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**LSG Floor Report For Postponed Business- Friday, May 5, 2017**

<p><b>HB 2662</b> By: Landgraf</p>	<p>Relating to the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact waste disposal facility.</p>	<p>Environmental Regulation</p>	<p>HB 2662 amends the Health and Safety Code regarding the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact. The bill eliminates capacity designations that previously limited the amount low-level radioactive waste for states outside of the compact. However, the executive director of the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Commission(TLLRWDC) after a study can prohibit the authority from continuing to accept waste from nonparty states. This provision will not limit the authority to review, approve, deny, or place condition on importing waste. At least once every 4 years TLLRWDC will conduct a study on the capacity and can also request a study be done at any time. 4 million cubic feet of space for radioactive waste must be set aside for states within the compact. The operator and TLLRWDC must ensure that the reservation is maintained until the completion of decommissioning of all the nuclear electric generation facilities in the party states and 20% of the volume is reserved for party states is allotted to waste generated in Vermont. When 80% of the disposal cell is filled, the operator will stop receiving waste from nonparty states. Receiving waste can resume the building of a new cell with additional one million cubic feet of space or when the operator executes a performance bond that is acceptable to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. This provision does not change the authority of the TCEQ or the TLLRWDC. Several sections are repealed with the bill concerning the importation of waste from nonparty states. The initial capacity study will be done by December 1st. This compact is between Texas and Vermont for the purposes of storing low-level radioactive waste. While there is need for other states to utilize the facilities in Texas, overloading the facilities with imported waste would not be prudent for Texas. The bill would also authorize that a new waste cell be developed without going through a permitting or licensing process.</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Erin@Texaslsg.org">Erin@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3379</b> By: Paddie / Giddings / Perez / Meyer</p>	<p>Relating to the eligibility process for customer service benefits.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>HB 3379 provides for the development of an automatic process by which the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) can identify low-income utility customers who may qualify for utility-assistance benefits. The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and PUC currently have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in which HHSC provides PUC with a list of individuals who qualify for Medicaid or TANF, allowing for PUC to easily identify customers who may qualify for utility assistance. PUC then passes that information onto the utility companies, who have ultimate authority in deciding how to administer utility assistance benefits. HB 3379 allows for the current MOU between PUC and HHSC to continue, and allows for the MOU to be amended as necessary to achieve the goals of this legislation. Additionally, the bill prohibits the PUC from requiring utility companies to offer assistance benefits to customers. <b>This bill will allow PUC to easily identify Texans who would greatly benefit from utility assistance, ultimately making it easier for Texas families to obtain the assistance they need.</b></p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tyler@Texaslsg.org">Tyler@Texaslsg.org</a></p>

<p><b>HB 2780</b> By: Paddie / Darby / Ashby / Geren / Phelan / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the purchase of iron and steel products made in the United States for certain governmental entity projects.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>In recent years, many iron and steel manufacturing facilities in Texas have been forced to close due to foreign countries that violate trade laws and subsidize their iron and steel products to sell at rates significantly lower than the US market value. Over 1.5 million tons of foreign steel were imported and sold in Texas last year at below market rates; with foreign products available at such low prices, it is almost impossible for US iron and steel manufacturers to compete. This has not only negatively impacted the Texas economy, but has created significant job loss within the manufacturing industry.</p> <p>CSHB 2780 would require state contracts for remodeling, constructing, or altering any buildings or infrastructure to include in the documents provided to contract bidders a provision that any iron or steel product used in the project must be produced in the United States. The bill outlines exemptions for certain projects where the entity determines that use of US iron and steel products will increase the total cost of the project by more than 20%, there is inadequate availability of these products, or complying with this law does not serve the public interest. These type of domestic preference laws are widely utilized on major projects, such as the federal aid highway program, to promote domestic purchasing. This “buy America” bill ensures that Texas is investing its money in products that promote both economic prosperity and job growth for the US and Texas. Additionally, it will put many iron and steelworkers who have been laid off back to work, which can restore devastating effects on families and communities.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 4237</b> By: Moody / Coleman / Price / Lozano / Turner</p>	<p>Relating to mental health first aid training for university employees.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>HB 4237 expands the list of individuals eligible to participate in free mental health first aid training to include university employees at public and private higher education institutions. Mental health first aid training is grant funded and delivered by local mental health authorities; it teaches participants to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness and substance abuse in a safe manner. The training also decreases stigma and improves overall awareness of the mental health and substance abuse issues that individuals (and college students) are often faced with. The bill does not expand grant funding or mandate university employees to complete this training, but rather expands their access to the training by adding them to the list of persons eligible to have the training costs waived. Mental health and substance abuse issues are prevalent among college students; 75% of mental illnesses present by the age of 24, and students are under mounting educational and emotional stress daily. University employees are interfacing with students regularly; it is critical that they are able to identify students experiencing mental health crises so they can help these students access necessary resources.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tyler@Texaslsg.org">Tyler@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HCR 106</b> By: Deshotel / Perez / Faircloth / Roberts / Cain</p>	<p>Urging Congress to provide sufficient federal funding for the construction of a storm surge barrier along the Texas coast.</p>	<p>Land &amp; Resource Management</p>	<p>This resolution urges the U.S. Congress to provide sufficient federal funding for the development and construction of a coastal barrier to protect the Gulf Coast from storm surges. It also urges the U.S. Congress to expedite the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers design and construction process. Since the Gulf Coast region is particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events, it seems only logical that there be funding for a coastal barrier which will mitigate damages from severe weather and hurricanes.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org">Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2381</b> By: Frullo</p>	<p>Relating to the applicability of the sales and use tax to certain insurance services.</p>	<p>Ways &amp; Means</p>	<p>This bill exempts certain insurance-related services performed by a certified public accountant from the sales tax. Taxable insurance services currently include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• loss or damage appraisal,</li> <li>• inspection and investigation,</li> <li>• actuarial analysis or research,</li> <li>• claims adjustment or processing, and</li> <li>• loss prevention services.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a></p>



			Under HB 2381, any services performed by a CPA firm relating to one of the services listed above would not be taxable as long as the total cost of those services does not exceed 1% of the firm's revenue for the calendar year. This clarifies some confusion around how to apply the sales tax at this intersection of insurance and accounting services, as accounting services are not currently subject to the sales tax.	
<b>HB 3772</b> By: Button / Parker / Capriglione / Springer / Martinez, "Mando" / et al.	Relating to operation of the Texas leverage fund program administered by the Texas Economic Development Bank.	Economic & Small Business Development	<p>CSHB 3772 extends the expiration of the Texas Leverage Fund (TLF) past the September 1, 2022 end date. The TLF was established in 1992 to allow local Economic Development Corporations (EDCs) to leverage economic sales and usage taxes for local economic development projects. Through the years, the TLF has been moved between departments, in 2003 it was moved into the Office of the Governor. Movements were made with no underlying changes in statute, leaving some statute to be shut off while assuming each office would operate under the master resolution. While no loans have been provided since Governor Abbott office, there were loans that were provided in FY 2013-14 which allowed for 17 out of 22 of the active loans to have a maturity date past the 2022 dates.</p> <p>This bill allows the TLF to extend past its original expiration date while clarifying operational language. CSHB 3772 codifies statute that was previously streamlined out of the program guidelines through the departments jurisdictional moves. While the bill has been given a negative fiscal note of over \$4 million dollars, this reflects the one-time movement of the fund outside of the treasury to correlate with the legislation. Beyond this one-time movement, the program is self-sustaining.</p> <p>This bill is a means of protecting a loan program which serves mostly small towns and rural communities averaging at 5000-6000 in population. It assists these towns with necessary projects that would take decades to fund from accumulating sales tax. Some projects covered include main street rehabilitations to improve business development, sewer projects and land development projects.</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Kylie@Texaslsg.org">Kylie@Texaslsg.org</a>

**LSG Floor Report For Constitutional Amendment Calendar-House Joint Resolutions Friday, May 5, 2017**

<b>HJR 100</b> By: Kuempel / Gutierrez	Proposing a constitutional amendment on professional sports team charitable foundations conducting charitable raffles.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures	This joint resolution removes language from the Texas Constitution (under the Charitable Raffle Enabling Act) to effectively allow charitable foundations associated with professional sports teams to conduct charitable raffles and use the proceeds towards their cause. Charity raffles allow for people to participate in philanthropic causes by bringing awareness to community needs and raising money to address them.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tyler@Texaslsg.org">Tyler@Texaslsg.org</a>
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**LSG Floor Report For General Calendar- Friday, May 5, 2017**

Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
<b>HB 639</b> By: Anderson, Charles "Doc" / Huberty / Kacal /	Relating to authorizing the purchase of certain insurance coverage by public schools for the benefit of businesses and students participating in career and technology programs and	Public Education	The expansion of career and technology programs have created more opportunities for students to gain workplace experience and to get a head start on preparing for college and careers. While CTE partnerships have steadily increased over the last several years, the lack of insurance coverage for students causes some businesses not to partner with CTE programs. HB 639 seeks to address this concern by allowing public schools to obtain accident, liability, and automobile insurance coverage for students and businesses participating in a CTE program. The bill specifies that a school may not charge a student or a student's parent for the cost of the	<b>Favorable w/ concerns</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a>



Stephenson	providing for immunity from liability of certain public school students participating in career and technology programs.		insurance coverage. The intent of this bill is to protect students, protect partnering businesses, and to lower barriers that prevent some businesses from offering workplace opportunities to students.  Concerns: HB 639 grants students who participate in a CTE program immunity from civil liability in the same manner that a professional employee of the school would have. Some CTE placements could involve the use of dangerous tools around coworkers, other students, and the public. It may not be in the best interest of everyone to grant teenagers, who have varying ranges of discretion, immunity from liability in these settings. Granting immunity from liability to students could have the unintended consequence of incentivizing employers to place students in a situation they would not normally put a regular employee in, simple because the student is immune from liability.	
<b>HB 785</b> By: Raney / Zerwas / Sheffield / Burkett / Klick / et al.	Relating to the provision of embryo donation information.	Public Health	As the use of fertility therapy treatment increases, more couples will be faced with the decision of what to do with their leftover embryos. HB 785 would require doctors that provide fertility therapy to provide their patient with information regarding embryo donation. Additionally, it would require DFPS to post information about embryo donation on their internet website. <b>While it is reasonable to make patients aware of their ability to donate their embryos, it is critical that they are made fully aware of all their options, including cryopreservation or a proper method for disposal.</b>	<b>Favorable w/ Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 1036</b> By: Thompson, Senfronia / Hernandez /Laubenberg / Collier / Sheffield / et al.	Relating to coverage for certain breast cancer screening procedures under certain health benefit plans.	Insurance	This bill amends the Insurance Code to define “breast tomosynthesis” as a radiologic mammography procedure that involves the acquisition of projection images over a stationary breast to produce cross-sectional digital three-dimensional images of the breast from which applicable breast cancer screening diagnosis may be determined. It also adds digital mammography and breast tomosynthesis to the definition of “low-dose mammography”. These definitions are to be added to the vast majority of health plans with the exception of:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A child health plan operated under Chapters 62 and 63 of the Health and Safety Code</li> <li>• The state Medicaid program</li> <li>• The Medicaid managed care program</li> </ul> <p>Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in women and is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in Texas. By expanding the forms of low-dose mammography in health plans, there is a higher chance of early detection which can drastically change a woman’s outcome after diagnosis.</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:elizabeth@texaslsg.org">elizabeth@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 1142</b> By: Davis, Sarah	Relating to prohibiting governmental contracts with a company doing business with Iran, Sudan, or a foreign terrorist organization	State Affairs	HB 1142 prohibits any governmental entity from entering into a governmental contract with Iran, Sudan or foreign terrorist organizations. This bill also requires that the Comptroller collect and maintain a list of all companies who have contracts with or provide supplies to a foreign terrorist organization. This will help to prevent the state and local entities from unintentionally funneling money into and thus supporting foreign terrorist organizations.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a>



<p><b>HB 1183</b> By: Roberts / Gutierrez / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the prohibition by counties of the use of fireworks during certain hours; creating a criminal offense.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>H.B. 1183 amends the Local Government Code to authorize a commissioner’s court to prohibit the use of fireworks in the unincorporated area of the county during specified hours indicated on the order.</p> <p>The bill includes an exemption for holidays, including New Year’s Eve and July 4, and a process by which a person may apply to the county for a permit to use fireworks during a time prohibited by the order.</p> <p>The bill creates a Class C misdemeanor offense for a person who intentionally or knowingly violates a prohibition adopted under the bill’s provisions by the commissioner’s court. This will give law enforcement the tools to enforce violation of this code.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tiffany Williams 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tiffany@Texaslsg.org">Tiffany@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1290</b> By: Roberts / Button / Parker / Kacal / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the required repeal of a state agency rule before adoption of a new state agency rule.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>HB 1290 amends the Government Code to require state agencies to repeal at least one rule before implementing any new rules. The bill makes two exceptions for rules specifically required by the legislature or rules that are necessary to protect the health and safety of the public. This type of “one for one” legislation is meant to target unnecessary regulatory provisions by maintaining or decreasing the number of regulations made by state agencies. During 2015 and 2016, state agencies adopted 9,184 new regulations; at times, over regulation can lead to duplicitous or contradictory rules that make it difficult for individuals to navigate and understand state agency processes. “One on one” legislation is not widely used, but has been implemented successfully in Canada and the United Kingdom and has shown to decrease administrative burdens for specific subsets of people, such as business owners.</p> <p>While it is important that state agencies are prudent when passing regulatory provisions, this bill’s rigid “one in one out” approach could impose too significant a burden on agencies who are intimately familiar with the types of regulations they need to function effectively. The bill fails to outline criteria for how agencies should determine which rules to eliminate; this lack of clarity leaves significant room for politically or ideologically motivated individuals to strike legitimate, necessary agency rules they may disagree with. The Legislature should certainly offer critical oversight to state agencies, however regulating the amount of rules agencies propose is a stringent, blanket approach to decreasing regulations. This bill may discourage agencies from adopting rules that are reflective of current practices out of their hesitation toward repeal a separate rule. Additionally, insufficient regulatory measures could lead to certain agency functions and programs being under regulated and inefficiently managed.</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1693</b> By: Dean / Larson / Paddie / Wray / Thompson, Senfronia / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to documentation for the transfer of a motor vehicle title.</p>	<p>Transportation</p>	<p>This bill changes language concerning disclosures related to the transfer or sale of a motor vehicle to conform with federal statute, by replacing “buyer and seller” with “transferor and transferee” in statute. This updated language could be more broadly interpreted to include donations and other title transfers that do not constitute a sale. In addition to the language updates, HB 1693 requires the Department of Motor Vehicles to make electronic versions of the forms necessary to complete a transfer of ownership available. However, the Department is not required for the creation of an electronic submission system at this time.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:andrea@texaslsg.org">andrea@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1730</b> By: Cyrier</p>	<p>Relating to certification of the state’s primary standards of weights and measures.</p>	<p>Agriculture &amp; Livestock</p>	<p>Changes the requirements that the Texas Department of Agriculture submit the standards of weights and measures to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) from at least once each 10 years to instead “as required to maintain recognition of the department’s metrology laboratory.” A substantial financial impact would result if the NIST renounced recognition of the state’s metrology laboratory. HB 1730 simply avoids any potential financial fallout by ensuring the metrology lab maintains recognition.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 1766</b> By: Alvarado / Dale</p>	<p>Relating to involuntary termination of parental rights based on sexual assault of the child's other parent and the child support obligations of the parent whose rights were terminated.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice &amp; Family Issues</p>	<p>HB 1766 grants the court the ability to terminate the parental rights of a parent who has committed sexual assault against the child's other parent. Sexual assault victims who continuously interact with their perpetrator often experience re-traumatization. HB 1766 aims to prevent that.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Ana Ramon 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:ana@texaslsg.org">ana@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1784</b> By: Faircloth</p>	<p>Relating to the period during which an action alleging a violation of the open meetings law may be brought.</p>	<p>Government Transparency &amp; Operation</p>	<p>Currently, there is no codified statute of limitation for the Texas Open Meeting Act. When interested parties wish to bring forth allegations of a violation, the current statute of limitation is four years. This is based on general limitations but not specific to the Open Meeting Act. There are 25 states have a statute of limitations on these types of violations within a time frame of 6 months and 13 others state with limitations of 2 years. This bill will amend the statute of limitations to 2 years upon the date of the meeting or when the meeting violation could've been reasonably discovered.</p> <p>While parties should file against those who have allegedly violated the Open Meeting Act within an appropriate amount of time. It's also important to ensure the public's capability to first discover a possibly hidden violation or equip themselves to contest an alleged violation. This bill seeks to address the issue of bad actors who seek to use the current statute of limitation requirements but could inadvertently harm the public's ability to seek retribution for violations of the open meeting act.</p>	<p><b>Favorable w/ Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Ana Ramon 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:ana@texaslsg.org">ana@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1819</b> By: Springer / Dale / Canales / Moody / Capriglione / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the criminal consequences of engaging in certain conduct with respect to a firearm silencer.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 1819 removes provisions relating to intentionally or knowingly possessing, manufacturing, transporting, repairing, or selling a firearm silencer. This revision effectively removes the requirement for an exempt firearm silencer to be registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record maintained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. Under HB 1819, classification as a curio or relic by the US Department of Justice or use by an actor who possesses, manufactures, transports, repairs, or sells the firearm silencer in compliance with federal law would exempt these instances from a conviction of a third-degree felony. Provisions in the bill apply only to an offense committed on or after the effective date of September 1, 2017.</p> <p>HB 1819 acts as a preemptive change in statute should a federal government revision in legislation relating to conduct with firearm silencers violate Texas law. In this way, provisions set in this bill allow a toggle-switch that essentially switches Texas into compliance with any change made to federal law.</p>	<p><b>Favorable w/ Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1891</b> By: Nevárez</p>	<p>Relating to a documented member of the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas hunting certain deer.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation &amp; Tourism</p>	<p>HB 1891 establishes deer hunting guidelines for members of the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas. HB 1891 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code, by including members of the Kickapoo Tribe who possess sanctioned membership documents, in the definition of a resident. The bill allows licensed members of the Kickapoo Tribe to hunt antlerless white-tailed deer for religious ceremonial purposes, and requires Tribe hunters to provide the local warden with a 24-hour notice before going to hunt. Additionally, people who are not documented members of the Kickapoo Traditional may not hunt antlerless white-tailed deer. Of the 4.5 million deer in Texas, the Kickapoo tribe would only be harvesting 50 per year, strictly for ceremonial and religious purposes. HB 1891 seeks to remove regulations that limit the Kickapoo Tribe from fully performing practices and rituals that are sacred to their heritage.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:fabeain@texasleg.org">fabeain@texasleg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 1946</b> By: Parker</p>	<p>Relating to the incontestability of certain contracts or leases submitted to the attorney general by certain water districts.</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p>	<p>HB 1946 seeks to align the approval of contracts and leases that are submitted during the bond approval process from water districts by the Attorney General. If proceeds of a contract or lease filed with the bond go toward the payment of the bond, the Attorney General's approval of the bond also approves the contracts and leases.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:erin@texaslsg.org">erin@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1957</b> By: Laubenberg</p>	<p>Relating to the treatment of political contributions by a person's spouse under the Judicial Campaign Fairness Act.</p>	<p>General Investigating &amp; Ethics</p>	<p>HB 1957 amends the Election Code to exclude the provision that a spouse is not a separate individual for the purposes of making a judicial campaign contribution. Under HB 1957 both the person and their spouse can donate the maximum amount allocated to the office the judicial candidate is running for in an election. This bill fails however to take into consideration the financial benefits and incentives that a spousal relationship offers under community property rights law. If assets are to be equally distributed under law then it would stand to reason the contributions should be treated as one unit instead of two.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:erin@texaslsg.org">erin@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1986</b> By: Martinez, "Mando"</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of regional transit authorities; granting the power of eminent domain; providing authority to issue bonds and charge fees; creating a criminal offense.</p>	<p>Transportation</p>	<p>HB 1986 creates Chapter 463 of the Transportation Code to address potential regional transit systems within Texas.</p> <p>This chapter would apply to coastal counties that border Mexico and also the counties adjacent to these counties. However, this chapter is not prohibitive to other municipalities. The chapter defines a transit authority and grants the power of eminent domain and the ability to issue bonds. Through the adoption of a resolution and a proposition by an affirmative vote by qualified persons within a county the transit authority is established. Management of the authority would be overseen by an executive committee. HB 1986 also grants the ability for the transit authority to work with the municipality to undergo the implementation of the transit system.</p> <p>If the authority exercises the power of eminent domain and reroutes certain structures, the authority is required to pay for the rerouting. An executive committee will be established to oversee the eminent domain proceedings. Certain sections related to eminent domain within the bill can only be enacted if two-thirds of both chambers of the legislature vote in favor. This bill creates the criminal offense of a misdemeanor with fines up to \$100 for passengers who don't pay their fair.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-2495 <a href="mailto:andrea@texaslsg.org">andrea@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1988</b> By: Larson</p>	<p>Relating to the use of emergency engine cutoff switches on motorboats.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation &amp; Tourism</p>	<p>HB 1988 amends Parks and Wildlife Code by establishing safety guidelines for motorboat operators. HB 1988 prohibits motorboat operators from using a motorboat under 26ft without verification of an operational engine cutoff switch. HB 1988 states if the operator is utilizing a lanyard attachment, it must be appropriately attached to the operator's body. The bill also includes provisions for wireless attachments that are activated by a man-overboard submerging. There have been fatal incidents of people being propelled from boats that could have potentially survived had a cut-off switch been installed. HB 1988 seeks to create methods of protection for operators of these vessels.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:fabeain@texaslsg.org">fabeain@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2004</b> By: Anderson, Charles "Doc"</p>	<p>Relating to the Texas economic development fund for the Department of Agriculture.</p>	<p>Economic &amp; Small Business Development</p>	<p>HB 2004 clarifies the use of the Texas Economic Development Fund (TEDF), and the focus of this program for rural economic development. In 2011, the U.S. Treasury granted the state \$46.5 million from the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) to increase small business access to both capital and business expertise, in order to allow private entrepreneurs to expand companies in Texas. With this money, the Texas Department of Agriculture created the Jobs for Texas (J4T) venture capital and Capital for Texas Loan Participations (C4T) programs. J4T is a program that works to establish fund managers who raise additional private capital for investment into Texas small businesses, while C4T provides additional lending capital to Texas small businesses, primarily located in rural areas of the state, but also in other underserved communities throughout Texas. The intent of both of these programs is for the core funding to be returned and recycled through additional investments and loans. Thus, in 2013, the TEDF was created in the State Treasury to account for these "recycled" funds, and allow continued economic development use.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			In September 2017, the contractual agreement between the TDA and the U.S. Treasury will expire. HB 2004 ensures the continuation of the TEDF and these two programs, J4T and C4T. Additionally, it will allow for the creation of a program to encourage the export of Texas agricultural products, or products manufactured in rural Texas. Lastly, the bill requires no additional funding since the funds included in the TEDF are the same recycled funds that were a result of the U.S. Treasury grant.	
<b>HB 2277</b> By: Darby	Relating to the temporary exemption or tax reduction for certain high-cost gas.	Ways & Means	This bill tries to simplify the process of calculating the median cost of drilling and completion for high-cost gas wells by requiring to Comptroller’s office to fix the median calculation for the year as soon as possible beginning March 1st. This fixed cost can then be used to calculate the percentage of reduction to applicable oil and gas taxes for each individual well based on their actual production. Because the Comptroller’s determination does not occur until midway through the fiscal year, HB 2277 includes a requirement that taxpayers shall have any taxes they pay more than what they owe under the fixed median calculation remitted to them. The bill also removes numerous references to tax exemptions that are no longer relevant because of the median calculations. The new processes established by HB 2277 provide well operators with clear, predictable guidelines on how their tax burden will be determined.	<b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2285</b> By: Thompson, Ed / Raney / Paul / Alvarado / Bonnen, Dennis	Relating to the establishment of the Texas Institute for Coastal Prairie Research and Education at the University of Houston.	Higher Education	HB 2285 seeks to establish the Texas Institute for Coastal Prairie Research and Education at the University of Houston. The University of Houston plays a vital role in coastal prairie conservation, and researching methodologies that ensure coastal prairie preservation. HB 2855 creates the institute to further the understanding of the native coastal prairie, and heighten the public, academic and governmental awareness of the leading research being conducted about this subject at the University of Houston. The institute is responsible for conducting research on coastal prairie restoration, and provide a setting for other groups to conduct their research, and best methods for restoration. The University of Houston must encourage both public and private entities to participate and support the institute, and may enter an agreement with a public or private entity.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:fabeain@texaslsg.org">fabeain@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2305</b> By: Guillen	Relating to the operations, communications, and notice procedures of state agencies.	Government Transparency & Operation	HB 2305 amends code to require the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) to put together a list of all statutorily mandated reports. The start date for this is 2021 and would be updated every four years. With the assistance of other state agencies, this bill would require an assessment on the report and if it’s still fulfil its intended purpose. This report will be submitted to the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board.  This bill would codify the Texas Digital Archive which will be maintained by the TSLAC to allow for the preservation and access to electronic copies of information provided by different state agencies. This will allow agencies to share information appropriately and with little fiscal impact. During the next Legislative Appropriation Request they must report any savings or efficiencies this bill created.  To allow for the electronic sharing of documents this bill amends the following section of code: Government, Health and Safety, Labor, Natural Resources, Occupations, and Transportation. If a report is required by statute, rule, or rider it shall be posted in the Texas Digital Archive once the archive is able to receive the reports. The TSLAC will also develop a framework for report submission and monitor the usage of the digital archive.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Ana Ramon 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:ana@texaslsg.org">ana@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2306</b> By: Guillen / Longoria	Relating to the use of auction proceeds from the sale of certain abandoned motor vehicles to reimburse	Homeland Security & Public Safety	This bill authorizes law enforcement agencies to designate funds from the auction of abandoned vehicles to recoup certain costs associated with pursuits. Agencies currently reimburse members of the public for damages to their personal property in the course of	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295





