds program. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality(TCEQ) must use part of the funds from vehicle emissions tests towards LIP and other air quality projects. Funds remaining on the last fiscal day of the year can be used toward replacement of local government vehicle fleets in which the counties will have two years from the last fiscal day to use the funds.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org
HB 836 By: Clardy/ Rodriguez, Justin	Relating to a requirement that certain participating institutions under the student loan program administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board provide loan debt information to certain students.	Higher Education	<p>HB 836 requires higher educational institutions to disclose loan debt information to students receiving state financial aid from the Higher Education Coordinating Board. The bill requires educational institutions to provide loan information at least annually to students enrolling as first-time freshmen. Through electronic communication the disclosure must include estimates of the total amount of state and federal loans accrued, the total payoff or a range for that amount, possible monthly repayment amounts, and the type of loans the estimates are composed of. HB 836 states that higher educational institutions are only required to include information that is provided by the Department of Education or reasonably collected from its own records.</p> <p>Additionally, institutions must add a statement confirming the disclosure is not an official record of the student's loan debt, the estimates are not intended as a guarantee, and an explanation on why the estimates may not be complete or accurate. Higher education institutions are exempt of any liability for representation of information. Approximately 43 percent of financial aid to undergraduate students attending Texas institutions in FY 15 was in the form of student loans. Disclosing loan debt information to students offers them a vital opportunity to make informed financial decisions regarding student loans.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 Fabeain@Texaslsg.org



<p>HB 3220 By: Phillips</p>	<p>Relating to the regulation of insurance holding company systems, including internationally active insurance groups; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>Insurance</p>	<p>This bill amends the Insurance Code to authorize the commissioner of insurance to act as the group-wide supervisor for any internationally active insurance groups. The commissioner may acknowledge another regulatory official as the group-wide supervisor where the internationally active insurance group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not have substantial insurance operations in the U.S • Has substantial insurance operation in the U.S. but not in Texas, or has substantial insurance operations in the U.S. and this state • Establishes that the commissioner, in cooperation with other regulatory agencies, will identify a single group-wide supervisor for an internationally active insurance group • Allows the commissioner to find the appropriate group-wide supervisor that conducts substantial insurance operations focused in Texas • Lays out the factors the commissioner is required to contemplate when making the determination or acknowledgment <p>The bill requires the commissioner to choose an appropriate group-wide supervisor for an internationally active insurance group in the event of a material change. It authorizes the commissioner to collect from any registered insurer all information needed to decide if the commissioner can act as supervisor of an internationally active insurance group or if he/she may allow another official to act as the supervisor. It establishes that the insurance group has 30 days to provide the commissioner with any pertinent information to the pending determination and authorizes the commissioner to publish on the TDI website the identity of internationally active insurance groups under supervision.</p> <p>It gives the commissioner authority to enter into agreements with or to obtain documentation from any registered insurer. The bill authorizes the commissioner to adopt rules necessary to implement the bill's provisions and requires a registered insurer to be liable for and to pay the reasonable expenses of the commissioner's participation in the provisions administration. This bill also stipulates statutory provisions about confidentiality. The threshold amount of a single transaction or total amount of all transactions from the lesser of one-half of 1% of the insurer's admitted assets or 5% of the insurer's surplus as of a certain date to one-half of 1% of the insurer's admitted assets as of that date.</p> <p>Essentially, this bill would set in statute the ability of the commissioner to act as a group-wide supervisor of the insurer. Typically, the state already acts in this role but concerns have been raised that international regulators can enforce these regulatory requirements on internationally active insurers based in the U.S. due to the absence of overt authority in law for a state to act in the role as supervisor. The bill would require TDI to create a fee on affected insurers in order to reimburse the expenses of the commissioner's participation in the administration of the section.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 3013 By: Martinez, "Mando" / Canales / Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to incentives to encourage landowners to destroy, remove, or treat citrus trees located in a pest management zone.</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock</p>	<p>Allows for the continuation of agricultural land appraisals even when the land ceases to be used to the degree of intensity in agricultural use generally accepted in the area, when: the land is located in a pest management zone, meaning the citrus producers are participating in a citrus pest control program, and the appraisal basis is primarily for the production of citrus. Additionally, the owner of the land must have executed an agreement with the Texas Citrus Pest and Disease Management Corporation, the Commissioner of Agriculture and the USDA to destroy, remove or treat all the citrus trees located on the land that are or could become infected with pests. The owner must notify the chief appraiser of the agreement within 30 days.</p> <p>HB 3013 protects the Texas citrus industry that is valued over \$200 million per year and employs over 3,000 people, while simultaneously addressing the concern of abandoned citrus groves harboring pests and diseases. The industry is comprised of almost</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org</p>



			27,000 acres and grows more than 9 million cartons of fresh oranges and grapefruits per year and another 5 million cartons of juice. Pest and disease outbreaks have cost growers millions of dollars as the care costs per acre have increased. Currently there is an estimated 800 acres of abandoned and untreated infected land. The bill offers a creative solution to combat the spread of this outbreak by giving citrus grove landowners a 5-year window to treat and replace the plants--if they choose--with the incentive of maintaining their agricultural valuation even after the trees are removed.	
