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Part 1					LSG Floor Report For Postponed Business- Wednesday, May 10, 2017				
Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation		Recommendation				
HB 3591 By: Thompson, Ed	Relating to the composition of the aviation advisory committee.	Transportation	This bill grants the Texas Transportation Commission broader authority in appointing members to the Aviation Advisory Committee. The minimum number of members for the committee is set at six, although a greater number is authorized. Presumably, TTC would settle on an uneven number of members to avoid potential gridlock. The other specified requirements for committee membership, namely five years of minimum experience within the aviation field, remain in place.		Favorable Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 Andrea@Texaslsg.org				
HB 2697 By: Price/ Coleman/ Springer/etal.	Relating to telemedicine and telehealth services.	Public Health	<p>Telemedicine and telehealth services are health care services provided by a physician using telecommunications or information technology; there are many benefits to utilizing telemedicine, including increased accessibility and cost-savings. Currently, a practitioner has to have established a patient-practitioner relationship in person to utilize telehealth; establishing this relationship is critical to ensure that there is adequate communication and cooperation between the practitioner and the patient, however, evidence shows the relationship can be effectively established through telecommunication. CSHB 2697 strikes language requiring the in-person establishment of this relationship and provides a clear regulatory structure for the establishment of a valid practitioner-patient relationship via other telecommunications methods.</p> <p>In order for the practitioner-patient relationship to be valid under HB 2697, the practitioner must provide a standard of care that is equal to that of the same health care service if it were being provided in person. Additionally, all communication with the patient should be pursuant to a call coverage agreement that is in accordance with established Texas Medical Board rules. The bill outlines acceptable forms of telecommunication technology to be utilized for the provision of telehealth services. It also instructs the practitioner providing the service to provide the patient with guidance on follow-up care and to provide relevant information to the patient's primary care provider about the telemedicine services rendered, should the patient consent to the information transfer.</p> <p>The bill also instructs the Texas Medical Board, Texas Board of Pharmacy, Texas Board of Nursing, and Texas Physician Assistant Board to jointly adopt rules that establish valid prescribing practices to be utilized via telemedicine and to publish these rules in a "frequently asked questions" section on each respective Board's website. HB 2697 explicitly prohibits a practitioner from utilizing</p>		Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org				

			<p>telemedicine to prescribe an abortifacient or any other drug or device that would result in termination of a pregnancy. It also specifies that the provisions of this bill are not applicable for the delivery of mental health services.</p> <p>Lastly, HB 2697 states that a health benefit/insurance plan may not exclude telemedicine services from coverage of a health service or procedure delivered by a preferred health professional to a covered patient solely because the service is not provided through an in-person consultation. Health benefit plans may still require a deductible or a copay for a covered telemedicine healthcare service. The bill does not require health benefit plans to provide coverage for telemedicine and telehealth services, but offers provisions to clarify the manner in which telemedicine services can be covered. To ensure coverage transparency, each issuer of a health benefit plan is required to adopt and display the issuer’s policies and payment practices for telemedicine services in a conspicuous location on the plan’s website.</p>	
<p>HB 852 By: Parker/ Shaheen/ White/ VanDeaver/ Koop/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to an adult high school diploma and industry certification charter school pilot program.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>The Goodwill Excel Center is a free public charter high school that provides adults, ages 17-50, the opportunity to earn their high school diploma. Since their inception, they have graduated 205 adults who now have more job opportunities and a higher earning potential. Ninety-eight percent of their students are economically disadvantaged and thirty-eight percent of their students enrolled in college after earning their high school diploma. HB 852 specifically removes the statutory cap that limits The Goodwill Excel Center’s capacity to 150 students. Effectively, HB 852 would allow this school to expand and provide more adults the opportunity to go back to school and earn their high school diploma.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 201-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 4011 By: Burrows</p>	<p>Relating to prohibited reporting of information regarding debt incurred for nonemergency medical care.</p>	<p>Business & Industry</p>	<p>HB 4011 prohibits health care providers from transmitting to consumer reporting agencies information regarding a consumer’s unpaid amounts if the provider did not obtain a signed disclosure in the form prescribed by the executive commission of the Health and Human Services Commission prior to billing, and waits at least 180 days after the consumer receives a bill for medical charges. The disclosure form must include an itemized statement of the amounts to be billed for the nonemergency medical care.</p> <p>HB 4011 protects Texans who struggle with nonemergency health care debt by affording them relief from negative credit reporting on unpaid, nonemergency health care services unless the provider gives the patient information on how much the care would cost and obtains the patient’s signature. In the Commonwealth Fund survey, one fifth of Texans said they were contacted by a collection agency in 2014 because of an unpaid medical bill, and 4 of 10 adults reported that they had trouble paying their medical bills. 43% of Texans said that they did not see a doctor when sick, did not fill a prescription, skipped a test, treatment, or follow-up visit.</p> <p>HB 4011 may help in leading to more providers giving health care cost information up front allowing consumers know what to expect. Even if this bill does not help with that, then at least consumers who later have trouble paying their bill would not have the debt appear on their credit report. Credit report information has a significant impact on an individual’s finances as it is used to determine eligibility for jobs, access to rental housing and mortgages, insurance premiums, and access to credit in general. This bill mandates some common sense protections by preventing medical debt from hurting a consumer’s credit rating when the person was not informed up up front about the costs.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org</p>