	law enforcement agencies for compensation paid to certain property owners.		a pursuit by law enforcement, but those reimbursements must come out of the agency's operating budget. Under HB 2306, the auctions of abandoned vehicles that happen as a matter of course can be used to offset the pursuit-related costs.	<a href="mailto:andrea@texaslsg.org">andrea@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2491</b> By: Frullo	Relating to authorized reinsurance and financial statement credit and accounting for reinsurance.	Insurance	<p>This bill amends the Insurance Code to loosen restrictions around reinsurance providers within the state so they conform with industry standards and National Association of Insurance Commissioner recommendations. Reinsurance refers to insurance taken out by insurance providers to cover their own liabilities, and out-of-country companies that offer reinsurance policies are required to maintain enough collateral to pay out 100% of their outstanding liability under current state law; companies headquartered in the United States are not subject to the same level of collateral obligation. This standard is unreasonable considering that these policies are typically offered by the largest, most stable insurance companies in the field.</p> <p>HB 2491 gives the Texas Department of Insurance permission to evaluate each company on its own merits to determine an acceptable level of collateral. Texas is one of only nine states that have not considered or adopted these recommendations at this time. Federal discussions with the European Union at the end of 2016 left an agreement pending for the current administration's consideration. Even if the administration makes a decision regarding the EU agreement, HB 2491 is more expansive and encourages competitiveness within the market.</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:elizabeth@texaslsg.org">elizabeth@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2665</b> By: Paul	Relating to notification by an insurer of certain disciplinary actions imposed on the insurer for a violation of the insurance laws of another state.	Insurance	This bill amends the Insurance Code by striking language which stipulates that an insurer must notify the commissioner of an order or judgement no later than the 30th day after the date the imposition of a penalty, forfeiture, or sanction on an insurer for a violation of the insurance laws of another state. Stakeholders feel that this reporting requirement for insurers who have violated insurance laws is redundant as state insurance regulators already participate in a regulatory enforcement database. Insurers are required to report these violations to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) and they are distributed to the respective states. Therefore, this type of reporting is duplicative as TDI reports receiving two sets of reports.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:elizabeth@texaslsg.org">elizabeth@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2993</b> By: Phillips	Relating to the public transportation advisory committee.	Transportation	<p>This bill changes the appointing authority for members of the Public Transportation Advisory Committee so that the Texas Transportation Commission would select members instead of the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house. The nine-member board's composition is also amended so that the membership includes at least two representatives from each of the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A diverse cross-section of public transportation providers,</li> <li>• A diverse cross-section of transportation users, and</li> <li>• The general public.</li> </ul> <p>While the Commission, which governs the Department of Transportation, would be able to identify potential board members with expertise in the field, these changes would violate the principles of checks and balances in state government by removing legislative oversight.</p>	<b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:andrea@texaslsg.org">andrea@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3124</b> By: Gooden	Relating to certain physician-specific comparison data compiled by a health benefit plan issuer, including the release of that data to physicians participating in	Insurance	HB 3124 permits agencies that issue health benefit plans to provide their comparison data to participating physicians, and health care providers. Cost comparison data is compiled information that displays health care costs of one physician or provider against another. Upon request, a health benefit insurer has 15 days to disclose cost comparison data associated with the physician or provider, the methodology and measures used to compare costs, and any other information considered in making the comparison. This bill requires health benefit plan issuers to give physicians or providers associated with the cost comparison, a fair chance to dispute the data at least once each quarter, or when a benefit insurers changes the measures the use to calculate their information.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:elizabeth@texaslsg.org">elizabeth@texaslsg.org</a>



	certain physician-led organizations.		After a dispute statement is received, or a reconsideration process is taking place, the health benefit plan provider must provide a cost comparison dispute proceeding. The health benefit insurer must provide a written communication of the outcome of the proceeding to the physician or provider within 60 days after the dispute process. Upon determination that the cost comparison data is inaccurate, the health benefit plan insurer must promptly make the necessary corrections to this information. HB 3124 sets specific confidentiality guidelines about physicians sharing cost comparison data of other physicians.	
<b>HB 3223</b> By: Goldman / Raney / et al.	Relating to liability for the sale or transfer of law enforcement vehicles before removal of certain equipment and insignia; providing civil penalties.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	This bill prohibits the sale or transfer of any vehicle with features marking it as a law enforcement vehicle, including lights, sirens, and emergency equipment. The sale of these vehicles is still authorized once identifying features are removed. Political subdivisions and individuals who violate this statute are liable for any damages associated with the vehicle during the commission of a crime, and they face a civil penalty of \$1,000. HB 3223 codifies these measures to prevent individuals from misrepresenting themselves in furtherance of criminal acts.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:andrea@texaslsg.org">andrea@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3227</b> By: King, Tracy O.	Relating to the administration and enforcement of produce safety standards by the Department of Agriculture; authorizing an administrative penalty.	Agriculture & Livestock	Provides the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) with the authority to administer produce safety under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The FSMA was enacted in 2011 to authorize the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to take a preventative approach to food safety and contamination, as opposed to a responsive approach. It does this by incorporating grower education and enforcement actions designed to achieve higher rates of compliance with preventative safety standards.  Currently, this Produce Safety program is not administered by any agency in Texas, including the Department of Health and Human Services. HB 3227 simply gives this authority to the TDA, and establishes a maximum penalty of not more than \$5,000 for enforcement of produce safety activities. The FDA will provide the TDA with the necessary funding to administer this program.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3232</b> By: Darby	Relating to the penalty imposed on certain delinquent oil and gas severance taxes.	Ways & Means	This bill provides a mechanism for oil and gas producers to avoid penalties relating to delinquent filing of their severance taxes. In order to qualify for the exemption from penalty, companies must meet all of the following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owe the delinquent taxes due to an amended report;</li> <li>• Have paid the total due upon initial filing of the taxes;</li> <li>• Owe no more than 25% of the initial filing in delinquent taxes;</li> <li>• Correct any errors in their filed report within 60 days of filing; and</li> <li>• File the amended report within 730 days (two years) of the initial filing.</li> </ul> If the conditions outlined above are not met, companies are still subject to a penalty totaling 5% of their reported tax with an additional 5% if the delinquent amount is not paid within 30 days of the amended report's filing. Current practice among oil and gas producers is to delay amendments for the maximum allowable time period, even when they know their initial reports were inaccurate. These accounting and reporting tricks keep funds out of the state's available revenue for up to four years and should not be encouraged, especially in light of the current fiscal outlook of the state.	<b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3304</b> By: King, Ken	Relating to health benefit plan coverage for ovarian cancer testing and screening.	Insurance	This bill amends the Insurance Code to include in the minimum standard for insurance coverage the testing or screening to detect ovarian cancer as approved by the FDA. Currently, ovarian cancer is the ninth most common cancer in women, and ranks fifth in cancer deaths. The American Cancer Society reports that when ovarian cancer is found early, approximately 94% of patients live longer than 5 years after being diagnosed. Adding coverage for ovarian cancer screening will increase early detection and contribute to better life and treatment outcomes for patients who are diagnosed.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:elizabeth@texaslsg.org">elizabeth@texaslsg.org</a>



<p><b>HB 3868</b> By: Smithee</p>	<p>Relating to the vote to authorize background and criminal history checks on tenant applicants by a property owners' association.</p>	<p>Business &amp; Industry</p>	<p>If there is approval in an affirmative vote from a majority of owners, a property owners' association (POA) may require background and criminal history checks in applications for long term or short term tenancy for a property in the subdivision. This would have serious negative effects this has on a person's ability to find housing when they have a criminal record. The only way that someone with a criminal history can often times find rental housing is through a direct relationship with the owner, as opposed to filing an application with a leasing company. For example, Texans with a criminal history may use "Craigslist" or "Austin Home Search", find properties for lease and then speak directly with the owner. They present evidence of rehabilitation and good standing, such as gainful employment. If that owner is part of an owners' association, and wants to exercise their right to lease their property, and it so happens the lessee has a criminal history, then HB 3868 may prevent them from doing so. Additionally, this bill potentially allows checking of anything in a person's background, which might include work history, salary, being a victim of domestic violence, and so on. It is a huge invasion of privacy.</p> <p>It is imperative to public safety and to breaking cycles of poverty and incarceration that housing is provided to persons with a criminal history. Working class people and people of color are disproportionately affected by our criminal justice system. In order to stop this vicious cycle, there needs to be policies that promote their advancement. People deserve to be seen as individuals with specific life histories and circumstances, rather than solely as a person with convictions. Furthermore, HUD last year expressed that landlords and home sellers who turn down tenants or buyers based on their criminal records may violate the Fair Housing Act.</p> <p>From the perspective of homeowners, it interferes with property rights to chose what tenant to rent to. Property owners have been renting homes in subdivisions without this sort of regulation for decades. From the perspective of tenants, there are potential fair housing violations. There is no demonstrative need for this legislation. This bill is simply not a step in the right direction for Texas and for working families.</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 4052</b> By: Murphy</p>	<p>Relating to the exemption of certain services performed by certain employees from the sales and use tax.</p>	<p>Ways &amp; Means</p>	<p>This bill introduces language to the Tax Code exempting employers from sales tax applicable to services rendered by temporary employees contracted to perform duties usually assigned to full employees. In order to qualify for this exemption, the employer must otherwise treat the temporary employee as a full employee with regards to their duties, supervision, and provision of supplies necessary to perform those duties. HB 4052 allows staffing agencies and the companies that contract with them to continue practices that will now be codified in statute, with a layer of protection in place that requires agencies to prove they conform to the standards if challenged. With over 1.1 million Texans employed in the temporary work industry in 2015, the effect of HB 4052 on sales tax revenue to the state cannot be predicted at this time. The LBB notes that creating clearer state guidelines on this issue may prevent future litigation as an offsetting feature to the loss of revenue</p>	<p><b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Joel Kissell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@Texaslsg.org">katherine@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 4086</b> By: Wray</p>	<p>Relating to expunction of a notice of lis pendens.</p>	<p>Business &amp; Industry</p>	<p>Clarifies that expunctions of a lis pendens can be relied upon and simply ensures the functionality of this statute. A "lis pendens" is a legal notice filed into the property records to give notice that a given piece of property is subject to a lawsuit. This effectively means one cannot sell a property that has a lis pendens. In 2009, the Texas Legislature enacted an expungement process of a lis pendens. This was in response to abuse of the lis pendens process by attorneys simply filing them without merit and unnecessarily clouding title, or frustrating individual's' ability to dispose of their property as they please. Currently, this expunction statute is needing clarity because some argue that if one learns of the claim through means other than a legal notice, such as word of mouth, then the expunction is not reliable. Thus, a loan officer or title company would have to establish the facts in every instance, which only a jury or judge could determine. HB 4086 avoids this potential loophole in the statute, and ensures the reliability of an expunction in these circumstances.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 3442</b> By: Cook</p>	<p>Relating to the Fairfield Hospital District.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>Currently, the average hospital tax rate in Texas is 25 cents and the Fairfield Hospital District is 10 cents. HB 3442 would amend Special Districts Local Laws Code to authorize the district's board of directors to order an election to increase the maximum tax rate of the district to a rate capped at 25 cents on each \$100 valuation of the taxable property in the district.</p> <p>This tax rate increase must be presented and approved by local tax payers of the Fairfield Hospital District. The presentation of a petition that requests the election, must state the maximum tax rate to be voted on at the election, and contain 100 signatures of registered voters of the district. This bill prohibits the tax rate for all purposes from exceeding the maximum tax rate approved by the voters at an election to increase the district's maximum tax rate.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tiffany Williams 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tiffany@Texaslsg.org">Tiffany@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 168</b> By: Lucio III</p>	<p>Relating to creating a voluntary program to recognize licensed before-school and after-school programs that promote healthy eating and physical activity.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>HB 168 creates a voluntary, distinguished health recognition program for recognizing licensed before-school and after-school programs that promote healthy eating and physical activity above and beyond minimum state standards. Before-school and after-school programs would be evaluated and assigned tiered recognition based on their incorporation of several standards including whether or not the program serves healthy snacks, provides opportunities for moderate to vigorous physical activity, or whether clean drinking water is available and accessible to program attendees at all times. The bill provides for a gold, silver, and bronze tier of recognition to be determined based on the number of standards the program satisfies. HB 168 would incentive before-school and after-school programs to enhance their quality of care, and it would empower parents to make informed decisions regarding the quality of care their children receive.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1066</b> By: Thompson, Senfronia</p>	<p>Relating to the collection of certain judgments through court proceeding.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Removes a condition affecting property that can be reached through a court injunction, or other means, from a judgment debtor to obtain satisfaction on a judgment for a judgment creditor. Striking this one condition that the property "cannot readily attached or levied on by ordinary legal process" will allow courts to enforce their own judgments, effectively reducing court caseloads. HB 1066 simply allows a judgment creditor to more easily receive a court's assistance in reaching property to obtain satisfaction on the judgment.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1055</b> By: Burkett</p>	<p>Relating to a limitation on the amount of certain licensing fees charged by state agencies.</p>	<p>Licensing &amp; Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>Prohibits a state agency from increasing the amount of a fee for the issuance or renewal of an occupational license to amounts greater than those established on January 1, 2017. Texas law requires mandatory occupational licensing fees for various professions, such as barbers, athletic trainers, dieticians, realtors, and a multitude of others. For some occupations, there is little to no stability in the rates for these licensing fees. HB 1055 returns the authority of setting these fees from the state agencies to the legislature, so that in order for a state agency to increase this fee, the agency would have to go through the legislative process and defend any proposed increase. This is similar to a proposal for a tax increase. This legislation ensures that the legislature asserts its duty to make sure occupational licensing fees are fair and stable.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1143</b> By: Davis, Sarah</p>	<p>Relating to investment prohibitions and divestment requirements for certain investments of public money.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>CSHB 1143 seeks to revise and reorganize current law that prohibits state investment in companies engaged in business with Sudan and Iran. It consolidates provisions related to prohibited investments in Sudan and Iran and moves them within the Government Code to the section relating to state and local government contracts and funds management. Additionally, it expands these provisions to include investments in any organization designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the US Department of State. This bill essentially seeks to ensure that State money is not being invested in or contributing to the economic prosperity of foreign terrorist organizations.</p> <p>This bill primarily: Prohibits state agency investment or contracts with Sudan, Iran, or a designated foreign terrorist organization Requires the comptroller to establish and maintain a list of designated foreign terrorist organizations and to post the list on its website. This list must be categorized according to companies that engage in scrutinized business with Sudan, Iran or another foreign terrorist organization. The comptroller must complete an initial list no later than September 1, 2017</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-328-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			Provides exemptions for ERS and TRS from prohibitions related to investments if the entity determines that the requirement would be inconsistent with their fiduciary responsibility established under the Texas Constitution	
<b>HB 1217</b> By: Parker	Relating to appointment of and performance of notarial acts by an online notary public and online acknowledgment and proof of written instruments; authorizing a fee and creating a criminal offense.	Investments & Financial Services	<p>HB 1217 provides a regulatory framework for online notaries public by requiring the Secretary of State to develop and maintain standards for online notarization in collaboration with the Department of Information Resources or other appropriate state agencies. The Secretary of State is also responsible for credential analysis and identity proofing standards for online notary public. The bill outlines provisions relating to the application, qualifications, and performance of an online notary public, and electronic records, fees of up to \$25, and use of online notarization. Furthermore, the bill outlines the instances of authority in which an online notary public may perform, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>real estate in Texas,</li> <li>An agreement relating to a transaction in which one party is a resident of Texas and authorized to conduct business in the state,</li> <li>An agreement securing a debt that is payable at a location in Texas,</li> <li>A document, including an affidavit, intended to be filed in state public records, including those related to a proceeding in a local, state, or federal court located in Texas,</li> <li>An acknowledgment made by a person while physically located in Texas, or</li> <li>A document signed by a resident of the state at the time of signing, evidenced by a valid government-issued identification credential and includes a photo and current address within the state.</li> </ul> <p>An online notary public is required to keep public electronic records of all online notarizations, and destroy the coding, disk, certificate, card, software, or password enabling electronic affixation of the online notary public’s official electronic signature or seal upon commission termination. Should an online notary public’s commission terminate for any reason other than revocation or a denial of renewal, they are not required to destroy the electronic affixation data if the individual is recommissioned with the same electronic signature and seal within 3 months. A person knowingly and wrongfully possessing software or hardware enabling an online notary public to affix an official electronic signature or seal commits a Class A misdemeanor. The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.</p> <p>The Legislative Budget Board does not anticipate a fiscal impact to state appropriations, and assesses that the online notary public application fees charged will be deposited into the General Revenue Fund. As legislation introduced and implemented in the 84th Legislature authorized electronic notarization, HB 1217 provides the regulatory framework. Currently, notary law in Texas allows for any notary at any time; the authorized use of online notarization criteria listed within the bill can create complexity with current statute. Furthermore, identification issues may arise as electronic verification is based on a knowledge-based system, which is easy to infiltrate due to user manipulation. Implementing a federated system of digital certificates and authentication of those certificates will ensure a safer system.</p>	<b>Favorable w/ Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 1249</b> By: Goldman	Relating to a prohibition of certain motor vehicles resembling emergency medical services vehicles; creating a criminal offense.	Transportation	This bill creates a criminal offense for individuals who display insignias that mistakenly identify their vehicle as an emergency medical service or governmental vehicle. These insignias include the words or commonly identifiable symbols associated with ambulances, fire departments, and emergency medical services, as well as the flashing light bars commonly found on emergency response and police vehicles. In an emergency situation, individuals look for this type of information to seek assistance and having non-authorized vehicles displaying them can cause unnecessary confusion. Removal of these identifying features is in the public’s best interest. HB 1249	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:andrea@texaslsg.org">andrea@texaslsg.org</a>