HB 2770 By: Smithee	Relating to the declaration of a common nuisance involving a computer network or web address.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	<p>Expands the definition of “place” in the Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Chapter 125, to include web addresses or computer networks that engage in specific prohibited activities already classified as a “common nuisance”, including sex trafficking and sexual abuse of a child, for the purposes of allowing such websites to be declared a common nuisance under Texas law. This provides additional deterrents for bad actors and sexual predators, as HB 2770 authorizes a suit to declare that such persons operating a web address or computer network is maintaining a common nuisance. This suit may be brought by the Attorney General, or by the district, county or city attorney. Furthermore, if the lawsuit is successful, the Attorney General may notify applicable Internet service providers, search engine operators, browsing or hosting companies, or device manufacturers on which the activities are hosted of the judicial finding in the suit, or the AG may post it on their website.</p> <p>It is commonly known that much of the activity involving sex trafficking occurs online, instead of physical locations. Sex trafficking thrives on the Internet because it is highly profitable, and authorities have a more difficult time investigating. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) reported an 846% increase from 2010 to 2015 in reports of suspected child sex trafficking and this increase is directly correlated to the use of the Internet as a hub. HB 2770 would help to identify Internet sites profiting off of human trafficking and bring them into the light of day.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org
HB 832 By: Clardy	Relating to state funding for baccalaureate degree programs offered at certain public junior colleges.	Higher Education	HB 832 requires the higher education coordinating board to authorize bachelor degree programs in the field of dental hygiene at public junior colleges. In the 84th legislature HB 3348 was enacted, allowing the coordinating board to create a pilot program permitting certain junior colleges to offer bachelor degree programs in dental hygiene fields. HB 832 seeks to make the pilot program permanent, and establish full funding for the program. Under this bill, public junior colleges must have a main campus in the county seat of a county with a population greater than 200,000, and include territory in at least six public school districts. HB 832 amends the Education Code by removing restrictions that prevent the state from providing the same amount of support to public junior colleges, as provided to general academic institutions, for junior-level and senior level courses. Changes made by HB 832 would apply beginning with funding for the state fiscal biennium starting September 1, 2019. Public junior and community colleges present as a more affordable option for students, making higher education more accessible. By securing programs like those in this bill, the state would be providing opportunities for expansion in our workforce, and making great strides toward accomplishing the recognized 60x30 goals.	Favorable Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 Fabeain@Texaslsg.org
HB 1983 By: Wray / Martinez, "Mando" / Phillips / Guerra / Geren / et al.	Relating to the eligibility of a first responder for workers' compensation benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder.	Business & Industry	<p>Recognizes Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a compensable injury under the Texas Workers' Compensation system for first responders. This would allow firefighter or police officers the option to apply for benefits under worker's compensation for PTSD without declaring mental impairment. Under the current system, a diagnosis of mental impairment may result in a declaration that the first responder is unfit for duty when all the required was a few sessions of counseling.</p> <p>In the lifetime of a firefighter or first responder, over 20% suffer PTSD compared to 6-8% in the general civilian population. Delays in receiving treatment or diagnoses leave first responders at a higher risk for self-harm and self-destructive behavior: in 2016, more officers passed away because of suicide than they were killed in the line of duty. PTSD should be treated just as any other injury on the job. First responders observe and internalize such a variety of horrific accidents. Although some police departments may run their</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org



			own confidential counseling programs through a charity, officers do not attend for fear of losing their jobs. HB 1983 is a necessary step to safeguard first responders' health and well-being as citizens and employees.	