<p>HB 1009 By: Alonzo</p>	<p>Relating to the regulation of firefighters and fire departments by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection.</p>	<p>Urban Affairs</p>	<p>This bill prohibits an employee of a municipality who has adopted the firefighters civil service laws from performing duties on wildland fires, including prescribed burning, unless the individual is a full time civil service employee regularly assigned to such duties. Currently civil service employees who hold a certificate by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection may perform such duties as prescribed burning without having to regularly performing firefighting duties. This has lead to safety concerns regarding fires in densely populated urban areas. An employee of the municipality who is not regularly assigned to such duties is prohibited to perform these duties, though the bill make an exception if they are performing such duties outside of their employment and under a voluntary fire department. With Austin and Houston ranked 3rd and 10th in the nation, respectively, for wildfires it is necessary to address the causes of wildland fires in highly populated areas.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 Kylie@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 6 By: Frank / Raymond / Klick / Dale / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the administration of services provided by the Department of Family and Protective Services, including foster care, child protective services, and prevention and early intervention services.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>HB 6 aims to take on the difficult task of redesigning foster care in Texas, by creating a community-based foster care program, through which a single source continuum contractor (SSCC) can contract with the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to provide child placement and case management. On Thursday December 17, 2015, United States District Judge Janis Jack of Corpus Christi ruled that Texas' foster care system was violating the constitutional rights of children. She sighted years of neglect and inappropriate placements that left children to have multiple placements. In some Texas counties, the average number of placements can be up to 15 per child. At any time, there are roughly 30,000 children in conservatorship care in Texas. These children are trapped in a broken system that can lead to further abuse and neglect they may have already been subjected to. The issue of foster care is a decades long problem, past attempts have been made to overhaul the system but to no avail. What remains is a shortage of foster care capacity, leaving foster parents overwhelmed with little support due to continuously high turnover rates of CPS case workers. HB 6 is the legislatures newest attempt to mend the wounds of Texas foster care.</p> <p>Community-Based Foster Care The bill seeks to redesign foster care requiring DFPS to contract with community-based, nonprofits, including faith based organizations, to provide child placement and case management services. The nonprofits work through the SSCC to meet the goals and requirements laid out by the bill. The bill requires that an organization place children in the least-restrictive environment with an emphasis on a family home environment if possible, being kinship or foster care. The ultimate goal would remain family reunification whenever possible for the child.</p> <p>Different from other proposals of foster care redesign, HB 6 privatizes case management by taking this service from DFPS and placing them into nonprofits contracting with the SSCC. The bill lays out the duties that would be required of the case workers under the SSCC. Little department oversight would be required of DFPS. However, before a catchment area can implemented, case management services within DFPS must conduct a readiness review of an SSCC. Qualifications of an SSCC are laid out in the bill and they would be required to hold a license from the DFPS. The bill also offers a contingency plan for the termination of contracts.</p> <p>Program Expansion HB 6 provides a roll out plan for both community based foster care and transfer of case management services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bill give a deadline of December 21, 2019 for DFPS to identify no more than eight catchment areas they find will best implement community-based foster care. • Provisions of expanding case management services will be slower, allowing DFPS to identify only two catchment areas to initially transfer services too. • Case management may not be transferred to an SSCC until foster care services are successfully transferred. • Annually DFPS shall report to the legislature the readiness of remaining catchment areas • Based on availability of funds and readiness of remaining catchment areas DFPS would create a timeline for the continued roll out of services. 	<p>Favorable w/ Concerns Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 Kylie@Texaslsg.org</p>



		<p>Oversight A community engagement group will be implemented in each catchment area by utilizing community stakeholders. The group will be responsible for reporting feedback of the program implementation to DFPS. They will also be responsible for helping an SSCC to facilitate the use of local prevention and early intervention resources as well as other community resources. The Child Protective Services Legislative Oversight Committee would be comprised of members of both legislative chambers and members of the public appointed by the governor. The duties of the committee are outlined in the bill and rely mostly on the facilitation of transferring services and the reorganization of DFPS administrative structure.</p> <p>Medical and Mental Health Screenings The bill provides new provisions for medical and mental health screenings. Currently DFPS policies for medical and mental health screenings of a child that has been taken into conservatorship is within 30 days. This requires that screenings be conducted within three days for urban and suburban communities and five days for rural communities. It would also be required that any movement of placement of a child who is enrolled in the STAR Health Program notify the Managed Care Organization (MCO) within 24 hours.</p> <p>Foster Capacity Needs Plan One of the major issues facing children in the child welfare system is the limited number of foster parents. The causes of this include both the overwhelming nature of taking in a child with little support from the department and the financial burden it can put upon a family. HB 6 would require DFPS to provide monetary assistance for day care to foster parents who work full or part-time. This will help to incentivize more foster care parents to take on this important responsibility and assist those who have already done so. DFPS would also be required to develop a plan to mitigate the foster care capacity crisis. This would be done in collaboration with advocacy groups, faith-based entities and nonprofits through the collection of data on the need and availability per region. It requires both short-term and long-term goals.</p> <p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This bill transfers for the first time, case management away from the state with minimal government oversight. Some agencies who take on this great responsibility lack the decades of experience with foster children and case management that many DFPS workers have. • While a pilot program for placement has already been implemented in the Ft. Worth area and has shown success, rural areas may not have the same resources. • Privatization of foster care has been attempted in three states, and has been found to be no more successful than the current system Texas has now. • Initial roll out for the program expansion is only a maximum two years and reconsidered annually thereafter, such a monumental project should be allowed more time to be thoughtfully implementing. • While the bill does not expressly state provisions for it, many have concerns that faith-based organizations may be at liberty institute discriminatory practices. The bill does not expressly protect children who may be denied services if they are LGBTQI+ or protect same-sex couples seeking to adopt. Some are concerned that religious entities may deny abortion access to teens in the system who have been sexually assaulted or are victims of sex-trafficking. Though protections for these seem implied, there are many loopholes in state and federal law that allow faith-based organizations to hold discriminatory practices. • The bill does not address high turnover rates of case workers, nor does it address the limited amount of available services and resources to the children. 	