			explicitly exempts classic and exhibition vehicles with specialty license plates. Violation of this prohibition is classified as a Class C misdemeanor.	
<b>HB 2008</b> By: Cospser	Relating to deferred presentment transactions made to military borrowers.	Investments & Financial Services	HB 2008 seeks bolster the compliance of payday lenders who engages in a transaction with a member of the United States Military or their dependent under federal law. This bill does not create any new regulations for payday lending, but further ensures these already codified regulations are enforced.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 1298</b> By: Frullo	Relating to the definition of commercial property insurance for purposes of certain provisions governing insurance rates and policy forms.	Insurance	This bill amends the Insurance Code to define “commercial property insurance” as coverage against loss caused by or resulting from loss, damage, or destruction of real or personal property provided through a commercial property insurance policy. This includes commercial fire or allied lines, commercial inland marine insurance, commercial crime coverage, boiler and machinery insurance other than explosion, glass insurance, and any other policies authorized by the commissioner. This bill clarifies the code to stipulate more specifically what commercial property coverage may be included by insurers.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:elizabeth@texaslsg.org">elizabeth@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 1472</b> By: Capriglione / Goldman / Darby / King, Phil / Turner	Relating to investment by a public junior college district of public funds received from the management and development of mineral rights.	Higher Education	HB 1472 authorizes the governing board of public junior college districts to invest funds from land development leases pertaining to oil, gas, and other mineral development. The funds invested by the governing board must be disbursed and accounted for separately from other district funds.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-2495 <a href="mailto:fabeain@texaslsg.org">fabeain@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2021</b> By: Hunter / Herrero	Relating to the duration of certain protective orders against family violence.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues	Current law only allows long-term protective orders for victims who have suffered serious bodily injury and for victims who have already obtained two or more protective orders against their abuser. HB 2021 amends the Family Code to also allow long-term protective orders for victims of felony level family violence offenses, regardless of whether the person has been charged with or convicted the offense. This bill seeks to provide protection for victims of felony level family violence that exceeds the usual two-year cap.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2119</b> By: Kacal / et al.	Relating to workers' compensation death benefit eligibility for certain spouses of first responders killed in the line of duty.	Business & Industry	Mandates that surviving spouses who remarry on or after the effective date of this act receive death benefits for life if their spouse was a first responder killed in the line of duty regardless of when the date of the death occurred. It intends to ensure that a surviving spouse of a first responder who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty is not penalized for remarrying due to the date that the death occurred.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3078</b> By: Thompson,	Relating to transfer of the regulation of podiatry to the Texas Department of	Public Health	CSHB 3078 is the Sunset bill for the Texas State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners (TBPME), which is the entity responsible for regulating the practice of podiatry. During the review process, the Sunset Commission found that this agency has been struggling to carry out many of its critical functions; in addition to being insufficiently staffed and not meeting key performance measures, its average complaint resolution time was upward of 500 days. To address these issues, CSHB 3078 abolishes the current independent	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson



<p>Senfronia</p>	<p>Licensing and Regulation; authorizing a reduction in fees.</p>		<p>Podiatry Board and reconstitutes it as a Governor Appointed Advisory Board within the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). The transfer is to take place on September 1, 2017, and is amenable to both the Podiatry Board and TDLR.</p> <p>In addition to transferring the Board to TDLR, CS HB 3078 makes various statutory changes related to podiatric practice. Major provisions of the bill include:                  Updated rulemaking authority for the TBPME under TDLR                  Eligibility requirements for individuals to be appointed to the Board and terms for service as a Board member                  Powers and duties of TBPME members                  Provisions instructing the creation of a training manual for TBPME board members                  Development of a complaint prioritization process to reduce the average complaint resolution time                  Development of a process to notify a TBPME licensee of a complaint made against them that provides anonymity for the complainant (unless the complainant is an insurance agent, insurer, pharmaceutical company, or third-party administrator)                  Updated licensing enforcement processes including allowing fingerprinting, criminal background checks, and biennial licensing renewal requirements for all licensure applicants                  Updated specifications for what conduct is grounds for denial of a licensure application                  Updated examination requirements for TBPME licensure                  A requirement that the Board develop continuing education requirements for TBPME licensees                  Establishment of a standardized penalty schedule, including recommended penalty amounts for each category of punishable conducted listed in the schedule</p> <p>Additionally, CS HB 3078 would require both TBPME licensees and the board itself to utilize the prescription monitoring system (operated within the Pharmacy Board) to periodically assess patient’s prescription histories to identify potentially harmful prescribing patterns or practices. It instructs TBPME in conjunction with the Pharmacy Board to develop conduct that constitutes a potentially harmful prescribing practice as it relates to TBPME licensees. The bill also authorizes the board to initiate a complaint against a podiatrist based on their harmful prescribing practices.</p>	<p>210-382-4295  <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2486</b>                  By: Stucky / Darby / Raney / Frank / Lambert</p>	<p>Relating to restoration of the position of public employees when relieved of duty from the Texas military forces or a similar unit.</p>	<p>Defense &amp; Veterans' Affairs</p>	<p>HB 2486 adds to existing statute that requires that state employees who serve in the military ordered to duty be able to return to their employment position. This bill includes that individuals who serve in a political subdivision of the state, is a municipal worker or county employee. Those able to return work would include military, reserve member or a member of a state or federal search and rescue team. This will open doors for more service members to feel secure in their civilian employment positions when being called to active duty.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b>                  Evaluated by:                  Kylie McNaught                  210-382-4295  <a href="mailto:kylie@texaslsg.org">kylie@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 45</b>                  By: Flynn / Leach / Burkett / Parker / Laubenberg / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to requiring the Texas Supreme Court to adopt rules and provide judicial instruction regarding the application of foreign laws in certain family law cases.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Requires the Texas Supreme Court to adopt specific rules of evidence and procedure in regards to limitations on the granting of comity to a foreign judgment or arbitration award as it relates to marriage and parent-child relationships in the Family Code. The purpose of requiring these procedures is to protect against violations of constitutional rights and public policy. However, the Family Code already contains several provisions providing guidance to Texas courts regarding the proper application of foreign law in these contexts. These provisions include: 1) foreign child custody law need not be applied if the child custody law of the foreign country violates fundamental principles of human rights in Chapter 152, 2) orders from a foreign country need not be enforced if the adoption law or process of the foreign country violates the fundamental principles of human rights or the laws or public policy of this state in</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b>                  Evaluated by:                  Serena Ahmed                  210-382-4295  <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			<p>Chapter 162, and 3) a Texas tribunal may refuse enforcement of a foreign child support order if doing so would be incompatible with public policy in Chapter 159.</p> <p>HB 45 places unnecessary burdens on the courts to develop procedures and rules of evidence when it is already clear that under Texas law a court is not required in family law disputes to enforce a foreign law if enforcement would be contrary to the Texas constitutional rights or public policy. Understanding this, HB 45 thus sends a negative message that Texas is suspicious and unreceptive to foreign countries, laws, businesses and groups. It has the potential to negatively impact minority faiths and their civil rights, by preventing minority religious groups from practicing their faith in areas such as marriage, divorce and funeral procedures.</p>	
<p><b>HB 1515</b> By: Elkins</p>	<p>Relating to the expiration of the dry cleaner environmental response program.</p>	<p>Environmental Regulation</p>	<p>HB 1515 lengthens the the Dry Cleaner Environmental Response Program (DCRP) which was set to expire in 2021 until 2050. This allows for any corrective action, including administrative, that has begun before September 1, 2050 for the remediation of a dry cleaner site to be paid for using the DCRP funds. A program that has only been implemented administratively after September 1, 2050 can still have corrective action taken if money is still in the fund. This time extension is important because waste from dry cleaning sites is damaging to the environment and this bill allow for continued mitigation.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:erin@texaslsg.org">erin@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1866</b> By: Geren</p>	<p>Relating to compensation and restitution to crime victims and the disposition of unclaimed restitution payments; providing for an administrative penalty; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 1866 adds Chapter 77 (“Report, Delivery, and Claims Process for Unclaimed Restitution Payments”) to the Property Code, outlining the applicability and procedures for unclaimed restitution payments presumed abandoned (URPPA) to victims of crime. The bill also repeals 56.54 (“Funds”) (c) from the Code of Criminal Procedure, which states that the compensation to victims of crime auxiliary fund may be used by the Attorney General only for compensation payments to victims, and 76.013 (“Restitution”) (d), Government Code that specifies a community supervision and corrections department must pay a victim claiming payment during a 5-year period in which the payment is held in the interest-bearing account for the original payment amount, less any interest earned. The revisions in 76.013 clarify restitution payment and cleans up the language, instituting a procedure that is more focused on incentivizing any URPPA. If a victim doesn’t make a claim before 5 years of the date the department receive the initial restitution payment, any unclaimed payments held by the department are presumed abandoned; in this case, the department must report and deliver the unclaimed payments to the comptroller, less a collection fee of 1.5%.</p> <p>Chapter 77 (“Report, Delivery, and Claims Process for Unclaimed Restitution Payments”) outlines provisions relating to advertising URPPA with other unclaimed property. Within the required property report, provisions regarding confidentiality exempt victims of sex offenses, stalking, family violence, and trafficking of persons from public information reported by counties regarding unclaimed property. Statutes outlining notice by holder of any URPPA requirements specify that if they are holding any URPPA on or before May 1, the holder must mail the payments to the victim’s last known address, and notify the victim that the holder may be required to deliver the payments to the Comptroller on or before the following July 1 if left unclaimed. Further provisions outline parties the Comptroller cannot approve a claim to, including a creditor, receiver, a person attempting to make a claim on behalf of a previously-dissolved trust if the person appears to have revived the trust or corporation solely to make a claim under this statute and was not an authorized representative at the time of termination, or a person holding a power of attorney that the Comptroller is not authorized to pay.</p> <p>A penalty equal to 5% of the value of the unclaimed restitution payment is imposed on a holder failing to deliver payment. The bill requires the Office of the Attorney General and the Comptroller of Public Accounts to establish a plan for the identification and transfer of records, property, and unspent appropriations of the Attorney General used for the purpose of managing the</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>





			<p>compensation to victims of crime auxiliary fund. The bill further requires a department that previously transferred payments to the Comptroller to provide the Comptroller with the property report information for each victim the department transferred a payment to under previous statute.</p> <p>Counties' current statute regarding locating crime victims does not require substantial effort and creates an incentive to keep it that way; entities are permitted to keep 5% of the unclaimed payments ultimately sent to the Comptroller. Decreasing the percentage of unclaimed restitution local entities can retain encourages counties to locate crime victims and ensure they receive restitution payments.</p>	
<p><b>HB 1522</b> By: White</p>	<p>Relating to a task force to coordinate and make recommendations on parent engagement and education programs provided by state agencies.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>Experts agree that parent engagement is vital to the well being and success of Texas children. Many state agencies offer parent engagement or education activities, but there is little understanding of how these various programs intersect to impact Texas Children. HB 1522 establishes a task force on parent engagement and education programs to enhance coordination of parent engagement and evidence-based parent education programs across state agencies. <b>The task force will aim to improve coordination and communication between state agencies and will serve as a valuable tool in identifying and implementing methods to better engage parents to ensure positive outcomes for Texas children.</b></p> <p>The task force will meet quarterly and will be composed of representatives from the Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Texas Juvenile Justice Department, county juvenile probation departments, faith-based organizations, and a parent who has experienced challenges meant to be addressed by parent education programs. It is authorized to accept gifts, grants, and donations and its abolishment date is September 1, 2019. Its major duties include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receiving reports and testimony from individuals, community organizations, and state agencies regarding parent engagement and evidence-based parent education programs</li> <li>• Identifying evidence-based parent education programs that are being implemented in Texas</li> <li>• Identifying opportunities for improved coordination among those programs to maximize their effectiveness and funding</li> <li>• Developing policies and recommendations for expanding access to parent-education and engagement programs and establishing statewide guidelines for these programs</li> <li>• Establishing methods for using existing administrative and program data to identify and target programs to communities with the greatest need for services and families exhibiting high levels of risk factors such as poverty, poor maternal health, or unemployment</li> <li>• Preparing a report to include a description of the activities of the taskforce, its findings and recommendations, and any proposed legislation or relevant matters deemed appropriate by the task force. The report should be reported to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker, and and presiding officers of relevant standing committees of the Legislature that have primary jurisdiction over parent engagement and education issues no later than December 1, 2018</li> </ul>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1536</b> By: Farrar</p>	<p>Relating to a biennial report on stormwater infrastructure in this state.</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p>	<p>HB 1536 creates a group that will report on green stormwater infrastructure and low impact development per biennium. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) will appoint a 10 member reporting group comprised of a wide-variety of stakeholders. The group will compile data of municipalities, counties, and special districts with land development authority that utilize green stormwater infrastructure and low impact development regarding: the number of private/public projects, amount of stormwater managed, and money invested in the project. Assessments on financing projects, typical impediments, law and policy impediments,</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295</p>