HB 1204 By: White	Relating to the provision of services as an alternative to adjudication for certain children who engage in conduct in need of supervision or delinquent conduct.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues	<p>HB 1204 creates a process to divert children younger than twelve years of age from the juvenile justice system and make detention a last resort. Research shows that youth who become involved in the justice system at an early age are more likely to perform poorly in school and more likely to be involved in the justice system as an adult. The intent of this bill is to circumvent those negative outcomes by ensuring that efforts are made to address the delinquencies of children outside of the juvenile justice system when possible.</p> <p>HB 1204 requires the person who is conducting the preliminary investigation to refer the child's case to a community resource coordination group, a local-level interagency staffing group, or other community juvenile service provider. The bill provides specifications regarding the type of cases that should be referred including cases where the child is younger than twelve and the child's case does not require referral to the prosecuting attorney.</p> <p>On receipt of the referral, the receiving party will evaluate the child's case and make recommendations to the juvenile probation department for appropriate services for the child and the child's family. The child's probation officer would then create and coordinate a service plan or system of care for the child or the child's family that incorporates the service recommendations. The child and the child's parent must consent to the services with knowledge that consent is voluntary.</p> <p>The probation officer may hold the child's case open for a maximum of three months to monitor adherence to the service plan, and the probation officer may adjust the service plan as necessary during the monitoring period. If the child fails to successfully participate in required services, the probation officer may refer the child to the prosecuting attorney.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 225-588-1221 Arielle@Texaslsg.org
HB 919 By: Kacal / Shine / King, Ken / et al.	Relating to workers' compensation insurance coverage for certain intrastate fire mutual aid system team members and regional incident management team members.	Business & Industry	<p>Provides workers compensation coverage for members of a Incident Management Teams (IMTs) or the Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System teams (TIFMAS) when activated by the Texas Division of Emergency Management. There is currently no state coverage for these first responders in the event they are injured or killed in state-activated deployments or trainings. In 2003, the Texas Legislature extended coverage to the elite state search and rescue, Texas Task Force 1, when deployed on state emergencies.</p> <p>TIFMAS and IMTs are comprised of law enforcement, fire services, emergency medical services, emergency management, emergency communications and representatives from public health and public works services. They respond to fires, flood, hurricanes, or events similar to the fertilizer explosion in West, Texas. In order to maximize emergency responses and support these first responders in the dangerous and challenging work that they do, HB 919 rightly affords them workers compensation coverage.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org
HB 106 By: Martinez, "Mando" / Guillen / Blanco	Relating to certain images captured by an unmanned aircraft.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	<p>The bill eliminates "real property or a person on real property that is within 25 miles of the U.S. border" in the Government Code as one of the purposes to legally capture an image with unmanned aircraft. Eliminating this part out of statute, will provide more privacy rights for private property owners and for Texans that live within 25 miles of the border</p> <p>Additionally, this legislation amends the Government Code by expanding the purposes of legally using unmanned aircraft to capture an image if it is captured by or for an electric or natural gas utility or a telecommunications provider for the purposes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations and maintenance of utility or telecommunications facilities for maintaining utility or telecommunications system reliability and integrity 	Favorable Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 Andrea@Texaslsg.org



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspecting utility or telecommunications facilities to determine repair, maintenance, or replacement needs during and after construction of such facilities Accessing vegetation growth for maintaining clearance on utility or telecommunications easements For utility or telecommunications facility routing and siting for the purpose of providing utility or telecommunications service <p>Current state law treats property and persons near the border in an inequitable manner by permitting the use of unmanned aircraft in Texas to capture images of real property or persons on real property that are within 25 miles of the United States border. Additionally, this bill further clarifies that telecommunications providers are subject to the same rules as those governing other utilities. Furthermore, this is a clean-up bill and it has no impact on law enforcement and Border Patrol still has federal jurisdiction. According to DPS, this legislation won't restrict any surveillance. This bill will just restrict any regular civilians (not public entity) from taking pictures by using an unmanned aircraft. There is no anticipation of fiscal implications to the state and local government.</p>	