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HB 1985 By: Flynn	Relating to debt cancellation agreements offered in connection with certain retail installment contracts and leases for vehicles.	Investments & Financial Services	<p>HB 1985 allows consumers to purchase a debt cancellation agreement (DCA) in connection with a retail installment contract in the case that insurance coverage is required for a vehicle as part of the retail buyer’s responsibility to the holder. The bill re-designates Subchapter G (“Certain Debt Cancellation Agreements”), Chapter 348 (“Motor Vehicle Installment Sales”) as Chapter 354 (“Debt Cancellation Agreements for Certain Retail Vehicle Installment Sales”); this change clarifies language referring to retail installment contracts and expands eligibility for all “covered vehicles”, which is defined as a self-propelled or towed vehicle designed for personal use and includes an automobile, truck, motorcycle, recreational vehicle, all-terrain vehicle, snowmobile, camper, boat, personal watercraft, and personal watercraft trailer. A DCA refers to a contractual arrangement modifying a contract term under which a retail seller agrees to cancel all or part of an obligation of the retail buyer to repay an extension of credit from the retail seller on occurrence of the total loss or theft of the covered vehicle, but does not offer to pay a specified amount. Notable statutes amended within the bill outline required language for DCAs and procedures regarding refunds for DCAs.</p> <p>The bill further adds Chapter 397 (“Debt Cancellation Agreements for Certain Vehicle Leases”) to Title 5 (“Protection of Consumers of Financial Services”), Finance Code. Provisions within this section exempt leases that are retail installment transactions under bailment, and expressly clarifies that a DCA is not a substitute for insurance. Further provisions outline limitations on certain DCAs, required and exclusion language, additional requirements, and refund requirements. Should the Attorney General believe a person is or is about to violate these provisions, they may bring an action in the name of the state against the person to restrain or enjoin them from violation. The bill has an effective date of September 1, 2017.</p> <p>In 2011, the Texas Legislature passed statutes that allowed for consumer protection as well as a predictable regulatory framework as a result of negotiating with the debt cancellation industry and the Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner. Adding these provisions allows consumer choices within this framework.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org
HB 3265 By: Howard	Relating to cemeteries.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism	<p>HB 3265 authorizes the justice of the peace acting as coroner or medical examiner, or another authorized person to supervise the removal of remains to identify graves. The bill provides definitions for unidentified graves, unknown cemeteries, abandoned cemetery, unmarked graves, and unverified cemetery. A person who discovers an unverified cemetery shall file notice and evidence of the discovery with the Texas Historical Commission. If the Texas Historical Commission determines sufficient evidence supports the existence of a cemetery, the Texas Historical Commission shall inform the landowner and may file notice of the existence of the cemetery</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 Fabeain@Texaslsg.org

LSG Floor Report For Emergency Calendar- Wednesday, May 10, 2017

Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
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<p>HB 39 By: Wu/ Raymond/ Davis, Sarah /Rose/et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the child protective service functions of the Department of Family and Protective Services.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>CSHB 39 addresses certain functions of child protective services (CPS) within the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). While much has been done to address the nature of foster care in Texas, the culture and regulations around CPS remains mostly untouched. High turnover rate and limited foster capacity continue to plague the child welfare system. This bill aims to help both children and case workers by ensuring they receive adequate trauma informed care training. It also aims to reduce any inequity of caseload distribution. CSHB 39 codifies. provisions on emergency placements for children who need temporary placement for not more than 30 days. This bill seeks to develop and regulate several responsibilities of CPS and DFPS.</p> <p>Medical Examinations This bill requires that a child receive a medical examination within three days after a child enters into state conservatorship. Rural communities would be afforded 7 business days to conduct the initial medical examine for the child. Rural communities often do not have the same resources as others, so allowing them extended time will benefit both the community and the child who may have to travel for the proper provider.</p> <p>Foster Care Provider Recruitment Plan CSHB 39 requires DFPS to collaborate with current foster and adoptive parents to create a foster care provider recruitment plan. The required criteria of the plan are laid out in the bill. This will serve to mitigate the foster care capacity crisis in our State and help those overwhelmed foster parents take on less children.</p> <p>Career Development and Education Program DFPS would be required to partner with certain stakeholders involved with CPS or education, including foster care youth to develop a program to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in obtaining a diploma or GRE. • Career guidance, including assisting with necessary trade certifications. • Provide information on tuition and fee waivers for higher education. • Provide information on housing, education or assistance for transitioning into independent living <p>It has been found that up to 20-25% of children who age out of foster care fall into homelessness in their struggle to transition into independent living. This will help those children who may turn 18 while in state conservatorship to build skills to transition.</p> <p>DFPS Employee Confidentiality This bill requires that any personal information of a current or former DFPS remain confidential. This will help to protect those from threats or actions taken upon them by former or current clients.</p> <p>Caseworker Caseload Management System This bill would create a management system that would aim to assess cases in order to determine the appropriate number of cases assigned to each case manager. This will promote equity of caseloads by ensuring that any one case manager is not overburdened by a high caseload with mostly cases assessed to be high risk. This will help caseworkers manage stress as well as reduce some of the vicarious trauma this type of work can put upon a worker.</p> <p>CSHB 39 will potentially increase the capacity of foster parents. The bill promotes interagency collaboration as well as CPS employees equal distribution of cases and peace of mind. For children in the system this will help to reduce the number of homeless former foster youth and encourage the care and attention they need.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 Kylie@Texaslsg.org</p>
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LSG Floor Report For Constitutional Amendments Calendar- Wednesday, May 10, 2017



<p>HJR 73 By: Burns/ Ashby/ Kacal/Shine / et al.</p>	<p>Proposing a constitutional amendment to restrict the power of the legislature to mandate requirements on a municipality or county</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>HJR 73 proposes a constitutional amendment requiring the Legislature to appropriate funds to cover any mandate made to a municipality or county by the Legislature after the date this act goes into effect. Funds appropriated cannot come from a source that already funds that county or municipality. These provisions attempt to address the issue of unfunded mandates, which can be financially burdensome to counties.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HJR 113 By: Capriglione</p>	<p>Proposing a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation precious metal held in the Texas Bullion Depository.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>HJR 113 proposes a constitutional amendment authorizing the Legislature to exempt precious metal held in the Texas Bullion Depository from ad valorem taxation. The Legislature would be allowed to provide a definition of what constitutes “precious metal” for purposes relating to this amendment. The Legislative Budget Board does not anticipate a statistically significant burden regarding the overall distribution of a state tax or fee for individuals and businesses contingent on the passage of HJR 113. The Texas Bullion Depository provides storage space for precious metals of both individuals and institutions.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p><u>LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar- Wednesday, May 10, 2017</u></p>				