			<p>and recommendations to increase use will be conducted. Public input will be essential to the reports by requiring both TCEQ and the appointed group will solicit information at multiple times during the preparation of the report. The report must be submitted by January 1st of the second year of the fiscal biennium to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house, and the members of the legislature.</p> <p>Green stormwater infrastructure and low impact development projects such as porous roadways and green roofs are proven to be successful at mitigating the issues cities have with stormwater runoff both financially and environmentally.</p>	<a href="mailto:erin@texaslsg.org">erin@texaslsg.org</a>
<p><b>HB 1884</b> By: Anderson, Charles "Doc"</p>	<p>Relating to the penalties for certain littering offenses.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 1884 expands the types of littering offenses subject to community service by requiring courts to sentence persons convicted of these offenses to performing, at the court's discretion, no more than 60 hours of community service in addition to any fine or other penalty. The types of littering covered within the bill's provisions include illegal dumping, discarding lighted materials, violating the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission rules and standards regarding processing and treating litter, and disposal of litter in a cave. The community service sentence must consist of picking up litter in the person's residing county or working at a recycling facility if a program is available within the sentencing court's community.</p> <p>While illegal dumping costs Texas each year- Houston has spent over \$13 million on litter abatement alone, and Lufkin has spent \$139 million- there is a strong possibility that the added community service requirement for an offense that can simply be paid with a fine will disproportionately impact vulnerable Texas families. Single parents, families, and individuals who suddenly face up to 60 hours of community service can face difficulties when their time and resources are strained and are not able to miss work. These persons can subsequently lose their license for failing to comply with court-ordered requirements for one of the lowest-level offenses and can easily get caught up in spiraling collateral consequences when the Texas criminal justice system places inordinate punishment on low-level crimes.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1605</b> By: Blanco / Elkins / Capriglione / Gonzales, Larry / Lucio III</p>	<p>Relating to the powers and duties of the Department of Information Resources regarding cybersecurity.</p>	<p>Government Transparency &amp; Operation</p>	<p>At this point in time there is no statewide place in place if our security systems were subject to a cyber-attack. With ever changing technology and the sensitive information held by the state's there is an ever-increasing concern about the harmful effects a successful cyber-attack can have on our State's vital infrastructure. This should be an increasing concern for our legislature and take the proper actions to address this problem.</p> <p>This bill requires that the Department of Information Resources, no later than August 31 of each even numbered year, submit a report identifying efforts that can be taken by the state to improve cybersecurity. This report will include assessments of the resources available to respond to a possible cyber-attack. It will also review the existing law regarding information resources technologies and make suggestions on how to increase cybersecurity and decrease operational and financial impacts of a cyber-attack. DIR may withhold or redact information that is confidential under Chapter 552, or other state or federal law. This bill also allows DIR to request funding to manage operational and financial impacts in the case of a cyber-attack.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Ana Ramon 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:ana@texaslsg.org">ana@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1630</b> By: Dale</p>	<p>Relating to the approval of expenditures for the Texas Military Department.</p>	<p>Defense &amp; Veterans' Affairs</p>	<p>This bill allows the Adjutant General to delegate to authorization of Texas Military Department expenditures to the executive director. Currently statutes lacks clarity regarding the Adjutant General's ability to grant authorizing power of expenses to the executive director. This bill allows for more clarity as to the duties and authority of each.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:kylie@texaslsg.org">kylie@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 1999</b> By: Israel</p>	<p>Relating to a violation regarding the purchase, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages by a minor or the misrepresentation of age by a minor; authorizing a civil penalty; creating a criminal offense.</p>	<p>Licensing &amp; Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>Amends the Alcoholic Beverage Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, Penal Code, and Transportation Code as they relate to the purchase, possession, or consumption of alcohol by a minor. These offenses otherwise punished as a Class C misdemeanor would become civil violations punished by a civil penalty not to exceed \$500, and would be credit collected and transferred to the general revenue fund. The minor charged may discharge the civil penalty by performing community service for not less than 20 but not more than 40 hours. The minor would only commit a criminal offense, Class C misdemeanor, after being previously assessed a civil penalty for such violations on multiple occasions.</p> <p>Criminal penalties imposed on a minor who purchases, possesses or consumes alcohol can result in barriers to college acceptance or entry into the workforce, creating vicious cycles of poverty and incarceration. These criminal penalties also strain the Texas' criminal justice system. HB 1999 reduces these strains, and is estimated to positively increase general revenue related funds by \$2,950,350 through the biennium ending August 31, 2019.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2068</b> By: Phillips / Wilson / White</p>	<p>Relating to the repeal of the driver responsibility program and the amount and allocation of state traffic fine funds; authorizing and increasing criminal fines.</p>	<p>Homeland Security &amp; Public Safety</p>	<p>The Driver Responsibility Program was first created by the Texas Legislature in 2003. This Program allows for The Department of Public Safety to place surcharges on the driver's licenses on people with convicted on certain traffic offenses. These funds are sent to help trauma hospitals with uncompensated care costs. Many of which absorb hundreds of millions of dollars in uncompensated health care costs. Unfortunately, some would argue that the program has not fulfilled its promise and provides less than half the revenue it was estimated to produce. There are also concerns that with 60% of the surcharges being left unpaid this program is more harmful to Texas families. When an individual can't afford to pay off the surcharges their license are no longer valid. Without a valid license, the individual would no longer be able to purchase insurance.</p> <p>This bill repeals the Driver Responsibility Program within the Transportation Code and creates a higher set of fines associated with moving violations to maintain the DRP's original intent. References to the DRP are similarly amended in other state codes as it relates to authorized instructors for parent-taught driver education, and to criminal history checks for various applicants relating to HHSC agencies. To compensate for the removal of a significant portion of the penalties associated with DWI offense within the DRPs, HB 2068 includes a series of financial penalties in addition to those already in statute.</p> <p>The second purpose of HB 2068 is to reallocate funds formerly associated with the Driver Responsibility Program. Under current statute, 67% of traffic fines collected as part of the DRP are directed to General Revenue and 33% to a dedicated fund for trauma facilities and emergency medical services; the updated allocation represents a 45/55% division between these two sources. The LBB's fiscal analysis of the bill indicate a net increase to GR and the trauma fund as a result of increased fine receipts.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Andrea@Texaslsg.org">Andrea@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2359</b> By: Ortega / Uresti, Tomas / Roberts / Neave</p>	<p>Relating to common nuisances.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>Vacant buildings have recently been used for criminal activities and the majority of them are potential fire hazards. Municipalities have ordinances in place to address this problem however counties do not. Under current law, unless specific crimes are committed in an occupied building, counties lack authority to effectively address this issue.</p> <p>H.B. 2359 creates uniformity in the Civil Practice and Remedies Code by adding the crimes listed under the "public nuisance" section into the "common nuisance section." Offenses added are: criminal trespass, disorderly conduct, arson, criminal mischief that causes a pecuniary loss of \$500 or more, and a graffiti offense in violation of applicable Penal Code provisions. The purpose is to make the two sections more consistent, address blight properties, and encourage cooperation among owners and law enforcement.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tiffany Williams 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tiffany@texaslsg.org">tiffany@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 2409</b> By: Raney / González, Mary / Simmons / Shine / Romero, Jr. / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to wage requirements for community rehabilitation programs participating in the purchasing from people with disabilities program.</p>	<p>Business &amp; Industry</p>	<p>Requires all community rehabilitation programs to pay no less than the federal minimum wage under the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) are community-based government entities or nonprofit private organizations established in 1978 by the Texas Legislature as part of the Texas Purchasing from People with Disabilities program. The program provides products or services through CRPs that are purchased, on a noncompetitive basis, by state or federal agencies, schools and political subdivisions. The products include office supplies, food items, and medical test kits, and the services include landscaping, park maintenance, janitorial services, copying, and temporary employment. The goal is to promote employment opportunities for Texans with disabilities, and assist such persons in achieving maximum independence through useful and productive employment activities.</p> <p>Currently, there are 8 out of 116 CRPs that pay their employees with disabilities less than the minimum wage, amounting to 410 workers out of the 6,064 employed by the program earning subminimum wages. For more than 70 years, employers holding special “certificates” issued by the Department of Labor (DOL) have been allowed to pay less than the minimum wage to workers with disabilities, in some cases just a penny an hour. Most receive a dollar or less for each hour they work. These certificates are issued in accordance with Section 14(c) of the FLSA enacted in 1938--an era in which people with disabilities were routinely segregated and excluded from the job market. A CRP can pay subminimum wages by applying for this waiver, by just simply “justifying” why an individual cannot earn minimum wage or higher through a time study (time studies compare the work of a person with a disability to the work of someone without a disability, but does not ensure the job matches their natural skills, desires and employment goals). Putting someone in a job who has limited mobility that requires full mobility does not help them increase their work skills. It sets them up for failure.</p> <p>By and large, the program is successful at employing Texans with disabilities at minimum wage or higher: 94% of Texans with disabilities employed by the program already earn the federal minimum wage or higher. HB 2409 simply directs the Texas Workforce Commission to assist the 8 CRPs that pay subminimum wages to phase out this practice within 2 years, with the possibility of an extension of an additional year. The bill mandates the TWC to also assist with the following: ensuring that an increase in wages does not affect the worker’s eligibility for federal benefits that they were receiving or were eligible for, ensuring that to the maximum extent possible that each worker with a disability remains employed and provides job training for other employment. Paying subminimum wages is a severe injustice to persons with disabilities. Taxpayer funding should not go to CRPs that pay below the minimum wage because it is discriminatory, and is not efficient with taxpayer dollars as paying subminimum wages only increases the reliance on state services. HB 2409 is a necessary step forward towards breaking the cycle of poverty for Texans with disabilities.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2373</b> By: Miller</p>	<p>Relating to the period for filing a claim for reimbursement for certain ancillary services under the Medicaid program.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>CSHB 2373 extends the time period for which patients who have received ancillary services under Medicaid to file a claim. Many nursing homes and other long term care facilities contract with ancillary service providers to bring in supplemental services such as portable X-rays and lab tests. Current statute requires that those who receive ancillary services while homebound or in a nursing home and receives an ancillary service has 95 days to file a claim to be reimbursed for the funds. Most nursing homes when filing claims are used to at 365 day time line, this results in filing claims for ancillary services later than the 95th day. This can cause some nursing homes to losing reimbursements for approximately 30% of the work that they do.</p> <p>This bill extends the filing deadline from 95 days to 270 days. This will allow for nursing homes to have more time to file claims for reimbursement without losing money on necessary services. Nursing homes and homebound patient care, provides healthcare to our most vulnerable and increasingly health deficient population. Many nursing homes are often underfunded and find difficulty being reimbursed for the important services, this will help to offset some of the costs lost each year.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:kylie@texaslsg.org">kylie@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 2492</b> By: Frullo</p>	<p>Relating to domestic surplus lines insurers; authorizing and imposing a tax.</p>	<p>Insurance</p>	<p>This bill authorizes domestic surplus lines insurance providers to offer policies within Texas. Current statute prohibits these policies from being sold by companies headquartered in the state, causing more than \$5 billion in insurance premiums to leave Texas each year. Surplus lines insurance policies cover unorthodox situations not covered by traditional insurance policies, either because they are inherently too risky or uncommon to be worth providing. Individuals and organizations seeking a surplus line must demonstrate that their efforts to find a traditional policy were unsuccessful. Even though the surplus lines market is less restricted due to its non-standard structure, all other applicable restrictions on the insurance providers remain in place. HB 2492 simply removes unnecessary barriers that prevent Texans from obtaining the insurance coverage they deem appropriate.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:elizabeth@texaslsg.org">elizabeth@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3356</b> By: King, Tracy O.</p>	<p>Relating to privacy of certain structured settlement information.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Requires courts to permit the full redaction of name, address, and other information that could reasonably be used to determine the identity or address of a payee if they request for such redaction in an application for a transfer of structured settlement payment rights. In this context, a payee refers to an individual receiving tax-free payments under a structured settlement and proposes to transfer payment rights under the structured settlement. A structured settlement is the arrangement for periodic payment of damages for personal injuries or sickness established by a settlement or judgment in resolution of a tort claim or workers' compensation.</p> <p>HB 3356 simply allows a payee to have their personally identifiable information redaction if they submit a written request to the court in a transfer of structured settlement payment rights. Some people have been subject to identity fraud, and others have had to procure temporary restraining orders. Some people may not even want to accept their right to a structured settlement payment because they were a victim of domestic violence and are afraid of being identified by their abuser. This bill clarifies for the courts that written requests for redaction of personal information must be met in certain structured settlement related applications.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2425</b> By: Price / Rose / Larson / Thompson, Senfronia / Oliverson</p>	<p>Relating to a requirement that a hospital allow a patient to designate a caregiver to receive aftercare instruction regarding the patient.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>Evidence shows that patients who have a designated caregiver to provide aftercare assistance after being discharged from the hospital have better overall health outcomes. CSHB 2425 would require hospitals to provide patients (or their legal guardian) with the option to designate a caregiver before the patient is discharged from the hospital. If the patient chooses to designate a caregiver, the hospital is responsible for documenting that in their file and request written authorization from the patient allowing the hospital to disclose relevant healthcare information to the caregiver. The hospital is also required to notate in a patient's file if they decline to designate a caregiver. The bill outlines requirements for the hospital to notify a designated caregiver before the patient's discharge date and provide them with the patient's discharge plan. Additionally, the hospital is responsible for providing any necessary instruction or training the caregiver might need to carry out the aftercare instructions contained in the discharge plan.</p> <p>The bill clearly states that a person designated as a caregiver is not obligated to serve as the patient's caregiver or to provide aftercare to the patient. Additionally, it asserts that the bill does not create a private right of action or liability against a hospital, its employees, or any designated caregiver. Finally, it states that this bill should not in any way affect the time at which a patient may be discharged or transferred from a hospital. This bill will ensure that patients have the opportunity to designate someone they trust to assist them in their at-home recovery, resulting in better overall health outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3781</b> By: Phelan</p>	<p>Relating to the uses of the lifetime license endowment account by the Parks and Wildlife Department.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation &amp; Tourism</p>	<p>HB 3781 authorizes the use of money and accrued interest from the lifetime license endowment fund solely for fish and wildlife resource management to the extent allowed by federal law. HB 3781 prohibits expenditures that would lower the unencumbered balance of the principal of the account below \$20 million. The bill states that the interest and principal earned from the account cannot pay any employee salaries or benefits. Per the bill, interest earnings and principal on the lifetime licenses endowment can be used for public hunting and fishing, or the development and repair of fishing areas.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:fabeain@texaslsg.org">fabeain@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 2508</b> By: Kuempel</p>	<p>Relating to the licensing and regulation of tow truck companies, tow truck operators, vehicle storage facilities, and vehicle storage facility employees, the regulation of parking facilities and parking facility owners, and the elimination of required state licensing for vehicle booting companies and operators.</p>	<p>Licensing &amp; Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>Streamlines and modernizes the statutes in relation to the regulation of the towing and booting of vehicles, and vehicle storage facilities. Current towing, vehicle storage and booting statutes are very extensive and result in licenses being subject to an inordinate amount of laws. These related statutes can also be disorganized and inconsistent with a number of licenses that exist that are neither necessary for public safety or consumer protection. HB 2508 resolves inconsistencies such as between the occupations and transportation statutes regarding notification of lienholders, so that all lienholders receive notices and not just the primary lienholders. Additionally, this legislation makes the Towing Act more user-friendly, and clears up different types of towing definitions.</p> <p>The average towing company is three tow trucks and less than ten employees, so unnecessary amounts regulations are particularly burdensome for these companies. HB 2508 cleans-up and clarifies these related codes.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2664</b> By: Miller / Thompson, Senfronia / Villalba</p>	<p>Relating to nutrition and fitness standards for certain child-care facilities and training for employees at those facilities.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>HB 2664 requires the commissioner of DFPS to establish nutritional and recreational standards for licensed child care facilities in an effort to establish healthy habits during childhood. The nutritional standards must comply with federal Department of Agriculture guidelines, while the recreational standards must follow recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Training standards relating to food allergies, choking hazards, and healthy meal planning provide child care workers with an appropriate framework to model healthy behaviors to the children in their care. The requirements laid out in HB 2664 will help reinforce the importance of diet and exercise in an effort to alleviate the increase to childhood obesity rates in recent years.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:kylie@texaslsg.org">kylie@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2697</b> By: Price / Coleman / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to telemedicine and telehealth services.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<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 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><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></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><b>HB 2776</b> By: Smithee</p>	<p>Relating to the right of certain appellants to supersede a judgment or order on appeal.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Requires the Supreme Court of Texas to adopt rules where the right of the state to supersede a judgment on appeal is not subject to being counter-superseded. Currently, when a plaintiff sues the state, the Texas Rules of Appellate Procedure (TRAP) allows the state to supersede a judgment or order in a civil suit on appeal. Some courts will allow a plaintiff to counter-supersede. This can result in substantial costs to the state, even when it prevails in the suit. HB 2776 clarifies that the state's right to supersede a judgment or order cannot be counter-superseded under any rule in the TRAP.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2861</b> By: Phillips / Martinez, "Mando" / Israel</p>	<p>Relating to Texas Department of Transportation and regional mobility authority comprehensive development agreements.</p>	<p>Transportation</p>	<p>This bill amends the list of authorized projects that the Department of Transportation may enter into comprehensive development agreements in order to complete. These agreements between TxDOT and the applicable regional mobility authorities are for specific construction projects with the jurisdictions of the authorities. The additional permissions granted by HB 2861 have an expiration date of August 31, 2021 and include two classifications of projects. Existing projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The expansion of I-35 from Bexar to Comal Counties,</li> <li>• The South Padre Island Second Access Causeway in Cameron County,</li> <li>• The International Bridge Trade Corridor in Hidalgo County, and</li> <li>• The expansion of U.S. Highway 290 West in Travis County, among others detailed in the bill.</li> </ul> <p>New projects that must be designed and implemented affecting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I-45 North in Harris County,</li> <li>• I-35 East in Dallas and Denton Counties between I-635 and Hwy 380, and</li> <li>• I-30 in Tarrant County between I-35 West and Fielder Road, among others detailed in the bill.</li> </ul> <p>These projects have been identified as priority projects by the Department of Transportation.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:andrea@texaslsg.org">andrea@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2888</b> By: Romero, Jr.</p>	<p>Relating to an inmate's completion of classes or programs before being released on parole.</p>	<p>Corrections</p>	<p>HB 2888 requires the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) to identify any classes or programs intended for an individual eligible for parole to complete prior to release on parole as part of a person's initial review within 180 days of admission to the institutional division, and would require the board to provide the individual with a list of the intended classes. The bill further requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to make reasonable efforts to provide an individual an opportunity to complete any required classes or programs included in the person's individual treatment plan other than those classes to be completed immediately before release on parole. The provisions within the bill prevent the delay of an individual's contingent release on parole due to incomplete classes per treatment plan requirements.</p> <p>HB 2888 will align Texas criminal justice and corrections statutes with the evidence-based process asserting that reentry begins the first day an individual is incarcerated. Current reporting requirements for individuals eligible for parole can cause delays in the completion of classes for parole release as some individuals, particularly non-violent, first-time offenders, may hear about required classes only once they attend their parole hearing. HB 2888 will save time as taxpayer dollars, as these required programs may take weeks to complete, and the individual is subsequently still confined within the institutional division. Should an individual be denied</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			parole, the treatment resources will been given up front; this creates a possibility that TDCJ will need to guarantee there are enough placement slots in treatment programs due to limited availability.	
<b>HB 3019</b> By: Burkett	Relating to the prosecution for the offense of injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual.	Criminal Jurisprudence	HB 3019 would allow for the owner or operator of a boarding home facility to be charged with a criminal offense for causing bodily injury to a child, elderly person, or person with a disability. This aligns boarding home operators with other professionals who own or operate nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other congregate care settings. The owner commits the offense if he or she knowingly, recklessly, or with criminal negligence causes serious bodily injury including mental injury to an elderly person, person with a disability, or child within their care. Boarding homes are not licensed and regulated by the state, therefore they lack the critical oversight necessary to protect the vulnerable individuals residing in them. Boarding home residents are at significant risk of abuse, neglect, and exploitation; this bill protects vulnerable individuals by holding boarding home operators accountable to the same standards that apply to other comparable professionals.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3131</b> By: Martinez, "Mando"	Relating to the disposal of certain motor vehicles to a motor vehicle demolisher; increasing a fee.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures	<p>HB 3131 aims to clarify language and processes in regards to the application for authorization for demolishing and disposing of motor vehicles. During the interim the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) heard from consumers and stakeholders, and it was found that language in the current statute for the application and process of disposing or demolishing a motor vehicle is redundant and confusing. This bill clarifies which owners and lienholders are eligible for selling, giving away or disposing of a motor vehicle.</p> <p>HB 3131 streamlines the process for which TxDMV must report the removal of an abandoned vehicle. This also adds in stipulation for notification to any owner or lienholders of a vehicle found abandoned to have a claim cutoff date of the 21st day of notification. Along with cleaning up the language around applications for selling motor vehicles for use of scrap metal, HB 3131 would require all registered owners and lienholders to be notified if an application is submitted to TxDMV. This bill increases the application fee from \$2.00 to \$10.00.</p> <p>This bill helps to streamline the process for individuals who wish to submit applications to sell, dispose of or give away a motor vehicle. Provision are set to both help the consumers and stakeholders understand the process. Effectively, this bill will help to prevent fraud and protect consumers.</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3294</b> By: Parker	Relating to the eligibility of certain NASCAR events to receive funding through the Major Events Reimbursement Program.	Economic & Small Business Development	This bill expands events that are eligible for the Major Events Reimbursement Program (MERP); under this bill, two additional NASCAR events would now be eligible for the MERP. Major events such as NASCAR events are an important inclusion in the Texas economy, any incentive to bring these major sporting events to the state would be beneficial to all Texans.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3166</b> By: Lucio III	Relating to the consideration of modeled sustainable groundwater pumping in the adoption of desired future conditions in groundwater conservation districts.	Natural Resources	HB 3166 amends the Water Code to expand the considerations a Groundwater Conservation District must factor when deciding the desired future conditions to include modeled sustainable groundwater pumping. The Executive Administrator of the Texas Water Development Board would take into consideration the maximum amount of groundwater that may be produced annually in perpetuity. This consideration incorporates the best available data when a groundwater conservation district is making decisions regarding aquifer levels that would serve in the best interest in the health of the aquifer. This calculation will not be made in management area which wholly or partially overlies an aquifer where a landowner is qualified for cost depletion deduction for water withdrawn for irrigation purposes under federal tax law.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:erin@texaslsg.org">erin@texaslsg.org</a>