HB 516 By: Israel	Relating to the requirement that drivers younger than a certain age complete and pass a driver education course.	Transportation	In current state law, there are two statutes that conflict with one another in the Transportation Code . This confliction has caused confusion among legal adult age individuals that desire to get a driver's license. Statute states <i>"The department may not issue a driver's license to a person who is younger than 21 years of age unless the person submits to the department a driver education certificate"</i> . The other statute that conflicts with the first statute mentioned states <i>"The department may not issue a driver's license to a person who is younger than 25 years of age unless the person submits to the department a driver education certificate"</i> . This bill wants to address this confusion by repealing the statute of not issuing a driver's license to an individual younger than 21 unless they have taken a driver education certificate, while keep the requirement from the statute of not issuing a driver's license to a person who is younger than 25 years of age unless they have taken some sort of driver's education. Additionally, this bill makes these same changes in the Education Code so there won't be any future confusion of conflicting statutes.	Favorable Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 Andrea@Texaslsg.org
HB 298 By: Larson	Relating to a parent's right to view the body of a deceased child before an autopsy is performed.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	Allows a parent to view the body of their deceased child before an applicable justice of the peace or medical examiner assumes control over the body. In some cases, a parent is not able to view their deceased child before an autopsy is rendered. For example, when a child dies under suspicious circumstances, a parent may be prohibited from seeing the body to say goodbye until after an autopsy has been performed <i>without a formal process</i> . This is cruel and unusual punishment. After an autopsy, a body is left mutilated and sewn together. Forcing a parent to view their deceased child post-autopsy, when it is not a necessity, is an injustice to these families suffering such an incomprehensible loss. HB 298 provides a more formal process for the performing of autopsies that involve a deceased child in order to protect a parent's right to view the body. Unless a parent receives consent from the justice of the peace, medical examiner, or another person acting on their behalf, a parent may not view or otherwise have contact with the child's body after a justice of the peace or medical examiner assumes control over the body. If consent is received, this viewing must be supervised by a physician, registered nurse, vocational nurse, the justice of the peace, medical examiner or person acting on their behalf. A person may not remove any medical devices or otherwise alter the body unless consent is obtained from the justice of the peace, medical examiner, or person acting on their behalf.	Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org
HB 2459 By: Flynn	Relating to the operations and functions of the Employees Retirement System of Texas and the sunset review date for,	Pensions	This bill establishes a mandatory board member training. This training will educate the members of the board of the rules, programs, functions, administrative procedures and ethics policies. It also requires the executive director to create a training manual to be distributed to members. Members will also be required to sign and submit that they received the manual.	Favorable w/Concerns Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org



	<p>financial management of, and programs administered by the agency.</p>	<p>The board will also be required to develop policies to encourage the use of negotiated rulemaking procedures and model these guidelines after those used by the State Office of Administrative Hearings. These policies must be consistent with the fiduciary responsibility imposed on the board by law. The board shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate the implementation of the policies adopted • Provide training to implement procedures • Collect data concerning the effectiveness of those procedures <p>Every four years the board will be required to adopt all mortality, service, and other tables considered necessary after considering the results of the actuary investigation. The actuary must conduct an actuarial investigation, valuation of assets and liabilities, every four years as opposed to the previously stipulated five years.</p> <p>This bill also limits the power of the board to delegate alternative investments by amending the Government Code. The code is amended to establish reporting requirements related to alternative investments. The board will be required to report profit sharing received by private investment managers with alternative investments made by ERS, categorized by asset class, in the yearly financial report and other appropriate investment reports. CSHB 2459 changes the requirement that all alternative investments above \$100 million be approved by the Board of Trustees. The new threshold for board approval of alternative investments is 1% of the total trust valuation, approximately \$250 million. In a closed meeting, the board may not deliberate on public business or agency policy that affects public business. Any final action, decision, or vote on a matter considered or discussed in a closed meeting under this provision must be made in an open meeting. This bill also stipulates new requirements to be added to the annual report, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demographic and financial information for each plan • a summary of recent benefit changes considered by the board • claims trends • recommendations for statutory changes • other information deemed to be appropriate by the board <p>The board of trustees must also develop and implement a process to allow an employee, participant, annuitant, or covered dependent affected by a determination to participate directly in the process of appealing the determination. The Insurance Code would be amended to require the board to develop and maintain a precedent manual relating to enrollment and claims determination or any related appeals. The precedent manual would include precedent-establishing determinations, examples of determinations consistent with identified precedent, and any other information the board finds necessary. The manual would be made available to staff, participants, annuitants, and covered dependents. The board is not bound by the document in deliberating on future determinations.