<p>HB 1747 By: Minjarez/ Villalba/ Larson</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of the offense of mail theft.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 1747 creates the felony offense of mail theft, in which commission of the offense pertains to a person appropriating pieces of mail that, in the aggregate, are addressed to at least three persons other than the actor. The classes of offenses for mail theft include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A state jail felony if 10 or fewer pieces of mail are stolen, • A third-degree felony if more than 10 but fewer than 50 pieces of mail are stolen, and • A second-degree felony if 50 or more pieces of mail are stolen. <p>Mail theft is currently charged under property theft laws, in which a dollar amount is attached to the theft. As there are no specific offenses pertaining to mail theft in Texas, there is little to deter repeat offenders who attempt to commit fraud or identity theft. HB 1747 will authorize law enforcement officers to prosecute persons committing mail theft as necessary.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 3261 By: Geren</p>	<p>Relating to the registration and regulation of appraisal management companies; authorizing fees; expanding the applicability of an occupational registration.</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>This bill updates Chapter 114 of the Occupations Code to update definitions and conform to federal law concerning appraisal management companies. These companies are regulated at the federal level with state oversight limited to registration and reporting requirements through the Texas Appraisers Licensing and Certification Board (TALCB), and employ individual appraisers who are licensed through the same Board. HB 3261 only adds one notable provision to statute relating to the collection of fees. The TALCB is authorized to collect registration fees on behalf of the federal Appraisal Subcommittee, and this bill expands that authority to include a subgroup of federally regulated AMCs regulated by the Federal Reserve System and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1643 By: Springer</p>	<p>Relating to the prosecution of the offense of operation of an unmanned aircraft over certain facilities.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p>	<p>This bill expands the definition of critical infrastructure facilities to include telecommunications structures (i.e. cell phone towers) and concentrated animal feeding operation (i.e. industrial livestock facilities) for the purpose of prohibiting the use of unmanned aircraft in their airspace. The use of drones near these types of facilities risks disruption to their normal operation for different reasons -- the potential for crashes that could damage cell phone towers and affect telecommunications access, and for the disruption to the environment of livestock including cattle, pigs, and poultry. More than a quarter of cattle in the United States are raised in Texas and represent a \$19 billion industry, a crucial segment of the state’s economic portfolio. Drone technology is a burgeoning field whose growth could not have been anticipated when the original definitions of critical infrastructure facilities were drafted, making it necessary to adjust statute now that their potential impacts are better understood.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 Andrea@Texaslsg.org</p>



<p>HB 2591 By: Herrero/ Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to the exemption from taxes and special assessments of property of a navigation district.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>This bill amends the Water Code to exempt navigation districts from taxation. Navigation districts are a political subdivision responsible for the maintenance of ports and waterways that do not currently pay taxes because of their public benefit. The state Tax Code already contains exemptions, so HB 2591 creates consistency across statute regarding this topic. The exemption only applies to the navigation districts themselves, leaving companies that lease property within their boundaries responsible for taxation as applicable. Texas ports and waterways are intimately tied to commerce in the state, and HB 2591 codifies an existing practice in support of their maintenance and operation by navigation districts.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 3296 By: Klick</p>	<p>Relating to persons required to establish nursing peer review committees.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>Nursing peer review is a process that is utilized to address nurses’ minor errors or infractions that do not warrant an official disciplinary complaint with the Texas Board of Nursing (BON). The peer review process allows for minor nursing issues to be at the nurse’s place of employment, ensuring that the proposed solution is tailored to that specific nurse’s scope of practice. Nursing peer review also offers vital workplace protections to nurses who feel that they have been asked to perform a service that is in violation of the Nurse Protection Act (NPA) , a Federal law that seeks to reduce occupational hazards for nurses. If a nurse feels they have been asked to do something in violation of the NPA, they can request for a “Safe Harbor” peer review process to take place to determine the nurse’s duty to perform the requested service. Finally, Nursing Peer Review allows minor cases to be handled locally, freeing up the BON to focus on more serious cases, such as when a nurse is accused of causing harm to a patient.</p> <p>Currently, only organizations with 10 or more nurses on staff are required to offer nursing peer review. CSHB 3296 expands access to nursing peer review by requiring it to be offered by organizations that employ 8 or more nurses. This minor change will expand nurse’s access to peer review, offering workplace protections and an avenue within which to address complaints without going through a formal disciplinary process with the BON.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2032 By: Gervin- Hawkins/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to increasing the criminal penalty for certain offenses committed in a vehicle operated by a public transportation system.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 2032 increases criminal penalties for sexual offenses, assaultive offenses, and robbery committed in a vehicle operated by a public transportation system. Within the bill, the commission of an offense on a vehicle operated by a public transportation system would be punished as prescribed for the next higher offense, with the exception of a first-degree or capital felony. HB 2032, “The Passenger Protection Act”, seeks to increase deterrents for individuals endangering passengers and operators of public transportation. Those relying on public transportation to get to work, school, or other places should have the protection of increased public safety from violent and violating offenses.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1661 By: Phelan</p>	<p>Relating to a withdrawal of a candidate.</p>	<p>Elections</p>	<p>HB 1661 allows for the ballot printing authority to withdraw a candidate’s name from a ballot and certification for unopposed status may be implemented. If the candidate withdraws from the race and meets all of the requirements for withdrawal with the exception for untimely withdrawal, if the ballots have not been printed, the authority may omit the name. Additionally, a certification for unopposed status may be added. This provision would be applied to elections for non state and county officers.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Ericksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 162 By: Lucio III</p>	<p>Relating to conditions of community supervision for defendants convicted of certain criminal offenses involving animals; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 162 allows a judge to require a person convicted of an offense relating to animal cruelty to complete an online responsible pet owner course as a condition of community supervision. The offenses eligible for the online responsible pet owner course include cruelty to livestock and non-livestock animals, attacks on an assistance animal, and dog fighting. The bill requires the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, or the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation as appropriate, to create rules by March 1, 2018 regarding administration, approval, and certification of the course and course providers. HB 162 seeks to reduce the occurrence of animal cruelty crimes and offer a rehabilitative and informative opportunity.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@texaslsg.org</p>