<p><b>HB 117</b> By: White / Anderson, Rodney</p>	<p>Relating to ethyl alcohol monitoring as a condition of community supervision for certain intoxication offenses; authorizing the imposition of costs.</p>	<p>Corrections</p>	<p>CSHB 117 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to include ethyl alcohol monitoring as a condition of community supervision. Ethyl alcohol monitoring devices either are worn by a defendant to detect ethyl alcohol through perspiration or requires them to carry and provide breath samples. Certain individuals who have been convicted of a DWI are at a high risk of reoffending. Those who had detected a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .15 are at the highest risk of reoffending. Some believe that more individuals who pose this risk should receive an ethyl alcohol monitoring device as part of their community supervision.</p> <p>Under this bill, the device could be required in congruence with an ignition interlock device. This could also be provided to those who can show that they neither have a care nor access to one. Those on community supervision may be required to pay for the device as a condition of the sentence. The device could be around \$75 to install or place on the defendant and approximately \$360 per month. Those who can provide an affidavit proving they are indigent may be eligible to have the fee waived or create a payment plan. The bill lays out provisions those who tamper with the device or falsify information regarding the access to a vehicle or their income. This bill could serve to keep Texans on the roadways safer by reducing the number of DWI re-offenses. Along with this the bill would have little to no financial impact to low-income Texans who may be required to use this device.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3151</b> By: Sheffield</p>	<p>Relating to demonstration projects to coordinate eligibility renewal and eligibility recertification for certain children in the Medicaid and child health plan programs.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>CSHB 3151 requires that the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) establish a demonstration project under the child health plan program (CHIP), allowing for renewal of eligibility or recertification for multiple children in a household. The bill also requires HHSC establish a similar demonstration project under Medicaid. At this time, families who have multiple children who are enrolled in CHIP or Medicaid are required to renew each child at different times throughout the year.</p> <p>This bill allows HHSC to create provisions for establishing the demonstration projects. HHSC will be prohibited from increasing the frequency on the renewal process. For the Medicaid demonstration project the bill lays out specific eligibility requirements for those who can participate in the program. The Medicaid demonstration project will also verify income eligibility twice per year under this program. A report of the program would be provide to legislature no later than December 1, 2020.</p> <p>Due to the current renewal and recertification structure of CHIP and Medicaid, children are at risk of facing a gap in coverage for up to one year, due to their parents having to keep up with multiple dates, documents and criteria. CSHB 3151 will all coverage to be streamlined and ensure that low-income families with multiple children will not go without health insurance.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:kylie@texaslsg.org">kylie@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 337</b> By: Collier / Anderson, Charles "Doc" / Coleman / Longoria / Phelan</p>	<p>Relating to the continuation of certain public benefits, including medical assistance benefits, for individuals after release from confinement in a county jail.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>It is common for individuals who become incarcerated in county jails to suffer from mental illness or other critical health conditions; many of these individuals are recipients of Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, or Social Security Disability benefits. Currently, an individual's Medicaid/SSI eligibility is automatically terminated 30-days post incarceration; upon release, these individuals are left to navigate the complex process of benefit reapplication, interrupting their continuity of care and leaving them uninsured for an extended period of time. This leads to increased ER visits and uncompensated care costs absorbed by counties; in 2015, both Harris County and Dallas County paid upward of \$1 billion in uncompensated care costs.</p> <p>To combat this issue, HB 337 provides an avenue for individuals who receive Medicaid to have their benefits suspended instead of terminated should they become confined in a county jail. The provisions of the bill outline the process by which HHSC will determine an individual's Medicaid eligibility, and whether to suspend or terminate those benefits. The provisions of the bill require HHSC to: Suspend the Medicaid eligibility of an individual who has been confined in a county jail and charged, but not convicted of an offense as soon as they are made aware of the individual's confinement</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			<p>Determine whether to terminate or suspend an individual’s Medicaid eligibility if the individual has been convicted of an offense and confined for an offense</p> <p>Reinstate an individual’s Medicaid eligibility that has been suspended due to confinement no later than 48 hours after the commission is notified of that individual’s release, provided that the individual’s eligibility certification period has not elapsed</p> <p>The bill provides an avenue for sheriff’s, county jails, and employees of these entities to report the aforementioned information to HHSC via electronic communication. The bill doesn’t require that these entities report to HHSC, but if they do, they are also required to report to the US Social Security Administration prior to the individual’s release within 48 hours of that release. It would also allow sheriff’s and counties to enter into an agreement with a third party to assist with providing reintegration resources or services to individuals who are released from jail. Finally, the bill would require entities that choose to opt into this reporting system to also provide the incarcerated individual with a written copy of applicable records and the contact information for HHSC prior to the individual’s release.</p> <p>HB 337 does not expand Medicaid eligibility or benefits, it simply reconnects already-eligible individuals to their benefits more efficiently. The reinstatement of individual’s Medicaid and SSI benefits will allow them to continue receiving essential healthcare without interruption, and will likely have a significant financial benefit to counties. Additionally, this continuity of care will contribute to reduced recidivism rates by making it easier for formerly incarcerated individuals to reintegrate into society.</p>	
<p><b>HB 374</b> By: Johnson, Jarvis / Arévalo / Bell / Thierry / Giddings / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the requirement that the Texas Workforce Commission provide certain employment information for secondary school students.</p>	<p>Economic &amp; Small Business Development</p>	<p>Currently, high schools are primarily focused on developing their students’ college readiness; while this is important, not all students will attend four-year institutions after high school. Additionally, 55% of all jobs in Texas are middle skilled jobs that require continuing education that is not a bachelor’s degree. It is critical that high school students are made aware of internships, apprenticeships, and technical programs that can provide them with the vital skills necessary to obtain a middle skilled, good paying job.</p> <p>CSHB 374 would require the Texas Workforce Commission to provide information to the Texas Education Agency quarterly regarding career and technical education partnerships with businesses and industry. This information will be made available to secondary school students to increase their knowledge and interest in available post-secondary education and career paths. CSHB 734 increases high school student’s career options and offers an alternative route for those students who do not intend to attend a four-year university.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:tyler@texaslsg.org">tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 362</b> By: Moody</p>	<p>Relating to the procedure for rearrest and adjustment of the bond amount in certain criminal cases.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 362 prohibits a judge or magistrate from re-arresting an individual accused of a criminal conviction or giving an increased bail bond if the person is formally charged with the same offense for which they were originally arrested, unless they provide notice and, on request, an opportunity for a hearing. Currently when a person is indicted, a judge can change the bond amount without notice. HB 362 would promote fundamental fairness in the Texas criminal justice system.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3969</b> By: King, Ken</p>	<p>Relating to a study regarding the feasibility of implementing a central filing system for the filing of financing statements for agricultural liens.</p>	<p>Agriculture &amp; Livestock</p>	<p>Requires the secretary of state to conduct a study on the feasibility of developing and implementing a central filing system. This system would be used for filing all financial statements covering farm products that are sold and purchased in this state and subject to an agricultural lien. HB 3969 also specifies that this study must evaluate a system that allows a secured party to file a financing statement that covers farm products in the system, and that allows a buyer, commission merchant, selling agent or other person to search the system for determining whether the farm product is subject to an agricultural lien. A central filing system relating to agricultural liens could be beneficial towards clearing confusion for parties on agricultural liens. This study must be completed no later than January 8, 2019, and shall report the results, any recommendations and related proposals for legislation to the Texas Legislature.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 553</b> By: White / Johnson, Jarvis</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of a task force to identify opportunities for academic credit and industry recognition for inmates of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.</p>	<p>Corrections</p>	<p>HB 553 seeks to create a task force for the purposes of a collaborative effort between The Windham School District, the Texas Department of Justice, and other important stakeholders to review the work and other activities of those confined or imprisoned engage as to increase access to high school and college credit and industry certifications. The bill lays out the composition of the 9-person task force, with the governor appointing designated member as the presiding officer. Gifts and grants may be accepted for the purposes of fulfilling the mission of the task force. Task force will not be compensated, but may be reimbursed for actual and necessary costs incurred. The task force must meet quarterly and at another other time when requested by the presiding officer and will: conduct ongoing reviews of the work or other productive activities and identity opportunities to receive high school or college level credit or an industry recognized credential or certificate.  Once every four years, the task force is required to submit a report to the governor, lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house, and the standing committee within the legislature with jurisdiction over the department including a review of the task force and steps taken to award academic credit or credentials. The chapter of the Government Code regarding advisory committees does not apply to this task force. The task force must submit its first report not later than December 31st, 2020.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 891</b> By: Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of the offense of theft of petroleum product.</p>	<p>Energy Resources</p>		<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:fabeain@texaslsg.org">fabeain@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 4032</b> By: Phillips</p>	<p>Relating to annual limitations on the reimbursement of expenses incurred by district court reporters.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Allows a court reporter to receive more than the maximum reimbursement set for a court report’s judicial district upon approval by the commissioner’s court of the county. The annual maximum reimbursement amount for judicial districts needs to be more flexible in order to account for actual and necessary expenses entitled to reimbursement for court reporters engaged in their official duties.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1583</b> By: Cortez / Uresti, Tomas / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the use of epinephrine auto-injectors on private school campuses and at or in transit to or from off-campus school events.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>Public schools and open enrollment charter schools are required to have epinephrine auto-injectors available to treat individuals suffering from anaphylaxis who may have an undiagnosed food allergy. HB 1583 enhances the safety of private school students by extending this requirement to private schools in the same manner that it exist under current law for public schools and open enrollment charter schools.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1075</b> By: Thompson, Ed</p>	<p>Relating to the frequency of criminal background checks for sports officials registered with the University Interscholastic League.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>The intent of this bill is to ensure the safety and accountability of all student athletes. HB 1775 requires University Interscholastic League sports officials to undergo an initial criminal background check when registering with the league. The bill also requires them to undergo a subsequent criminal background check once every three years.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:arielle@texaslsg.org">arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 1744</b> By: Murr</p>	<p>Relating to the payment of certain costs associated with certain assignments of a statutory probate court judge.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>If a party to a probate proceeding files a motion for the assignment of a statutory probate court judge in circumstances involving counties where there is no statutory probate court or county court at law exercising original probate jurisdiction, HB 1744 mandates that counties be reimbursed either out of the estate or from one or more of the parties of the probate proceeding. On the one hand, the cost of some of these probate cases may be an unreasonable burden on some counties. On the other hand, placing the burden of these cases onto the parties involved in the probate proceeding may also be an unreasonable burden to require.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 4102</b> By: Neave / González, Mary / Villalba</p>	<p>Relating to establishing and funding a grant program for testing evidence collected in relation to sexual assaults or other sex offenses; authorizing voluntary contributions.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>This bill established and creates a voluntary donation fund to go towards testing evidence regarding sexual offenses. This allows for individuals who are renewing or registering a motor vehicle to contribute a donation of any size to the evidence testing grant program. The program would be designed to assist law agencies or counties in testing evidence for sexual assaults or other sexual offenses.</p> <p>In 2011 legislation was passed to ensure rape kits get turned over to labs for testing regardless of whether the perpetrator is in jail. Due to that, appropriations of \$11 million were made in 2013 to test all rape kits from 1996-2011, reported at a 20,000-kit backlog as of August 2011 from the Texas Department of Public Safety. Unfortunately, previous grant funding will not address future backlogs. This bill will provide a temporary solution in addressing the remaining backlog of untested rape kits, each of which can cost \$500 to \$2,000 per test depending on the contained DNA evidence.</p> <p>CSHB 4102 would create an evidence testing account that would be held under the General Revenue Fund of the state treasury. Allowing for money in this account to only be appropriated for the purpose of distributing the evidence testing grant program. This bill will create a positive impact on the backlog of rape kits that remain untested. CSHB 4102 will allow victims of sexual assault to come a step closer to justice.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1877</b> By: Murr</p>	<p>Relating to a penalty for independent executors who misrepresent in an affidavit in lieu of the inventory, appraisal, and list of claims that certain beneficiaries received the inventory and appraisal.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Courts may fine up to \$1,000 for independent executors who have been found to misrepresent in an affidavit that beneficiaries received a full and detailed report on inventory, appraisal and list of claims. There are no damage fee structures currently in place for courts, yet there have been reports that some independent executors of estates fail to provide these full reports and lists of claims to beneficiaries and file perjurious affidavits that misrepresent this detail. Independent executors have a stake in wills and might be tempted to hold cost down of the appraisal that they make. This bill makes the independent executor and the executor's sureties, if any, liable for any such fine and damages and costs sustained by their misrepresentation. HB 1877 also authorizes the recovery of the fine, damages and costs in any court of competent jurisdiction.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3125</b> By: Kuempel / Gutierrez / Raymond / Dale / Herrero</p>	<p>Relating to charitable raffles conducted by the charitable foundations of certain professional sports teams.</p>	<p>Licensing &amp; Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>CSHB 3125 amends the Occupations Code to update the list of teams considered professional sports teams for the purposes of the Professional Sports Team Charitable Foundation Raffle Enabling Act; 8 various men's and women's hockey, baseball, basketball, and soccer leagues are added to sports leagues covered under the act. Additionally, the bill adds racing teams sanctioned by NASCAR, INDYcar, or another nationally recognized motorsports racing association at a venue in Texas with a seating capacity of 75,000 or more. The bill also adds debit cards to the list of acceptable forms of payment for the purchase of a raffle ticket for a raffle conducted by a the charitable foundation of a sports team. Allowing sports teams to conduct charitable raffles promotes philanthropy and social awareness among sports fans while allowing necessary funds to be raised for various worthy causes.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@texaslsg.org">Arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 972</b> By: Giddings / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the assignment of a public school student to an uncertified teacher.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>HB 972 prohibits school districts with an enrollment of 5000 students or more from assigning, for two consecutive school years, a first thru sixth grade student to a teacher who is lacking relevant certification and has less than one year of experience. Studies show that certified teachers produce significantly stronger student achievement gains than teachers who are not certified, and it is undisputed that teacher quality is among the top school based factors related to student achievement, graduation rates, and college eligibility. National trends show that the least qualified teachers are educating the most economically disadvantaged students with the highest educational needs. HB 972 seeks to give all children a fair shot at reaching their full potential by ensuring that all Texas children have the opportunity to learn from the most effective and experienced teachers available during the foundation years of their education. In the interest of not creating any hardship to districts, the bill allows the education commissioner to grant a waiver from the requirements of this bill if he finds that extreme circumstances warrant it. The bill also allows for an exemption to the requirements of this bill if the student's parent and a school administrator agree otherwise regarding the assignment of the student to a teacher.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@texaslsg.org">Arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1291</b> By: Geren / Price</p>	<p>Relating to the inclusion of American principles in the public school curriculum and instructional materials.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>This bill requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) and each school district to ensure that the public school curriculum emphasizes an understanding of the principles underlying the United States government. The intent of this bill is to ensure that the limited amount of available instruction time is spent covering historical events that meet a reasonable standard of historical significance. However, the only historical events and topics the bill specifies must be included in the curriculum are the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Federalist Papers. While the bill does not prohibit the inclusion of other historically important events, interested parties contend that the bill should specify the inclusion of several additional historical events and topics to ensure that students receive a well rounded and holistic understanding of United States history.</p>	<p><b>Favorable w/ Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@texaslsg.org">Arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3649</b> By: Herrero / Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to confidential communications of victims of certain family violence offenses.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 3649 adds Chapter 93 ("Confidential and Privileged Communications") to the Family Code, which protects written or oral communications between an advocate and a victim of family violence in the course of advising, advocating for, counseling, or assisting a victim of family as confidential. Provisions in the bill define an "advocate" as an employee or volunteer of a family violence center with at least 20 hours of training in assisting victims of family violence. The bill further provides that a victim has a privilege to refuse to disclose and prevent another individual from disclosing confidential communications, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A victim or victim's attorney on the victim's behalf,</li> <li>A parent, guardian, or conservator of a victim under 18 years of age, or</li> <li>And advocate or a family violence center on a victim's behalf.</li> </ul> <p>Statutes granting exemptions from disclosure include another employee or volunteer of a family violence center for the purpose of furthering the advocacy process, people in a support group or group counseling setting in which the victim participates, or for purposes of reporting instances of child abuse or neglect. The Texas Rules of Evidence will govern any disclosure of a confidential communication by an expert witness relying on facts or data from the communication to illustrate the basis of the expert's opinion in a criminal or civil proceeding.</p> <p>Over 72,000 people seek services at domestic violence and women's shelters in Texas each year. Advocates for victims of domestic violence contend that abusers are able to utilize the court system when an attorney seeks records of services by victims; records from domestic violence or women's shelters can be subpoenaed and an abuser's access to and manipulation of sensitive information will make victims of domestic violence and their children even more vulnerable. <b>In Texas, 158 constituents are killed per year at the</b></p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a></p>