</p> <p>This bill would also repeal Section 814.604 of the Government Code. This statute provides criteria for a one-time cost of living adjustment (COLA) for members who have been retired from state service for at least 20 years at the time the COLA is granted. The criteria require that the trust be actuarially sound and the COLA must not result in an amortization period of more than 30 years. As this bill seeks to repeal the already difficult to obtain COLA's under the current requirements, it strips these promised cost</p>	
--	--	---	--



			<p>adjustments from members who rely on their pension in retirement. Repealing this provision is harmful to members who have paid into the fund for the entirety of their career with the expectation that the proper adjustments will be made for cost of living increases.</p> <p>Significant concerns have been raised by ERS that the newly imposed timeline for the reporting of alternative investment sharing statistics within the first year is unlikely to be met while working to produce and publish the agency's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The work on this document has begun months prior to the effective date of this bill. As a new reporting requirement, the mandatory data may not be able to be obtained and appropriately vetted within the stipulated timeline to be included in a report published during the first quarter of the fiscal year.</p>	
<p>HB 28 By: Bonnen, Dennis</p>	<p>Relating to the use of certain surplus state revenue, in certain circumstances, to adjust franchise tax rates to phase out the franchise tax and to the expiration of that tax.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>HB 28 seeks to reduce and eventually eliminate the franchise tax by requiring the Comptroller to determine the ending balance of GR-Related funds available for certification for the previous fiscal biennium between September 1 and December 15 of each odd-numbered year. The Comptroller would also be required to determine the tax rates that, if applied beginning January 1 in the following year, are estimated to yield an amount of revenue is made equal to the lesser of the ending balance or \$3.5 billion.</p> <p>Similarly, the Comptroller would be required to determine adjusted tax rates in effect from the previous biennium, less the tax rates calculated to raise the revenue amount outlined above, before December 15 of odd-numbered years, and adopt and publish the adjusted tax rates. Should the adjusted tax rates in a fiscal year calculate to less than 15 percent of rates in effect on September 1, 2017, the franchise tax expires on December 31 of that year. Provisions relating to adjusted tax rates less than 15 percent of those in effect at the time of determination, the Comptroller must publish notice that entities previously subject to the franchise tax are not required to file or pay the tax. While calculating the tax rates, the Comptroller must ensure proportional reductions are reflected at the time determination is made. Any actions taken under this section are final and cannot be appealed.</p> <p>The franchise tax provisions will continue to apply to audits, deficiencies, redeterminations, and refunds of tax due or collected until barred by limitations; provisions for confidentiality of records will continue to apply after the franchise tax expires.</p> <p>Eliminating the franchise tax- Texas' third-largest source of tax revenue that gleans \$8 billion per biennium- will have a detrimental effect on the Texas economy; currently, the Legislative Budget Board estimates HB 28 will have a direct impact loss of up to \$3.5 billion in revenue to the Property Tax Relief Fund and the General Revenue Fund for the 2020-2021 and subsequent biennia; the proposed \$3.5 billion cut per biennium is one-third larger than the 2015 cut. The LBB further states that the Foundation School Program must be funded by an equal amount from GR, as a result of any loss from the Property Tax Relief Fund. Decreasing revenue streams and requiring funds from GR will mean less future funding for students, CPS, health care, pension funds, and other necessary state services. HB 28 will leave the burden for supporting state services on the sales tax, which will consequently impact funds utilized for transportation infrastructure. HB 28 will leave a hole in the Texas economy by repealing the franchise tax and failing to replace with a sensible solution.