<p>HB 3854 By: Morrison, Geanie W./ Martinez, “Mando”/ Paddie/ Bonnen, Dennis/ Deshotel/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the movement of certain vehicles transporting an intermodal shipping container; authorizing a fee; creating an offense.</p>	<p>Transportation</p>	<p>This bill would authorize the TxDMV to issue an annual permit authorizing the movement of sealed intermodal shipping containers, which are enclosed, standardized, reusable containers. The bill would establish certain restrictions regarding axle weight and configurations and other conditions for vehicles that may operate under this permit. An applicant for a permit would be required to designate each counties and municipality in which the permit would be used. This legislation would require an applicant to pay a permit fee of \$5,000, of which 60% would be deposited to the State Highway Fund (SHF), 35% would be divided equally among and distributed to the counties designated in the permit application, and 5% would be divided equally among and distributed to the municipalities designated in the permit application. The bill would require the Comptroller to send amounts due to the counties at least once each fiscal year for deposit to the credit of the county road and bridge fund. The bill would create a Class C misdemeanor for certain offenses related to the permit. HB 3854 will unnecessarily jeopardize the safety of the traveling public, provide certain business interests with a significant competitive disadvantages for small businesses, and potentially create a number of enforcement challenges. Trucks with higher gross vehicle weight allowances compromise margins of safety, they are harder to handle and maneuver, and additional axles or different axle configurations will not entirely mitigate infrastructure damage. The overweight trucks described in this bill were found to have a 18% higher out-of-service rates for brake violations and are 362% more likely to be involved in a crash (U.S. Department of Transportation, and Institute for Highway Safety). Profit should not come at the expense of public safety, the deterioration of roads and bridges, nor smaller businesses of the trucking industry going out of business. Instead, the state should be more focused on addressing its structurally deficient bridges, the poor condition of public roads since there is a major backlog in highway maintenance and capital improvement projects.</p>	<p>Unfavorable Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 Andrea@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 245 By: Johnson, Eric</p>	<p>Relating to certain reporting requirements for law enforcement agencies; providing a civil penalty.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p>	<p>This bill creates a civil penalty for law enforcement agency that fails to submit a report to the Office of the Attorney General regarding an officer-involved injury or death. Agencies are currently required to submit these reports but there is no enforcement mechanism, so HB 245 requires the attorney general to investigate any claim of an unfiled report. When the results of those investigations indicate that an agency has failed to follow the reporting procedures, they will be assessed \$1000 for each day the report is unfiled; repeat offenses under this statute result in an additional \$10,000 fine. Agencies can be understandably reluctant to release details following a high-profile incident involving one of their officers, but law enforcement’s duty of public service carries with it an expectation of openness. HB 245 provides one step in the process of increasing accountability regarding agency operations.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 Andrea@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 472 By: Dale/ Villalba</p>	<p>Relating to judicial review of protective orders and the duration of those orders.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Limits motions to review a protective order for determination of continuing need. Currently, in motions to terminate sexual assault or human trafficking protective orders (POs), victims must prove a continuing need in order to maintain the PO. However, the victim did not have to prove this continuing need when they established the PO because the trauma from these crimes can be lifelong and severe. For example, there was a case where a court ruled that a man had repeatedly raped his 9-year-old daughter for years. She was issued a 10-year PO against the father. Three years later, he petitioned to terminate the order early, and because the victim could not prove “continuing need”, the court rescinded the PO.</p> <p>HB 472 ensures that civil protective order laws in Texas serve the purpose of protecting survivors of sexual assault and abuse, rather than allow perpetrators to use the courts as weapons of control and intimidation. This bill corrects the evidentiary imbalance between the standard for obtaining a PO based on sexual assault or abuse, stalking, or human trafficking, and the standard for modifying or terminating that PO. It additionally limits the motion for review to one.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 108 By: Alvarado/</p>	<p>Relating to the use of the skills development fund to facilitate the relocation to or</p>	<p>Economic & Small Business Development</p>	<p>Texas’ multiple economic business-incentives make it an appealing state for businesses to relocate to; the lack of workforce training and support services for these businesses, however, can discourage them from ultimately deciding to bring their company to Texas. HB 108 authorizes the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to utilize funds from the Skills Development Fund to provide training and</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson</p>



<p>Button/ Bernal/ Paddie/ Gonzales, Larry</p>	<p>expansion in this state of employers offering complex or high-skilled employment opportunities.</p>		<p>support for employers looking to relocate to Texas, with a focus on recruiting employers who will provide high-skilled employment opportunities for Texans. Under the bill, TWC is authorized to use funds to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership and direction to out-of-state employers • Provide linkage between out-of-state employers and economic development organizations, local workforce development boards, public junior colleges, and public technical institutes, allowing these entities to collaboratively address employer’s needs • Address employers’ needs for high-skilled workers by collaborating with Texas public junior and technical colleges to deliver targeted workforce training • Award grants to public junior and technical colleges to develop, obtain equipment for, or implement targeted workforce training <p>This bill does not create a new grant program, but creates flexibility in what existing skills development grant funds can be used for. Investing skills development funds in training that will incentivize businesses to relocate to Texas will have a positive impact on our economy and create valuable high-skill jobs for many Texans.</p>	<p>210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 525 By: Villalba/ Alvarado/ Morrison, Geanie W./ Thompson, Senfronia/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to a central database containing information about offenders who have committed certain violent offenses against children or offenses involving family or dating violence.