			<b>hands of their abuser.</b> HB 3649 seeks to close harmful loopholes within the criminal justice system and provides secure treatment resources for victims of domestic and family violence.	
<b>HB 2832</b> Oliveira / Flynn / Price / Romero, Jr. / Collier	Relating to notice by a property owner to a mortgage servicer that the owner intends to enter into a contract with a property tax lender.	Business & Industry	Requires property owners to send a notice to any appropriate mortgage servicer before they could enter into a contract with a transferee for the purposes of paying delinquent taxes on their property. This notice must be send no later than the 10th day before the property owner executes a contract. Currently, the Tax Code allows a property owner to authorize another person to pay the taxes imposed on the owner’s real property, and the owner must file with the tax collector certain information about the transferee in a sworn statement. This bill also requires this statement to include the fact that this notice was sent by certified mail. HB 2832 provides options to consumers, and provides an opportunity to mortgage servicers to protect their property interest. Usually mortgage servicers do not learn that their customer entered into a contract with a transferee until after it has been signed. This notice allows the mortgage servicer to work out a possible agreement with the property owner without involving a third party. When a property owner is struggling to pay their property taxes, they can enter into a contract with a property tax lender; however, property tax lenders charge high interest rates and do not verify a borrower’s ability to repay, resulting in frequent defaults on these loans. When the borrower defaults, a mortgage servicer will often pay the remaining balance to protect their interest in the property by keeping the property tax lender from foreclosing on the property. HB 2832 allows the opportunity for the property owner to consider options outside a contract with a property tax lender. These options could include entering into an agreement with the taxing entity to repay the taxes at a lower rate. Or, the mortgage service may loan the money, in which the property owner would pay monthly for the mortgage, the amount borrowed to cover the taxes and an amount to cover next year’s taxes. While this would increase the monthly payments for the property owner, it would provide a structured process to ensure there is no future delinquencies on the property’s taxes.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 998</b> By: Alvarado	Relating to the confidentiality of certain information stored as part of the preparation of campaign finance reports required to be filed with the clerk of certain counties or municipalities.	General Investigating & Ethics	HB 998 would extend the ability for certain local elected officials candidates to keep electronic drafts of their campaign finances reports remain private until submission. The Legislature currently has this privacy and the same standard should apply to our local officials.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:erin@texaslsg.org">erin@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 1935</b> By: Frullo / Dutton / Kuempel / Moody / Springer / et al.	Relating to the carrying of certain knives.	Criminal Jurisprudence	HB 1935 removes certain knives from classes of prohibited weapons, subsequently repealing criminal sanctions and amending school punishment for the use or possession of an illegal knife. Under the bill, a student may be expelled for using, exhibiting, or possessing the following knives while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A knife with a blade over 5.5 inches,</li> <li>• A hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown,</li> <li>• A dagger, including a dirk, stiletto, and poniard,</li> <li>• A bowie knife,</li> </ul>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sword, or</li> <li>• A spear.</li> </ul> <p>Effectively under this bill, the use or possession of previously mentioned knives no longer constitutes a state jail felony or misdemeanor, and removes these weapons from places prohibiting illegal weapons. As there is not a consistent definition for what constitutes an “illegal knife” in statute, confusion exists between citizens, law enforcement, and courts. HB 1935 seeks to provide school districts with more discretion relating to punishment for students possessing or using the aforementioned types of knives on campus or at school-related events. This legislation does not impact criminal offenses for individuals utilizing an illegal knife to harm others, and most crimes are committed with kitchen knives. State jail felony and misdemeanor convictions are disproportionately enforced against younger people of color; HB 1935 would ensure young people are not faced with premature legal obstacles that can have a detrimental impact on their educational and career futures.</p>	
<b>HB 1507</b> By: Giddings / Hernandez	Relating to the rights of certain defendants who successfully complete a term of community supervision.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>Judicial clemency is a valuable tool in a judge’s arsenal that is often underutilized and widely misunderstood; it gives a criminal judge the authority to release an individual from all disabilities and penalties resulting from their conviction should the judge deem them fully rehabilitated upon completion of their community supervision requirements. Certain offenses, such as DWI and violent crimes, are not eligible for judicial clemency. Judicial clemency is not expunction, but instead a form of post-conviction relief that provides certain benefits such as increased ease for passing background checks and obtaining employment.</p> <p>CSHB 1507 requires criminal courts to advise individuals, before they plead guilty or no contest to a crime, that the possibility for judicial clemency is available to them should they complete their community supervision. It also requires the Office of Court Administration to adopt a standardized form for use in discharging defendants and granting judicial clemency. Currently, different judges utilize different forms, resulting in inconsistency in the application of the benefit. This form will clearly outline the provisions of the clemency, including the defendant’s release from any penalties and disabilities, which will ensure transparency and ease of understanding for all parties. This bill will not force a judge’s hand in granting clemency or in any way reduce sentencing laws; increasing access to judicial clemency will, however, allow more individuals who have completed the terms of their community service to have increased access to vital services and employment opportunities that will allow them to lead more productive and fulfilling lives.</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@texaslsg.org">Katherine@texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2050</b> By: Bonnen, Greg	Relating to the confidentiality of certain employment records submitted to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement or maintained by a law enforcement agency.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	This bill requires that law enforcement agencies keep employment records confidential to protect the privacy of their employees. The section of the Occupations Code being amended already requires that the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement keep this information confidential, but that mandate does not extend to other agencies without the clarifying language in HB 2050. The bill creates a statewide standard in lieu of relying on individual departments to make this decision independently.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Andrea@Texaslsg.org">Andrea@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2880</b> By: Dutton	Relating to the criminal punishment for the threatened exhibition or use	Public Education	Under current law, a student who threatens to use or display a firearm on school property or on a school bus and a student who actually uses or displays a firearm on school property or on a school bus are both subject to a third degree felony charge. While it is	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295



	of a firearm in or on school property or on a school bus.		<p>important to provide a punishment for students who make such threats, the level of punishment associated with a third degree felony charge is too severe for a child who did not actually use or display a firearm.</p> <p>Because a lesser charge is not available, school resource officers are often reluctant to file charges against children who make threats but are not actually in possession of a firearm.</p> <p>HB 2880 addresses this problem by separating the offenses for actually exhibiting or using a firearm on school property from threats to commit those actions. The penalty for threatening to use or exhibit a firearm on school property or on the school bus would be a Class A misdemeanor, and the penalty for actually using or displaying a firearm on school property or on the school bus would remain a third degree felony. Effectively, this bill provides law enforcement with the tools and options they need to appropriately punish and deter students from making such threats.</p>	<a href="mailto:Arielle@texaslsg.org">Arielle@texaslsg.org</a>
HB 3189 Bonnen, Dennis	Relating to the reporting of and access to information related to court-ordered prescription drug substance abuse treatment; providing a criminal penalty.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>Prescription drug abuse is a major public health issue; Texas utilizes a prescription monitoring program database, housed under the Texas State Board of Pharmacy, to monitor the prescriptive practices of patients and medical professionals with prescriptive authority in attempts to identify potentially harmful prescribing patterns and to control the supply chain of prescription drugs available for recreational use.</p> <p>CSHB 3189 requires a judge who sentences a defendant to receive substance abuse treatment in a DSHS licensed facility to submit the defendant's name, date of birth, and substance(s) abused to the Texas State Board of Pharmacy to be entered into the prescription monitoring program database. The bill also requires the same information be reported to the Pharmacy Board when a judge sentences a defendant to receive substance abuse treatment as a condition of the defendant's participation in a special court, such as drug or veteran's court. Finally, the bill makes the same requirement for a judge who enters a civil order for a defendant to receive court-ordered substance abuse treatment. Requiring judges to provide relevant information to the Pharmacy Board for use in the prescription monitoring program will allow for increased oversight and will likely contribute to decreased prescription drug abuse over time. Additionally, it will provide physicians and pharmacists with useful information they can utilize when making decisions about these individuals' healthcare in the future.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b></p> <p>Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:katherine@texaslsg.org">katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>
HB 3306 By: Kuempel	Relating to the regulation of motor vehicle towing, booting, and storage and to the elimination of required state licensing for vehicle booting companies and operators.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures	<p>This bill repeals the requirement for licensure relating to booting operations in the Occupations Code and amends sections within the code to remove references to booting. These changes were initiated in response to a report by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation indicating that booting licensure requirements were no longer necessary for public safety. Local government entities retain the ability to regulate these operations as they deem appropriate. Other changes to statute throughout the bill update the language to currently acceptable terms, such as replacing "remove" with "tow," or "law enforcement officer" with "peace officer" in regards to the composition of the Towing and Storage Advisory Board.</p> <p>HB 3306 also introduces a new section of the Occupation Code to establish protocols for towing and parking enforcement during special events on university campuses. These protocols address concerns about providing sufficient advance warning to individuals that regularly utilize a parking lot so they can adjust their plans accordingly. This information creates accountability standards for parking enforcement and establishes best practices for institutions of higher education to handle the increased traffic flow through their jurisdiction.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b></p> <p>Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@texaslsg.org">Arielle@texaslsg.org</a></p>





<p><b>HB 4180</b> By: Coleman</p>	<p>Relating to issues affecting counties and certain other governmental entities and residents.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>Currently, Angelina County is unable to draw down available federal dollars to assist with previously unreimbursed uncompensated healthcare costs. HB 4180 amends the Health and Safety Code so that Angelina County can access these funds through the creation of a Local Provider Participation Fund (LPPF). This bill 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 accessing state general revenue. This measure would not create a new fee or raise local property taxes for Angelina County.</p> <p>HB 4180 amends Health and Safety Code further to address issues with the board of emergency service districts that are located in Tyler and Hardin counties which is comprised of five members. Currently, Hardin county is authorized to appoint commissioners from both counties; three from Hardin county and two from Tyler county. This bill authorizes for each respective county to appoint their allocated commissioners for the board so that Tyler county has a voice in who represents them in their emergency service district.</p> <p>This bill also amends the Local Government Code to create a statutory provision for a county judge who is participating in a commissioners court meeting. As statute stands, if present, the judge would have to be the presiding officer. HB 4180 would make a provision so that if a judge was participating by way of videoconferencing, they could participate without being the presiding officer.</p> <p>HB 4180 further amends the Local Government Code by repealing the requirement that county order or municipal ordinance has to offer to remove graffiti free of charge for property owners before they give an order to a property owner to remove it themselves.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tiffany Williams 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tiffany@texaslsg.org">Tiffany@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3609</b> By: Burns</p>	<p>Relating to the administrative and civil consequences imposed by the Department of Public Safety.</p>	<p>Homeland Security &amp; Public Safety</p>	<p>This bill creates a formal timeline for the courts to submit notifications regarding traffic violations, after which time the violations can not be used against an individual for purposes of enforcement. The one-year period established by the bill allows court officials a significant amount of time to file appropriate documents related to a conviction with the Department of Public Safety and requires the courts to follow their own established administrative procedures. Individuals should not have to live in uncertainty about when their license will be suspended due to inefficiencies within the system.</p> <p>HB 3609 includes exceptions to the timeline it establishes for offenses involving alcohol, the transport of hazardous materials, and commercial vehicles and drivers. The increased risks to public safety resulting from these types of traffic violations warrant special consideration and flexibility for enforcement.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:andrea@texaslsg.org">andrea@texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2222</b> By: Hunter / Herrero / King, Phil</p>	<p>Relating to the confidentiality of home address information of certain victims of family violence, sexual assault or abuse, stalking, or trafficking of persons.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 2222 expands eligibility and application requirements for participants in the Address Confidentiality Program to include victims of family violence, sexual assault or abuse, stalking, or trafficking of persons. Eligibility in the program requires applicants to either meet with a victim's assistance counselor from a state or local agency, nonprofit, or for-profit entity identified by the Attorney General as an entity providing shelter, civil legal services, or counseling to victims of family violence, sexual assault or abuse, stalking, or trafficking of persons; be protected under or be filing an application on behalf of a victim who is the applicant's child or another person in the applicant's household and is protected under a temporary injunction, a temporary ex parte order, a protective order, or a magistrate's order for emergency protection; possess documentation of family violence, sexual assault or abuse, or stalking under a right to vacate and avoid liability. The bill updates program requirements by including the expansion for victims, an applicant's child or another person in the applicant's household, of newly-covered classes of offenses within statutes relating to eligibility criteria, the application process, and documentary evidence.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@texaslsg.org">Katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			<p>The bill further expands protections regarding the recording and disclosure of the resident address by voter registrars and the confidentiality of home address information for instances of local appraisal for property taxes for victims of family violence, sexual assault or abuse, stalking, trafficking of persons, or participants in the Address Confidentiality Program, including an individual's child or another person in the individual's household. In order to receive confidentiality protections under these circumstances, victims must provide a copy of a protective order, magistrate's order for emergency protection, or other independent documentary evidence necessary to illustrate the individual, individual's child, or another person in the individual's home is a victim, regardless of whether the abuser was charged with a criminal conviction. This bill takes effect immediately should it receive the required 2/3 vote of all members of each house; otherwise the act takes effect September 1, 2017.</p> <p>The Address Confidentiality Program provides state-run P.O. boxes for survivors of abuse who have a protective order against their abuser. Each year in Texas, 72,000 individuals seek victim advocacy services at a domestic violence or women's shelter, and 158 victims are killed at the hands of their abusers. HB 2222 would close a gap in services by providing safety and confidentiality for victims of sexual family violence, sexual assault or abuse, stalking, or trafficking of persons.</p>	
<p><b>HB 1216</b> By: Deshotel / Thierry</p>	<p>Relating to disclosure regarding the existence of a gestational agreement in a suit for the dissolution of a marriage and standing of an intended parent under a gestational agreement to file a suit affecting the parent-child relationship.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice &amp; Family Issues</p>	<p>HB 1216 requires all petitions for divorce to include pregnancies and gestational agreements, allowing a court knowledge if there are these circumstances to address. A gestational agreement is a contract between two intended parents and a third party (a gestational mother) who is willing to give birth to a child. HB 1216 simply gives the court notice that there is a gestational agreement which needs to be addressed in a suit for the dissolution of a marriage.</p> <p>HB 1216 also provides an additional general standing to file suit under the Family Code for an intended parent to establish a parent-child relationship under a gestational agreement. It further clarifies that both intended parents must file suit or a person is filing an original suit against the other intended parent. Overall, this bill seeks to limit the need for unnecessary litigation required to determine a legal parent-child relationship under a gestational agreement when the married couple files for divorce.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1549</b> By: Burkett / Raymond / Thompson, Senfronia / Price / Zerwas / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the provision of services by the Department of Family and Protective Services, including child protective services and prevention and early intervention services.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>HB 1549 creates new provisions for the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) as well as creating programs for prevention and early-intervention for child abuse and neglect. Since Judge Jack's ruling over the Texas foster care system incremental steps have been made in an attempt to protect our most vulnerable citizens. Yet with legislation focusing on increasing the amount of foster parents, very little has been done to attempt to prevent instance of child abuse and neglect. Between 2015 and 2016 the number of reported child fatalities related to abuse or neglect has increased by over 13%. One of the most significant ways to reduce child fatalities is to help ensure that children are not abused or neglected in the first place. This bill adds several provisions to mitigate some of risk factors facing children. This also addresses foster provider recruitment, family preservation services, reducing child fatality and near fatality, and caseworker attention.</p> <p><b>Risk Assessment</b> The bill adds in provisions that utilize geo-mapping for designating communities showing to have a high risk of child abuse and neglect. Those areas would have a caseworker who would be assigned to cover that area after normal business hours to be available for and reports of child abuse or neglect.</p> <p><b>Foster Care Recruitment</b> Utilization of geo-mapping will also be made available in implementing a data-base for a child-placing system, and foster provider recruitment. The geo-mapping out identify areas using risk stratification modeling or risk assessment, for areas with high occurrences of foster abuse, with the goal of increasing recruitment strategies in these areas. Details for the recruitment of foster providers are</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Kylie@texaslsg.org">Kylie@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			<p>laid out in the bill. HB 1549 attempts to increase kinship provides and helps to ensure that children not be transferred during a new school when removed from their home.</p> <p><b>Family Preservation Services</b>                  HB 1549 allows for DFPS to create an evidence based pilot program that would include 2,000 families who have a history of abuse or neglect to to have frequent in-home visits. The program would be funded upon available appropriated funds. This would help to ensure that families whose children are at a high risk for abuse or neglect would receive the support needed through home visits and while also monitoring the well-being and safety of the children. Subject to available appropriations home visiting services would be expanded.</p> <p><b>Prevention and Early-Intervention</b>                  Provision are laid out in this bill in regards to researching the causes of child abuses related fatalities and near fatalities. Appointments to the child fatality review team would be extended to include three appointments by the Speaker, Lt. Governor and Governor. Adding to the review team’s duties, they would now be creating trainings for justices and medical examiners for inquests on child death cases. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) would be required to include in their data collect on childhood fatalities, instances of near fatalities defined as resulting in a child being left in critical or serious condition. Data on child fatality and near fatalities would be tracked and held in a database to use for research to help determine conditions that lead to abuse related fatalities, tools to reduce child fatalities and help to predict future occurrences. If appropriations are available DFPS would be required to work with institutions of higher education to create an efficacy review of prevention and early intervention services.</p> <p><b>Caseworker Retention</b>                  One of the major issues in the child welfare system is the high turnover rate for CPS caseworkers. In FY 2016 DFPS had a turnover rate of 19.9% with 2,036 employees voluntarily separating. This bill aims to utilize available appropriated funds to develop a caseload management system to help ensure caseload equity based on case complexity. Based on data collected regarding departments with higher turnover rate the goal would be to anticipate caseworker vacancies to ensure those caseloads are not turnover over to another caseworker with an already high case load. HB 1549 also aims to implement secondary trauma support for caseworkers, including critical incident stress debriefing.</p> <p>Abuse and neglect does not have to be an inevitable for children in Texas. There are many factors leading to child abuse that can be addressed early on, such as poverty, high stress and mental health. CSHB 1549 is an important step in beginning to address the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Adding provisions that address the notorious turnover rate for caseworkers, due to high caseloads and vicarious trauma and creating provision to recruit more foster parents will ultimately benefit children. This bill would be a key component in the process of overhauling CPS in Texas.</p>	
<p><b>HB 2466</b>                  By: Davis, Sarah / Thompson, Senfronia / Price /</p>	<p>Relating to coverage for certain services related to maternal depression under the Medicaid and child health plan programs.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>Postpartum depression (maternal depression) is a serious mental health issue that impacts 1 in 6 Texas women who give birth annually. While postpartum depression is completely treatable, it requires a specified screening to discern when a woman is exhibiting symptoms that indicate postpartum depression. Women who live in poverty, have low levels of social support, or deliver babies with health conditions/birth defects are disproportionately impacted by postpartum depression. Left undetected, postpartum depression can worsen, leading a new mother to contemplate suicide. It also shows to have negative long-term health effects on the child, including increased risk of delayed language and cognitive development. In addition to improving the mental health of new moms,</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b>                  Evaluated by:                  Tyler Anderson                  210-382-4295  <a href="mailto:Tyler@texaslsg.org">Tyler@texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p>Zerwas / Collier</p>			<p>addressing postpartum depression will decrease incidences of maternal mortality as deaths due to postpartum depression and substance use significantly contribute to Texas’ astronomical maternal mortality rate.</p> <p>HB 2466 would require CHIP and Medicaid to cover maternal depression screenings for a CHIP/Medicaid enrollee’s mother, regardless of whether the mother is also an enrollee. This screening would take place during a covered well-child visit before the child’s first birthday, and would be a reimbursable service under both CHIP and Medicaid. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the House Interim Committee on Mental Health both recommend increasing access to maternal depression screenings during well infant visits, as this ensures that the service is accessible and convenient to new moms. The bill instructs HHSC to adopt any rules necessary to implement the bill’s provisions and encourages them to base the rules on evidence and information provided by relevant physicians and behavioral health organizations. This bill’s addition of one reimbursable screening under CHIP and Medicaid does not have any negative fiscal implications, but it will likely save the state money as women with maternal depression are four times more likely to have multiple emergency room visits. The bill also increases Texas’ eligibility for federal funding related to maternal healthcare, as states who implement increased access to screening are often prioritized in grant provision decisions. More importantly, however, the bill will improve the mental and physical health outcomes for millions of Texas mothers and their newborn children, resulting in healthier, happier families.</p>	
<p><b>HB 1174</b> By: Hinojosa, Gina / Gonzales, Larry / Koop</p>	<p>Relating to indicators of achievement under the public school accountability system.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>This bill introduces a new indicator of performance for public high schools in Texas relating to the completion of dual enrollment courses in the OnRamps program. OnRamps is offered through the University of Texas at Austin in partnership with 55 school districts across the state. Dual enrollment programs such as this one prepare students for the transition to higher education through rigorous courses in advanced topics; participation in this type of program is correlated with higher graduation rates at institutions of higher learning and greater economic potential across a student’s lifetime. HB 1174 provides an incentive to school districts that offer dual-enrollment options to their students by adding another factor for consideration during their evaluation by the Texas Education Agency.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1463</b> By: Smithee/ Villalba / et al.</p>	<p>Relating to procedures for asserting claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act; providing a civil penalty.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Requires claimants to give written notice to a respondent no later than the 60th day for which a civil action is filed in relation to a violation of applicable design, construction, technical, or similar standards to accommodate persons with disabilities. Section 121.003, Human Resources Code, prohibits discrimination to persons with disabilities, and includes reference to Chapter 469, Government Code. The purpose of Chapter 469, “Elimination of Architectural Barriers” is to ensure each building and facility subject to this chapter is accessible and functional for persons with disabilities. If these buildings and facilities do not meet the proper requirements, a person, including a firm, association, corporation, or other public or private organization, are subject to penalties. They can also be subject to a cause of action.</p> <p>The policy of this state is to encourage and enable persons with disabilities to participate fully in the social and economic life of the state, to achieve maximum personal independence, to become gainfully employed, and to otherwise fully enjoy and use all public facilities available within the state. The intent of this bill is to prevent frivolous lawsuits for entities that in good faith want to properly provide the necessary requirements to ensure persons with disabilities have full and equal access to their facility. This notice requirement would ideally help these good faith entities to correct the problem before spending costly resources in court.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House w/ Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:serena@texaslsg.org">serena@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			<p>However, HB 1463 may be overly broad as to encompass a person who wishes to file a legitimate cause of action in relation to this subject. HB 1463 outlines that a claimant must first give at least 60-days' notice, then the person could file suit, then they would have to get the respondent served, and then there is the possibility of an abatement hearing where the respondent could be granted another 60 days. This process may take anywhere between 3 and 6 months to proceed. There is no exception to the time delay in the claims process in regards to an emergency need for access, such as for medical care, day care, education, etc. Ultimately, HB 1463 may unjustly hurt persons with disabilities who could not access some public facilities and may enable bad faith actors who are not meeting ADA requirements in their buildings. More work needs to be done on this legislation to ensure access is not inhibited for persons with disabilities, but still addresses the problem of frivolous lawsuits hurting entities acting in good faith.</p>	
<p><b>HB 1243</b> By: Smithee /et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the identification and handling of unclaimed life insurance and annuity contract proceeds.</p>	<p>Insurance</p>	<p>CSHB 1243 adds provisions to the Insurance Code to identify and mitigate unclaimed life insurance policies. The bill requires an insurer to cross check an unclaimed policy with the United States Social Security Administration's Death Master File. The checks will be completed semiannually. If a match is found the insurer has 90 days to confirm a death and contact any beneficiaries if a death is confirmed. It stipulates steps to be taken if a death is confirmed. If after three years of the date that the claim matched with the Death Master File, no beneficiaries have been available for contact, the insurance will be considered unclaimed. This will help to ensure that insurance policies for individuals that have passed away do not go unclaimed and beneficiaries can be provided with the policies allotted to them.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org">Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1542</b> By: Price/ Frullo/ Romero, Jr. /Bernal/ Klick/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the definition of the least restrictive environment for the placement of children in foster care.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>CSHB 1542 ensures that general residential operations (GROs) or cottage homes can be included as eligible placement for children who have been removed from their homes. Currently DFPS requires that children who are removed from their home and require temporary placement be placed in the "least restrictive environment." Current categorization for least restrictive environment is based on the child's need with an emphasis on kinship or foster care.</p> <p>This bill amends the Family Code to add the definition for "least restrictive setting," as the most family like setting. This will allow for kinship and foster care homes to take precedence when placing a child. If no kinship or foster home is available in the proximity of the child's home GROs would now be an available setting. Criteria added will also state that placement will be upon the child's needs, and depending on developmental ability based on the interest of the child. Essentially CSHB 1542 would be adding GROs to the spectrum of least restrictive setting with kinship and foster care if seen as being in the best interest of the child.</p> <p>Normalcy is a key component when a child is dealing with the trauma that can stem from entering into the CPS or foster care system. Beyond the traumatic events that may have happened in a child's home is the trauma they face from the removal and placement itself. While priority would seem to be placement within a family like setting, emphasis should remain on placement with relatives if available, followed by foster care. Currently if a caseworker places a child in a GRO they have to document why a child was placed there and notate why a less restrictive environment was not available. Should this bill pass and a family like setting that includes foster care not be in closer proximity to a child's home this bill would allow for a cottage home to then be prioritized. This care is not meant for long term care and can sometimes have poor living conditions. While GRO's should not be discluded when a there are no other options, kinship and foster care should remain priority placement.</p>	<p><b>Favorable w/ Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Kylie@Texaslsg.org">Kylie@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 25</b> By: Simmons/ Larson/ Laubenberg</p>	<p>Relating to the elimination of straight-party voting.</p>	<p>Elections</p>	<p>HB 25 repeals sections of the Election Code to eliminate Straight Ticket Voting in Texas.</p> <p>Straight ticket voting (STV) is an optional way for a voter to cast their ballot during a general election. Being that it is not a mandatory action, the removal of this voting choice is questionable at best. A Michigan law was blocked by the Supreme Court in September 2016 upholding a district court's ruling that the elimination of straight ticket voting unequally disenfranchised African-American voters.</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Erin@Texaslsg.org">Erin@Texaslsg.org</a></p>