</p>	<p>Unfavorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1292 By: Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to the Texas Funeral Service Commission; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>HB 1292 is a clean-up bill for chapter 62 of the Occupations Code related to the Texas Funeral Service Commission which has not been updated since 2003. The bill attempts to streamline language, clarify duplicative provisions, and reflect the current standard of practice in the industry. The bill does not create any new fees or penalties, but does authorize continuation of all existing fees and penalties. The bill primarily:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a mechanism by which a license holder can request a duplicate license to be printed for display purposes 	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org</p>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeals contradictory provisions related to renewal of expired licenses by out of state practitioners • Clarifies the complaint hearing process, increasing transparency for involved parties • Makes minor statutory changes for standards for removing a body • Makes clarifications regarding inspection reports for crematory and funeral establishments • Addresses re-licensing requirements for individuals whose licenses have been expired for longer than one year • Requires funeral establishments to conspicuously display an up-to-date license • Clarifies what constitutes unethical conduct regarding embalming or funeral services • Changes the process by which the Funeral Commission can take disciplinary action against a licensee <p>Repeals sections that are no longer relevant to current practice</p>	
<p>HB 249 By: Hernandez / Frank / Faircloth / Blanco</p>	<p>Relating to investigations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation conducted by the Department of Family and Protective Services.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>HB 249 amends the Family Code to merge the definition of child abuse and neglect under Child Care Licensing (CCL) and facilities and the CPS definition of child abuse and neglect. While also adopting a definition for child exploitation. Currently, CCLs and facilities have a differing definition of abuse and neglect than CPS. Under this, there are two separate investigation criteria. While CPS investigations are typically more immediate and thorough, many reports on child care facilities fall short. Error rates in child care facilities for Texas average at 75%, whereas the national average is 2-3%. With no correlating definition of abuse and neglect, accountability for investigations and reports of child care facility abuse and neglect has been nearly non-existent. Because of this, many children who suffer from maltreatment, in an environment in which their parents entrust their child's safety, will have their abuse swept under the rug.</p> <p>This bill takes on several tasks to remedy the issues facing child abuse, neglect and exploitation in Texas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It incorporates a new definition for child exploitation at the improper use of a child or their resources for personal or financial gain. • Includes personnel in CCL and facilities as individuals responsible for the welfare of a child. • Repeals the definition of reporting requirements from CCL and facilities and merges them with the existing CPS definition. • While CCL's will be centered in HHSC even upon passage of HB 5, this bill would require that investigation of all child care facilities, licensed or not remain under the jurisdiction of DFPS. <p>Between 2015-2016 the number of child abuse related deaths in Texas increased by nearly 14% and the number is only rising. While efforts are being made to overhaul the state's child welfare policies, every detail in which current statute has failed to protect children needs to be examined. Existing requirements for investigating reports of child abuse, neglect and exploitation in child care facilities are missing the mark. This bill is a crucial step in mitigating any vagueness regarding criteria for child abuse. Allowing the two entities responsible for investigating these allegations to merge their definitions as well as create new concise criteria for exploitation. This bill will allow DFPS to conduct more comprehensive investigations as well as build better cases surround child care facility abuse neglect and exploitation.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 Kylie@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2062 By: Phillips</p>	<p>Relating to the creation and operations of health care provider participation programs in certain</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>In 2011, Texas began participating in the 1115 Medicaid waiver which allows counties to draw down allocated federal funding to help cover uncompensated care. The local provider participation program empowers counties to improve the delivery of health care by establishing local projects tailored to meet a community's unique health care needs. However, the waiver requires local government funds to support waiver payments and that counties without a hospital district, such as Grayson County, are disadvantaged because of the lack of a mechanism to generate funds for intergovernmental transfers to draw down federal dollars. H.B. 2062 amends the</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Tiffany Teate 210-382-4295</p>



	counties.		Health and Safety Code so that Grayson County can participate in this county health care provider participation program. This bill would allow local providers to access more funds under the waiver, help ensure access to care for the community, and reduce the level of uncompensated care for hospitals. HB 2062 provides the mechanism to generate funds for intergovernmental transfers to use federal dollars for indigent care. Participation in this program empowers local communities, provides access to federal funding, and alleviates the uncompensated healthcare cost for hospitals without raising local property taxes or accessing state general revenue.	Tiffany@Texaslsg.org
HCR 56 By: Shine / Casper / Sheffield / et al.	Recognizing Texas as a Purple Heart State.	Defense & Veterans' Affairs	HCR 56 moves to recognize Texas as a Purple Heart State. Texas is home to 5% of the nation's veterans at 1.5million. The state holds several purple heart cities and counties. This also would recognize February 22, George Washington's birthday, as Purple Heart Day. This resolution shows the state's dedication to supporting those who serve our state and nation.	Favorable Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 Kylie@Texaslsg.org