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 525 requires the Department of Public Safety to maintain a computerized central database of persons who have on three or more occasions been convicted of an offense regarding dating violence, family violence, unlawful restraint of children or kidnapping of children. The information contained in the database is public information, with the exception of any information regarding: 1) the social security, telephone or driver’s license number, and 2) information that would identify the victim. The database must contain certain information including the person’s name, date of birth, physical description, a recent photograph and a list of offenses related to family or dating violence or violence against children.</p> <p>HB 525 addresses the terrifying problem of violence against children, and family violence. A central, public database establishes a mechanism for Texans and Texas families to have more knowledge for the purposes of ensuring the safety of themselves, their children and loved ones. There is a concern that the bill may otherwise focus more on being punitive rather than rehabilitative. Additionally, there is a concern that it may have an unintended consequence of targeting low-income communities.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 816 By: Bernal/ Uresti, Tomas</p>	<p>Relating to a school district assigning a mentor teacher to a new classroom teacher.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>HB 816 amends the Education Code to set out requirements for teacher mentoring. The bill requires districts to provide training to mentor teachers to be completed before the beginning of the school year as well as supplemental training during the school year. The bill specifies that the training must include content related to best mentorship practices, and it delineates requirements regarding mentoring session topics and session frequency. HB 816 also creates a mentor program allotment to fund districts that implement a mentoring program as described in this bill. Effectively, HB 816 strengthens the Texas teaching workforce and reduces the millions of dollars spent on teacher attrition.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 539 By: VanDeaver/ Bernal/ Casper/ Gonzalez,</p>	<p>Relating to the ability of certain dependents of members of the United States military to enroll full-time in courses provided</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>HB 539 expands the eligibility requirements for enrolling full-time in courses provided through the state virtual school network to accommodate students in military families who transferred to this state as a result of a deployment or transfer, and was enrolled in a publicly funded school out-of-state in the preceding school year. This will help military children who relocate to Texas continue their education with as little delay as possible.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org</p>



Mary/Sheffield	through the state virtual school network.			
HB 849 By: Murr	Relating to notice to certain lienholders of cancellation of certain personal automobile insurance coverages.	Insurance	This bill requires that automobile insurance providers send notice to the lienholder on the vehicle if they cancel the policy. These notifications are already considered best practice among insurance companies, but the absence of this requirement in statute can cause financial complications for other parties. The motivation for this bill involves a car salesman who sold a vehicle to an individual who totalled the vehicle after their policy was cancelled without notice, leaving him responsible for the outstanding balance on the loan. HB 849 is a straightforward adjustment to the Insurance Code that requires communication that should, and generally already does, happen within the industry.	Favorable Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org
HB 884 By: King, Ken	Relating to a revision of the essential knowledge and skills of the public school foundation curriculum and proclamations for the production of instructional materials.	Public Education	The instructional materials allotment (IMA) was created for the purchase of instructional materials, technological equipment, and technology-related services. School districts have flexibility over the use of IMA funds, but they are required by the Texas Education Agency to certify that they have spent sufficient funds on instructional materials that meet 100% of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) requirements. Districts typically purchase materials adopted by the State Board of Education (SBOE) in their proclamation, but the costs of the materials adopted by SBOE are so high that it leaves some districts with little to no money left over to purchase technological equipment, technology-related services, and other instructional materials. HB 884 would limit the proclamation by the SBOE to 75% of the IMA funding, and it would require the review and revision of TEKS for each subject and grade level of the foundation curriculum. Effectively, this would allow schools to use at least 25% of their IMA funding on technology or other instructional materials.	Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org
HB 786 By: VanDeaver	Relating to the prohibition of certain employment discrimination regarding an employee who is a volunteer emergency responder.	Business & Industry	Prohibits an employer from terminating or suspending the employment of, or in any other manner discriminating against, an employee who is a volunteer emergency responder when they are late or absent in responding to an emergency. HB 786 also provides entitlements for these employees if an employer violates this mandate. Many small cities and rural communities rely on volunteer firefighters and other emergency responders to respond to fires and other emergencies. They are sometimes the only trained resource for these communities, and they save taxpayers incredible amounts of money. These volunteer firefighters must be protected from punishment for missing work when responding to emergencies. This is a public safety concern. The only concern in this bill is that an employer may reduce the wages otherwise owed to the employee for any period that the employee took off responding to an emergency, except as authorized by a collective bargaining agreement. A volunteer emergency responder should not be penalized in their wages otherwise owed when called on to respond to an emergency.	Favorable with Concerns Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org
HB 929 By: Miller	Relating to the time for returning ballots mailed by certain federal postcard applicants.	Elections	HB 929 extends the deadline for a ballot by mail to be counted for those serving in the armed forces and the merchant marines, their spouses, and dependents to arrive to the address on the carrier envelop by the sixth day after the date of the election. If the sixth day falls on a weekend or national holiday the deadline extends to the next regular business day. This bill also amends language requiring the local canvassing authority to meet be set by the canvassing authority presiding officer within the parameters described in statute.	Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org



<p>HB 1974 By: Wray</p>	<p>Relating to durable powers of attorney.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Provides several clarification and modernization changes to the Texas Durable Power of Attorney Act, Chapter 751, under the Estates Code. These changes came as recommendations by the Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law Section of the State Bar of Texas, and were approved by the State Bar. A valid Durable Power of Attorney (DPOA) is a legal document that gives someone you choose the power to act in your place; for example, the trusted person you name will be permitted to take care of important matters to you, such as paying a bill, in the event that you are incapacitated.</p> <p>Many Texas citizens have been unable to effectively use the DPOA. Sometimes a DPOA is rejected for unexplained or arbitrary reasons. HB 1974 aims to clarify this Act, so as to simply prevent the continued spread of arbitrary refusal of DPOAs by some financial institutions. This will also meet the goal of reducing the need for guardianship proceedings, which is a very time-consuming and costly legal mechanism for one person to manage another person’s affairs when they are incapacitated. DPOAs are specifically included as an alternative to guardianship in Section 1002.0015, Estates Code.