/Davis, Sarah /et al.			<p>While 40 states have eliminated the ability to vote straight ticket, Texas is among a handful of states who vote for all general jurisdiction trial court judges in partisan elections. Harris and Dallas counties have some of the longest ballots in the country; in 2014 Dallas county had 65 offices up for election. Lengthy ballots can lead to voter fatigue. Notably, county and municipal offices come after judges on the ballot.</p> <p>Straight ticket voting does not foster a less informed voter. It is a way to save time and long lines at the polls. Eliminating it will only bring confusion to what can be an already difficult process to navigate. 64.04% of Texans who voted used the straight ticket voting option in the 2016 general election. Large counties especially need the option for straight ticket voting and repealing it would create disenfranchisement for voting Texans.</p>	
<b>HB 2223</b> By: Giddings/ White	Relating to developmental coursework offered by public institutions of higher education under the Texas Success Initiative.	Higher Education	HB 2223 seeks to implement a necessary reform around developmental education programs, by instituting a phase-in statewide program for students enrolling in developmental education courses using a co-requisite model. According to the Higher Education Coordinating Board, only 9% of students enrolling in developmental education math courses are completing first level math courses, 26% are completing reading courses, and 21% completing writing courses. Presently, developmental education programs are not successfully achieving the results they were created to produce. HB 2223 requires an institution of higher education to utilize a college readiness assessment for every entering student to determine the academic capability for freshmen-level coursework. The bill requires each institution to develop and implement a phase-in statewide where students enroll simultaneously in a developmental education course and a gateway course of the same subject, during the same semester. The program will allow opportunities for students to receive support and guidance, gain college credits simultaneously, and save tuition dollars. HB 2223 will decrease formula funding for both general academic institutions and community colleges. By implementing this program Texas would be investing the success of underprepared students in efforts to achieve the state's 60x30 goals.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Fabeain@Texaslsg.org">Fabeain@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2079</b> By: Hunter	Relating to the promotion of tourism related to the musical heritage of this state.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism	HB 2079 seeks to promote and preserve the rich music history of Texas by establishing a Texas Music History Trail Program. HB 2079 authorizes the Texas Historical Commission to develop a Texas Music History Trail Program that includes the designation of locations historically significant to the musical heritage of Texas, adopt an identifying symbol to represent a designation, and develop maps that may guide tourists to these designated locations. The commission is responsible for creating eligibility criteria to be selected as a designated location, and procedures to implement the program.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Fabeain@Texaslsg.org">Fabeain@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3305</b> By: Larson	Relating to restrictions on certain contributions by persons appointed to public office by the governor.	General Investigating & Ethics	<p>During the final year of Former Gov. Rick Perry's, research indicated that nearly a quarter of his appointees had contributed to his campaign. These same appointees contributed over \$20 Million dollars before and after their appointments. This bill seeks to address some of these concerns. HB 3305 makes certain donors ineligible for to be appointed by the Governor if an individual's contribution exceeds \$2,500 to their campaign or a specific purpose committee supporting them</p> <p>It further codifies that an individual serving as an appointee can not contribute more than \$2,500 to their campaign or a specific purpose committee supporting their campaign in a single year.</p> <p>The bill further clarifies that contributions from a spouses and dependents are treated with the same muster as if it came from them personally. Also, a contribution from an organization with the knowledge made in an individual's name with their knowledge is also prohibited and subject to penalties laid out in the bill. The individual ,if appointed by the Governor, must also sign an attestation or</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Ana Ramon 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Ana@Texaslsg.org">Ana@Texaslsg.org</a>



			agreement that the aforementioned parties will not contribute more than \$2,500 to the Governor’s committee or a specific purpose committee in support of their candidacy.	
<b>HB 3056</b> By: Meyer / Flynn	Relating to the participation in the Texas Municipal Retirement System of certain employees of certain municipalities subject to the Texas Local Fire Fighters Retirement Act.	Pensions	<p>This bill would amend the Vernon’s Texas Civil Statute by allowing certain municipalities to adopt ordinances to exclude employees, after the effective date, from participating in their current retirement system. HB3056 stipulates that this section only applies to a municipality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With a population of less than 200,000</li> <li>• That is located in a county with a population of no less than 2 million and no more than 4 million</li> <li>• That has a regularly organized fire department in which a retirement system and fund has been established</li> <li>• That before 1/1/2017 has one or more departments participating in the Texas Retirement Municipal System</li> </ul> <p>This bill also allows the municipality to adopt rules to allow employees to participate in the Texas Municipal Retirement System. Approval is contingent on a majority of participating members voting in favor of the ordinance. If approved, the board of trustees must update their retirement system plan as necessary and provide the Texas Municipal Retirement System with copies of relevant ordinances and amended documents.</p> <p>This bill is intended to apply only to the University Park Fire Department. This local fire department is seeking to switch newly hired employees from the current retirement system to the Texas Municipal Retirement System. This community hopes to become a part of a larger retirement system and over time, phase out the current system by not adding in new employees. There is concern from the Pension Review Board that passage of this bill will increase the retirement systems unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) from \$11.2 million to \$11.7 million. The PRB also projects that this will increase the amortization rate from 53.7 years to 88.4 years since they will not be changing city or employee contribution rates for the current system and will not be added any new members.</p>	<b>Favorable w/Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Elizabeth Hann 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org">Elizabeth@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 3488</b> By: Hinojosa, Gina / Oliveira / Meyer / Parker	Relating to authorizing public benefit corporations.	Economic & Small Business Development	<p>CSHB 3488 serves as enabling legislation that would allow for the formation and incorporation of public benefit corporations in Texas. Public benefit corporations allow public-good to be a core goal of the organization alongside traditional corporate goals; well known examples of public benefits corporations include TOMS, Kickstarter, Patagonia, and Method. Benefit corporations allow their Boards of Directors to consider expanded obligations, including environmental and social factors, resulting in increased awareness of the impact the business has on society. Public benefit corporations are becoming more common due to their positive economic and social impacts in their respective communities; 32 states currently allow for companies to incorporate as public benefit corporations. The bill will allow companies who are interested in doing public-good to incorporate in Texas as opposed to having to do it in a different state.</p> <p>Texas’ current constituency statute allows for a corporation to include a social purpose in its charter, but it is unclear the extent to which the corporation’s officers and directors must consider that purpose. CSHB 3488 clears up ambiguities and offers legal protection for corporation’s officers and directors to pursue a mission and consider the impact of their business on society. It requires public benefit corporations to be managed in a manner that balances shareholders’ financial interests, the best interests of persons materially affected by the corporation’s conduct, and the public benefit specified in the corporation’s charter. It outlines multiple regulatory provisions that benefit corporations would be required to operate under. Additionally, the bill would also allow for benefit corporation litigation to occur in Texas, saving litigation costs and allowing Texas to create its own body of law regarding this emerging field.</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tyler@Texaslsg.org">Tyler@Texaslsg.org</a>



<p><b>HB 3956</b> By: Geren/ Bonnen, Dennis/ Price/ Kuempel/ Paddie</p>	<p>Relating to a privilege from disclosure to governmental units for certain evidence concerning sermons delivered by a religious leader.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>This bill amends the Civil Practice and Remedies Code to prohibit government entities from compelling disclosure of a written, audio, or video copy of a sermon as part of any civil action or proceeding. It also prohibits compelling testimony from the religious leader to testify regarding the sermon. These protections would extend to any religious organization that qualifies for tax exemption under state law. The bill attempts to protect these organizations’ freedom of speech and freedom of religion; these core principles, however are not inherently violated by a civil subpoena.</p> <p>While not inherently harmful, the bill raises a number of concerns including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would inhibit civil courts’ ability to enforce the tax code as it relates to electioneering by tax-exempt religious institutions</li> <li>• It may be interpreted to be in violation of the establishment clause, which establishes a clear separation of church and state</li> <li>• It may allow individuals who have committed crimes to have certain speech shielded under the auspice of religious freedom</li> <li>• It opens the door for religious exemptions from civil or criminal prosecution in an array of different scenarios</li> <li>• It opens the door for religious institutions to become conduits for political campaigning and spending</li> </ul>	<p><b>Will of the House</b> <b>Evaluated by:</b> Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tyler@Texaslsg.org">Tyler@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 1556</b> By: González, Mary</p>	<p>Relating to the appointment of foster parents and other qualified persons to serve as educational decision-makers for certain children in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>Current law is unclear about who has the authority to make special education decisions on behalf of a child with a disability during the first 60 days of the child’s placement in a foster home. However, federal law is very clear on this issue. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) allows anyone who meets the definition of a parent to make special education decisions for a child who is, or may be, eligible for special education services; foster parents are included in that definition. HB 1556 seeks to align state and federal law by allowing a foster parent to become the special education decision maker for a child immediately upon placement. The foster parent would be required to fulfill certain requirements including agreeing to the role and completing a training program. In the event that the foster parent is unwilling or unable to serve as a parent in this capacity, the district would be required to appoint an individual to serve as the surrogate parent of the child; the district is required to do this for any child with a disability whose parents can’t be located or identified.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 961</b> By: Rodriguez, Justin</p>	<p>Relating to the election of junior college district trustees by plurality vote.</p>	<p>Higher Education</p>	<p>HB 961 seeks to remove runoff elections for candidates of governing boards of junior colleges. Runoff elections show significantly smaller voting turnouts that become costly to the schools and counties. HB 961 permits the governing board of a junior college district to determine by resolution that a candidate must receive majority of the votes cast for a position at the election. This resolution must be provided no later than the 180th day before an election.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Fabeain@Texaslsg.org">Fabeain@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 72</b> By: Keough</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment, operation, and funding of victim-offender mediation programs; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 72 allows the establishment, operation, and funding of the pretrial victim-offender mediation program. The bill would effectively authorize a county commissioners court or governing body of a municipality, in coordination with the attorney representing the state, to adopt administrative and local policies to implement and operate the program. The pretrial victim-offender mediation program would be available for individuals arrested or charged with a misdemeanor related to offenses against the property who have not been previously convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, other than a misdemeanor traffic fine-only offense. Program requirements must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards and eligibility requirements for individuals able to participate,</li> <li>• Consent from the attorney representing the state for the referral of a defendant’s matter to mediation under the program,</li> <li>• Obtaining and documenting the victim’s consent in the court record by the attorney representing the state prior to the case proceeding to pretrial victim-offender mediation, and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@texaslsg.org">Katherine@texaslsg.org</a></p>





			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The defendant to enter into a binding mediation agreement, requiring the defendant to take responsibility for and address the specific circumstances of their actions, which may include an apology to the victim or require the defendant to pay restitution to the victim, perform community service, or both.</li> </ul> <p>Instances requiring a case to be returned to the docket and proceed through the regular criminal justice system include a mediation not resulting in a mediation agreement, a defendant failing to successfully fulfil the mediation agreement terms by the specified date in the agreement, or the mediator determines either the victim or defendant no longer wants to participate or cooperate or the mediation will be ineffective. If a defendant successfully completes the mediation agreement and the court determines it is in the best interest of justice, the court shall dismiss the criminal action against them; a determination regarding successful completion of mediation is final and cannot be repealed. A court must enter an order of nondisclosure of criminal history record information on the motion of a defendant if they are not arrested or convicted of a subsequent felony or misdemeanor, with the exception of a fine-only traffic misdemeanor, on or before the first anniversary of successful completion of a mediation agreement.</p> <p>The bill further allows legislative review by interim committees for the study, review, and evaluation of pretrial victim-offender mediation programs in order to make recommendations for appropriate policies to monitor, improve, or provide state resources. The bill also allows for a management, operations, or financial/accounting audit of the mediation program on a request by the county commissioners court or governing body of a municipality. The bill stipulates that a mediation program must collect fees for program participation of no more than \$500, and may collect fees to cover the costs of alcohol or controlled substance testing, counseling, or treatment, if required per the mediation agreement. The bill requires the Texas Juvenile Justice Board to establish guidelines for victim-offender mediation programs by December 1, 2017, but participation by a child and a victim must be voluntary. Defendants participating in a pretrial victim-offender mediation program must help fund the mediation programs offered upon successful completion of the program. The mediation program applies to defendants entering the program regardless of when the offense was committed.</p> <p>HB 72 serves to provide victims expedited relief by allowing offenders to take responsibility for their actions, as well as reduce recidivism in local communities. The bill also reduces taxpayer spending by decreasing the need for trials and funding for incarceration.</p>	
<p><b>HB 18</b> Capriglione /Zerwas / Roberts/ Walle</p>	<p>Relating to oversight of and requirements applicable to state contracts and other state financial and accounting issues, including the delivery of certain Medicaid medical transportation program services; providing a civil penalty.</p>	<p>Appropriations</p>	<p>This bill constitutes a significant overhaul to contract procurement and management procedures for state agencies. The major components outlined below, combined with other amendments to statute, define the parameters of a contract management system with clear requirements and enforcement mechanisms to help agencies with cost-containment initiatives.</p> <p>HB 18 requires that an attorney be involved in contract negotiations to ensure that necessary provisions such as confidentiality and public information, antitrust, and the right to audit are included when applicable. Contracts must conform to the standards laid out in the Contract Management Guide issued by the Comptroller’s office. The bill seeks to improve the CMG by requiring its review to include information concerning best practices regarding the acceptable timeline for contract procurements.</p> <p>Changes are also made to vendor reimbursement protocols to reduce inefficiencies within the system relating to multiple payments. Under HB 18, agencies are only authorized to make payments for invoices related to conditions laid out in a contract, and only one such payment is permitted each month. This provision creates an incentive for vendors to consolidate invoices, reducing agency</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Joel Kissell 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Joel@texaslsg.org">Joel@texaslsg.org</a></p>