</p> <p>A DPOA may be rejected by some financial institutions because they do not want to take a risk. This bill does not require someone to automatically accept a DPOA nor does it shift liability to those who do accept a DPOA. Rather, it provides a new liability protection to those who accept a DPOA by allowing them to rely on an agent’s certification that the DPOA is valid for the purpose it is being presented, or an opinion of the agent’s counsel who would be hired at the principal’s expense. Additionally, it includes new procedures to follow to properly reject a DPOA. It provides numerous valid reasons to reject, some of which cannot be challenged by either the principal or the agent, and provides a mechanism to have a court decide any disputes.</p> <p>Thirty other states have enacted similar legislation without disruption to financial institutions. A person who has a DPOA, and wants to pay their loved ones rent who is incapacitated, so that they are not evicted, should not have their DPOA rejected without explanation by a financial institution. HB 1974 is an important bill for working families planning for the possibility of incapacity by making a DPOA more effective and readily available.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 Serena@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 978 By: Murr/ Moody</p>	<p>Relating to the terms of the board members of the Texas Indigent Defense Commission.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 978 extends term lengths of the Texas Indigent Defense Commission board members from two years to six years. The bill further allows one or two members’ terms to expire February 1 of each odd-numbered year, striking the provision allowing three members’ terms to expire February 1 of each even-numbered year. The Texas Indigent Defense Commission board is composed of volunteer members, and frequently experiences periods of seat vacancy due to lengthy processes of cultivating and vetting qualified candidates. Expanding term lengths for board members through HB 978 will address this issue.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 Katherine@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1649 By: Munoz Jr.</p>	<p>Relating to the use of extrapolation by a health maintenance organization or an insurer to audit claims.</p>	<p>Insurance</p>	<p>This bill prohibits health maintenance organizations from using a mathematical algorithm to determine their projected claims amounts. This technique may be a cost-saving strategy for the insurance companies on their end, but it can be burdensome for providers to track and sort out discrepancies in their accounts billable when the results are inaccurate. HB 1649 shifts the burden to the insurance companies to ensure that their billing and accounting practices are sound and based on transactions that actually occur.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Joel Kissell 210-382-4295 Joel@Texaslsg.org</p>



<p>HB 931 By: Miller/ Bonnen, Greg/ Zerwas/ Thompson, Senfronia/ Fallon/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to liability of certain electric utilities and political subdivisions that contract for certain uses of land that the electric utility owns, occupies, or leases.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>Hiking and biking trails offer recreational and public health benefits to Texans, but it can be costly for municipalities to obtain land to be used for these purposes. HB 931 would allow political subdivisions to contract with electric utilities for recreational use of the utility company's land. HB 200 of the 83rd Legislative Session allowed Harris County to implement this practice; it has allowed them to increase public biking trails while more efficiently utilizing lands owned by electric utility companies. This bill expands the practice so it can be implemented statewide, which could allow for the creation of new hike and bike trails in metropolitan areas for little to no cost to municipalities for the land. Political subdivisions are responsible for the costs associated with entering into an agreement with an electric utility under this subchapter. Liability of a political subdivision that arises from the use of an electric utility's property is limited to an amount not to exceed: \$350,000 for each person, \$700,000 for each single occurrence of bodily injury or death, \$100,00 for each occurrence for injury to or destruction of property, court costs, reasonable attorney's fees, or any other expense incurred in filing a cause of action against a political subdivision under this section.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 Tyler@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1816 By: Metcalf</p>	<p>Relating to the operation of medical supply transport vehicles during a declared state of disaster.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p>	<p>This bill expands the range of vehicles authorized to utilize roads within declared disaster areas to include medical supply transports. In situations facing a disaster declaration, medical facilities including hospitals and pharmacies often encounter shortages of critical supplies needed to treat casualties; the emergency response operations that follow such a declaration affect the resupply options available to these facilities. HB 1816 introduces a subchapter to the Transportation Code relating to emergency vehicles covering medical supply vehicles and requires the Texas Division of Emergency Management to adjust their procedures to accommodate their inclusion.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 Andrea@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1724 By: Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the commercial license buyback account managed by the Parks and Wildlife Department.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation & Tourism</p>	<p>Creates one unified commercial license buyback account to replace the separate license buyback programs for the shrimp licenses, finfish, and commercial crab licenses. These buyback programs were established around 1995 and are voluntary programs that offer the opportunity for participants in these fishing industries to sell their licenses. Reducing the number of working licenses results in healthier and more productive ecosystems. HB 1724 simply unifies these separate license buyback programs into one account, and clarifies that their funding can only be used to buy back commercial licenses from willing license holders.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 Fabeain@Texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2766 By: Sheffield/ Zerwas/ Miller/ White/ Raymond/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the creation and administration of a reinvestment allowance for certain long-term care facilities.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>CSHB 2766 aims to address underfunding in nursing homes in Texas, by creating the Nursing Facility Reinvestment Allowance (NFRA). For years Texas has been faced with a crisis for nursing home funding. Nationally our state is rank 49th in nursing home Medicaid funding. Medicaid reimbursement has been in a shortfall for sometime, resulting in a decrease in the quality of care due to cuts to caregiver wages. This bill implements the NFRA, which will draw down the additional federal Medicaid funding for nursing homes.</p> <p>In order to fund the NFRA, nursing home facilities would pay a fee assess of up to 6% of each facilities bed to the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). The dollars paid to HHSC would be used to access federal available federal funding. Upon matching the federal dollars, HHSC would move the funds to Managed Care Organization's (MCO) to be in calculated with the Medicaid rate, MCOs would then pass down the reimbursement rate. This bill aims to address concern for provider payments to low or no-Medicaid providers by implementing a redistribution process. This bill ensure that fees cannot be passed to the residence and is paid for by the providers. CSHB 2766 also has a quality component for facilities who meet certain quality metrics standards outlined by HHSC. 50% of dollars can be used for quality payments.</p> <p>CSHB 2766 will address the nursing home funding crisis in the same manner that 43 other states are utilizing federal matching dollars. As our state begins to see an increase the aging populations and more nursing homes will be required to support our elderly, now is as an important time as ever to address the under funding. Nursing homes are a necessity in caring for our elders who often do not</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 Kylie@Texaslsg.org</p>



			choose to leave their, homes and relinquish their independence. This bill will serve a great purpose in mitigating the nursing home Medicaid shortfall with no cost to the state, while still promoting quality care for those who need it most.	
HB 1837 By: Springer	Relating to the authority of counties to require a person to notify a local governmental entity before starting an outdoor fire; creating a criminal penalty.	Springer	HB 1837 seeks to reduce the amount of unnecessary responses by firefighters, especially in rural counties where resources are limited. This bill establishes the authority of a commissioner's court to require residents of the county to notify a local governmental entity before creating an outdoor fire. Occasionally people start controlled fires without notifying any authority which results in a needless response from a fire department. Exemptions from the definition of "outdoor fire" include a campfire at a campsite, fire used in a grill or an outdoor fireplace or oven, as well as fire use to burn trash in a container. HB 1837 amends the Local Government Code so that a person in violation of this chapter would receive a Class C misdemeanor if the person is aware of this statute and does not notify an authority of their outdoor fire.	Favorable Evaluated by: Tiffany Williams 210-382-4295 Tiffany@Texaslsg.org
HB 2087 By: VanDeaver/ Fallon	Relating to restricting the use of covered information, including student personally identifiable information, by an operator of a website, online service, online application, or mobile application for a school purpose.	Public Education	HB 2087 amends the Education Code to provide several privacy protections for student data. The bill bans the sale or rent of student data as well as targeted advertising to students based on their use of educational services. It limits the disclosure of student information obtained by technology providers, and it requires educational technology providers to maintain reasonable security practices and procedures that protect student data. The bill provides other similar provisions that enhance the protection of student data. HB 2087 ensures that while digital learning resources and technology integration in the classroom continue to transform education, student privacy is maintained.	Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org
HB 2722 By: Phillips/ Guillen	Relating to early voting by certain persons who have an employment hardship.	Elections	HB 2722 provides a new opportunity for voters with certain occupational hardships to cast their ballots by mail. A person whose job takes them offshore or away from home frequently can file an application to have their ballot sent to their employer or specific relatives to be sent to the voter at their present employment location. The voter will need file an application with the county clerk submitting an affidavit from the employer and an address of where the ballot is to be mailed within 60 days of the election. The ballot may be mailed to the employer, a relative of 2nd degree affinity or 3rd degree by blood. The ballots will be processed in the same manner as early voting ballots. This bill will allow those whose occupations make regular voting by mail difficult because their worksite location is never certain. This expands the opportunity for those people to vote.	Favorable Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org
HB 2790 By: White	Relating to funding for certain apprenticeship training programs.	Public Education	Current law only allows a public school district or a state postsecondary institution to sponsor apprenticeship training programs. HB 2790 amends the Education Code to also allow independent apprenticeship committees to conduct apprenticeship training programs. The bill requires the independent training program to maintain a clear audit trail and delineates the procedure for doing so. Effectively, this bill creates more opportunities for the expansion of apprenticeships to keep up with the growing demand of skilled labor.	Favorable Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 Arielle@Texaslsg.org
HB 3083 By: Price/ Coleman/ Darby	Relating to repayment of certain mental health professional education loans.	Public Health	HB 3083 amends the Education Code by adding Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDC) to the list of professionals that may be awarded repayment assistance grants under the Loan Repayment Program for Mental Health Professionals. Texas is experiencing a severe shortage of mental health professionals. By adding the additional group Texas is encouraging the improvement of designated health professionals. HB 3083 clarifies the limitations for the amount of assistance a student may receive from the state, and removed the two-year service requirement. Per the bill, a LCDC may receive \$10,000 in assistance from the state if that individuals have	Favorable Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 Fabeain@Texaslsg.org



			received an associates degree. The bill requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board to apply for federal matching funds to ensure that money is being fully utilized, by annually seeking the maximum amount of funds.	
HB 3735 By: Frank	Relating to an application for a new or amended water right submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.	Natural Resources	HB 3735 modifies the Water Code for new or amended water rights and updates language within the chapter. The bill limits the scope the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) can consider when granting or amending a water permit to what under its purview through jurisdiction. Amending language in the bill also changes language so that a permit is now <i>not inconsistent</i> with the state water plan instead of consistent. The state water plan is what Texas uses as a road map for regional and statewide needs and recommendations. Allowing leeway to deviate from the measures put forth through the state water plan could weaken the foundation of the process.	Will of the House Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 Erin@Texaslsg.org