			<p>workload for accounts payable and reducing the potential for graft. A civil penalty is implemented for vendors who do not return overpayments from the state within 90 days, and the comptroller is granted authority to bar vendors from participating in state contracts as a result of repeated unsatisfactory performance.</p> <p>The final set of changes included in HB 18 relate to audits and performance reviews of contracts. Agencies must submit information to the Legislative Budget Board regarding the extent of their contracts; the LBB must then release a report detailing those contracts as a percentage of the agency’s total budget. The bill instructs HHSC to conduct a review of Medicaid transportation services to identify areas of possible improvement to the program as it relates to client satisfaction and cost effectiveness.</p>	
<p><b>HB 150</b> By: Bell/ Metcalf/ Guillen /Shine/ Blanco/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the exemption from ad valorem taxation of part of the appraised value of the residence homestead of a partially disabled veteran or the surviving spouse of a partially disabled veteran if the residence homestead was donated to the disabled veteran by a charitable organization for less than the market value of the residence homestead.</p>	<p>Ways &amp; Means</p>	<p>This bill would extend the homestead tax exemption for veterans with a VA disability rating below 100% under certain circumstances. Under current statute, these veterans are eligible for a partial exemption equal to the percentage of their disability if their home was donated to them at no cost by a charitable organization. HB 150 amends those requirements to allow a form of subsidized donation where the charitable organization contributes no more than 50% of the home’s fair market value and the veteran pays the rest. These provisions make more options available to qualifying veterans and service organizations to resolve obstacles keeping them out of affordable housing.</p> <p>The implementation of HB 150 is contingent upon passage of the corresponding constitutional amendment.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 161</b> By: Dutton</p>	<p>Relating to the child support obligation of an obligor during the obligor's confinement in jail or prison.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice &amp; Family Issues</p>	<p>An incarcerated individual subject to a child support order often incurs substantial child support arrearages while they are incarcerated. HB 161 seeks to prohibit these individuals, under certain conditions, from being found in contempt of court for failure to pay child support. Under this bill, a person incarcerated for at least 90 days who was not incarcerated for an act of family violence or for failing to comply with a child support order could not be found in contempt of court for failure to pay child support.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3062</b> By: Kacal</p>	<p>Relating to the sale of property for delinquent ad valorem taxes.</p>	<p>Ways &amp; Means</p>	<p>This bill updates language relating to the sale of real property as the result of failure to pay property taxes owed. The phrase “successful bidder” is replaced with “purchaser” in existing statute; the bill also clarifies that the legal spouse of the purchaser. Officers of the court executing the sale are only authorized to transfer the property deed to the purchaser, their spouse, or a third-party entity (e.g. church, civic or charitable organization, or business) that has prior written authorization for the transfer. These provisions remove sources of confusion in the process of purchasing property under these conditions.</p> <p>The other major changes in HB 3062 amend the definition of property that can be sold pursuant to judgment of foreclosure to include personal property. Taxing authorities are only allowed to sell off real property under current law, which excludes manufactured homes. Subject to restrictions already in place, the inclusion of personal property is intended only to extend only to manufactured homes. For the purposes of sale, the authorities may treat manufactured homes as they do real property and not move the home to</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a></p>



			the location of the sale. These changes correct a presumed oversight in statute and provide taxing authorities great flexibility in recouping delinquent property taxes. The potential impacts for people in the middle of economic hardship are severe, and the state should consider remedies beyond confiscating a family's home.	
<b>HB 238</b> By: Hernandez/Romero, Jr./Faircloth	Relating to the creation of records of the DNA of certain defendants for inclusion in the DNA database system.	Corrections	HB 238 adds an individual convicted of an offense as a buyer of prostitution to the DNA records database requirements. Sex offenders convicted of buying prostitution will be required to provide a DNA sample to be submitted into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). DNA base expansion will help convict individuals committing sex offenses and prevent them from committing future crimes.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2484</b> By: Nevarez/Anderson, Charles "Doc"	Relating to the licensing and regulation of animal export-import processing facilities; providing penalties; requiring an occupational license; authorizing fees.	Agriculture & Livestock	Prohibits a person from operating an animal export-import processing facility unless the person holds a license. Such animal export-import processing facilities receive and hold animals and animal products for transportation in international trades. In the 1960s, Mexico requested Texas construct livestock export facilities to improve importation of livestock into Mexico. Mexico felt the private facilities operating at that time were too costly for the crossing of livestock into Mexico. These facilities are the last line of defense for livestock inspection where strict guidelines must be met before traveling internationally. They are used by Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación (SAGARPA) for the inspection of livestock before crossing the border. The TDA currently operates three export facilities, which are located along the Texas-Mexico border, and a fourth that is located at the George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston. However, recently, private export facilities have opened along the border operating independent of the TDA's export facilities, and there is no governing agency to protect and oversee these private facilities in Texas. There have been issues in these private facilities where was no water or feed when the animals arrived, and some actions have caused SAGARPA to shut down the border to a specific species due to the actions of one facility.  Requiring a license for these export facilities would ensure all locations are complying with requirements in order to provide safe and ethical handling of livestock by holding these private facilities accountable to the same guidelines and regulations that the TDA abides by. The TDA may impose an administrative penalty or sanction for violations of this required license for no more than \$5,000.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Serena@Texaslsg.org">Serena@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 852</b> By: Parker/Shaheen/White/VanDeaver/Koop/et al.	Relating to an adult high school diploma and industry certification charter school pilot program.	Public Education	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.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 523</b> By: Schofield/Fallon/et al.	Relating to the requirement that certain elected school district boards make audio and video recordings of certain work sessions and	Government Transparency & Operation	Last session, the Texas Legislature passed HB 283 which required certain government entities to record public meetings and post them on the internet. HB 523 amends a loophole used by some School Boards that did not align with the intent of the aforementioned legislation. While most Boards of Trustees act in good faith for their school districts there were instances when School Boards would move their official business to work meetings and they would no longer need to post their meeting online. Ultimately, diminishing the transparency set forth by HB 283 and possibly leading to mistrust of the School Board.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Ana Ramon 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Ana@Texaslsg.org">Ana@Texaslsg.org</a>



	special called meetings available on the Internet.		<p>This bill would amend this section of code and require school boards to post recorded session online if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meeting included any public testimony</li> <li>• The Board votes on any matter</li> </ul> <p>This applies to school districts with populations of 10,000 or more as codified by HB 283 last session.</p>	
<b>HB 431</b> By: Metcalf/et al.	Relating to a temporary justice of the peace.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	Specifies that when a justice of the peace is temporarily absent and thus unable to perform their official duties, the county judge may appoint a qualified temporary justice of the peace on their own motion <i>or</i> at the request of the justice of the peace. This bill further clarifies that the duration of the temporary justice appointment remains until the justice returns to take their seat at the bench, rather than for the duration of the justice’s disability. This clarifies any confusion related to when the temporary justice’s service ends, and addresses concerns that justices of the peace are unable to request a temporary replacement for absences from the bench.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Serena@Texaslsg.org">Serena@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 478</b> By: Israel/ Laubenberg /Rinaldi /Gutierrez/ Neave/et al.	Relating to civil liability for removing certain individuals or animals from a motor vehicle.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	<p>Provides immunity from civil liability to any person that enters a motor vehicle for the purpose of removing an unattended vulnerable individual or domestic animal from that vehicle. The bill defines “vulnerable individual” as a child younger than 7 years of age or who by reason of age or physical or mental disease, defect, or injury is substantially unable to protect the individual’s self from harm. “Domestic animal” is defined as a dog, cat or other domesticated animal that can be kept as a household pet, but does not include a livestock animal. This bill limits the circumstances by which this immunity applies, including determining the vehicle is locked, has good faith and reasonable belief that entry is necessary to avoid imminent harm, uses no more force than is necessary, notifies law enforcement or calls 911 before entering the vehicle, and remains with the individual or animal in a safe location of reasonable proximity to the vehicle until law enforcement arrives.</p> <p>Young children, those unable to protect themselves, and domestic animals are vulnerable to death by heat stroke if left confined within a vehicle under certain conditions. For example, since dogs do not sweat like humans, heat stroke can quickly occur. A person who must break into a vehicle to rescue these vulnerable persons and animals should be protected legally from damages resulting entry or removal. Currently, some individuals may be afraid to free an animal or vulnerable person from a car in the heat because they are afraid from being sued. These concerned citizens might instead contact the police, who cannot arrive at the scene immediately. Every minute matters when trying to save these precious lives.</p> <p>Even when it is only 70 degrees outside, the inside of the car’s temperature can go above 100 degrees, and in 10 minutes a car can go up 100 degrees. Heat stroke is a leading cause of non-crash related fatalities for children, and every year thousands of pets succumb to heat stroke. Law enforcement has described terrifying situations of animals leaving claw marks trying to escape the car, or a body in a contorted shape trying to escape. HB 478 ensures that no person is penalized by way of civil damages for saving these lives.</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Serena@Texaslsg.org">Serena@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 812</b> By: Wu/Davis, Sarah/ Murphy/ Alvarado	Relating to standing in a roadway; amending provisions subject to a criminal penalty.	Transportation	This bill consolidates provisions within the Transportation Code relating to pedestrians in roadways and removes an exception for individuals or groups soliciting charitable contribution. The phrasing of the change tries to communicate that the prohibition is for the protection and safety of individuals in the area, or to maintain the flow of traffic, but leaves room for alternative interpretations with potential unintended consequences. Disruption of traffic is sometimes used as a tactic for protest, as seen in response to the deaths of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, as well as after the election of President Trump; prohibiting that type of demonstration could cause a backlash by groups concerned about free speech. HB 812 could also be interpreted to set a precedent for crackdowns against the homeless population.	<b>Favorable w/concerns</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Andrea@texaslsg.org">Andrea@texaslsg.org</a>



<p><b>HB 4122</b> By: Kacal/ Guerra</p>	<p>Relating to the transference of certain territory from one groundwater conservation district to another.</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p>	<p>HB 4122 amends Chapter 36 of the Water Code to allow a landowner the ability to transfer their land from one groundwater conservation districts to another when the land is situated in one or more districts. A landowner with a contiguous piece of land that exceeds 1,000 acres and is located on top of only one aquifer or subdivision of an aquifer can submit a petition to a groundwater conservation district to have the entirety of their property under one district. The land must transfer to the district which has the higher appraised value. The two or more districts will need to agree upon this transfer and any outstanding debts of the district the landowner is leaving must not be impeded. A joint resolution of the districts is required for the transfer of the land.</p> <p>While landowners have property rights, including the groundwater beneath their property, this bill could allow for property owners to move into the groundwater conservation districts with the weaker regulation. This could allow for a landowner to pump more water out and affect the drawdown that could pose an undue burden on smaller domestic wells. A safeguard would be to require the landowner to move into the district with the stricter regulations if the transfer is for efficiency of being only under one groundwater conservation district.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Erin@Texaslsg.org">Erin@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 591</b> By: Minjarez</p>	<p>Relating to the punishment for the offense of aggravated assault.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 591 amends the Penal Code to enhance the penalty for aggravated assault from a second-degree felony to a first degree felony if the assault results in paralysis of the victim. For the purposes of this subchapter, paralysis means the complete and permanent loss of feeling or the ability to move in part or most of the body. Victims who are paralyzed as a result of being assaulted face significant financial, physical, and emotional hardships. Enhancing the penalty for this type of violent offense ensures that the perpetrator is held accountable to the fullest extent of the law, which can help bring closure to some victims.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 850</b> By: Turner/ Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to an exemption from ad valorem taxation of a portion of the appraised value of certain real property used to provide housing to certain individuals with an intellectual disability or related conditions.</p>	<p>Ways &amp; Means</p>	<p>This bill would extend certain property tax exemptions to group homes and intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Many of these facilities are funded through Medicaid and argue that the public nature of their funding entitles them to tax relief. HB 850 would allow qualifying facilities to apply for an exemption equal to the cost of facilities upkeep for the preceding year; programmatic and other expenses are not included in the calculation of these exemptions. This limited property tax relief would support the continued operation of these care facilities and the critical services they provide by allowing them to recoup a portion of their Medicaid funding and redirect it back to their programs. While the exemptions lead to modest decreases to the Foundation School Fund, school districts, and local governments over the next five years that would need to be made up elsewhere in the budget, but those funding shifts are well worth it to support this underfunded and underappreciated community.</p> <p>The implementation of HB 850 is contingent upon passage of the corresponding constitutional amendment.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3287</b> By: Goldman/ Geren/ Guillen/et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the sale of ale and beer by certain brewers and manufacturers.</p>	<p>Licensing &amp; Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>This bill amends limits on the size of craft breweries that are authorized to sell their products on-site, from 225,000 barrels at each of their locations to 225,000 total across all locations. The original intent of the permission to sell on-site was granted during the 83rd Legislature with a series of bills known as the “craft beer package” to help small, locally-owned breweries build their brands and gain traction in the market. Ultimately, that intent was lost in the shuffle as larger breweries took advantage of the situation.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a></p>



			Without an official definition of “craft brew,” companies like Karbach are able to market themselves as craft brands in spite of a significant market share. The Brewer’s Association lists that company as a large brewery, with production in excess of 6 million barrels per year, while Shiner is considered a regional brewery that produces between 15,000 and 6 million barrels. Restricting the ability of these larger brands to operate in the gray areas within the existing distribution system for beer products fosters growth for the smaller operations that more accurately represent the craft brew concept.	
<b>HB 1856</b> By: King, Ken	Relating to the creation of a defense under the Solid Waste Disposal Act for persons engaged in certain scrap metal recycling transactions.	Environmental Regulation	HB 1856 would allow a Metal Recycling Entity (MRE) a defense to prosecution of pollution if the company that was contracted with to dispose of the material commits violations under the Solid Waste Disposal Act and subsequently goes out of business. This would relieve the MRE of undue prosecution for violations committed by another company.	<b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Erin Eriksen 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Erin@Texaslsg.org">Erin@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2052</b> By: Phelan	Relating to a tree planting credit to offset tree mitigation fees imposed by a municipality.	Urban Affairs	This bill implements a tax credit for a tree mitigation fee. Municipalities with tree ordinances may require permit with a corresponding fee, for the removal of protected size trees. CSHB 2052 allows a person who has to pay a tree mitigation fee for the removal of a tree due to development or construction can apply for a credit. In order to receive the credit a tree has to be planted either on the property which the mitigation fee was assessed or a place mutually agreed upon by the person and the municipality. The rates of the credit are laid out in the bill. CSHB 2052 will help to neutralize the loss of trees due to construction and development.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Kylie@Texaslsg.org">Kylie@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 1810</b> By: Dale	Relating to the creation of the offense of possession or promotion of lewd visual material depicting a child.	Criminal Jurisprudence	HB 1810 creates a criminal offense for possession or promotion of any lewd visual material depicting a child, regardless of whether the depicted child consented to creation of the visual material. The bill outlines prohibited visual material as depicting the lewd exhibition of the genitals or pubic area of an unclothed, partially clothed, clothed child under the age of 18 at the time the material was created; appealing to the prurient interest in sex; and has no serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. Under HB 1810, an offense for possession or promotion of lewd visual material of a child is a state jail felony, except in the case that an individual has been previously convicted one time of an offense under this law or for possession/promotion of child pornography as a third-degree felony, and in which the offense is a second-degree felony if an individual has previous convictions of possession/promotion of lewd visual material and child pornography two or more times.  The Austin Child Exploitation Unit of the Office of the Attorney General has reported 88 cases of either possession or promotion of lewd visual material depicting a child since January 2015. There are no current statutes criminalizing the possession of child erotica images, which are often precursory to the possession or promotion of child pornography; therefore, charges in the state of Texas cannot be pursued solely for lewd visual material of a child. HB 1810 would serve to de-incentivize actions regarding lewd visual materials of a child.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 183</b> By: Dutton	Relating to the consequences of successfully completing a period of deferred adjudication community supervision.	Corrections	HB 183 prohibits the completion of deferred adjudication community supervision as grounds for denying a professional license to a person who is otherwise qualified. The provisions would relate to a dismissal and discharge of an individual on or before the expiration date of the person’s deferred adjudication community supervision period and restricts the use of a dismissal and discharge to determining punishment for repeat and habitual felony offenders of sexual performance by a child, possession or promotion of child pornography, or certain obscenity convictions. The bill further provides that the fact that an individual has successfully completed a period of deferred adjudication community supervision is admissible before the court or jury for consideration on the	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a>



			<p>issue of penalty, but not admissible if the individual is an applicant or holder of a license under the Department of Family and Protective Services or the Council on Sex Offender Treatment. HB 183 applies only to individuals placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for an offense committed on or after September 1, 2017.</p> <p>If an individual successfully completes a period of deferred adjudication community supervision, it is almost as if the conviction never occurred. However, this statute is not reflected as individuals are denied employment based on a criminal conviction on their arrest record. Persons who receive a dismissal and discharge should be able to carry on with their lives, yet there is merely a 40% employment rate in some Texas counties. HB 183 would provide an actual second chance for individuals wishing to move forward with their lives.</p>	
<p><b>HB 2612</b> By: Meyer</p>	<p>Relating to civil liability of a person who produces, distributes, sells, or provides or aids in the production, distribution, sale, or provision of certain synthetic substances to another person for damages caused by the other person.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 2612 mandates that a person who produced, distributed, sold, or provided is liable for civil damages as it relates to consumption or ingestion of a synthetic substance by another person. If the consumption or ingestion of the synthetic substance is by a minor, then the person who produced, distributed or sold the substance is strictly liable. This legislation is vitally important to protecting minors and working Texas families from abusing these unregulated substances that can have very serious and dangerous effects.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Serena@Texaslsg.org">Serena@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2122</b> By: Clardy</p>	<p>Relating to the adoption of the Uniform Foreign-Country Money Judgments Recognition Act.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>HB 2122 repeals Chapter 36, the Texas Foreign-Country Money Judgment Recognition Act, in the Civil Practice and Remedies Code, and replaces it with a revised chapter, entitled "Uniform Foreign-Country Money Judgments Recognition Act". This has been adopted by more than 20 states. A recent federal court decision called into question whether the current Texas Act protects Texans' due process rights by foreign court systems. HB 2122 simply updates this chapter to ensure Texans enjoy due process protection when defending against foreign country judgments in Texas courts. This is especially an important topic in regards to increases in international trade in the United States where there is more litigation in foreign judicial systems, and more judgments to be enforced from country to country. Adopting this legislation simply provides for more uniformity between states with respect to the law governing foreign country money-judgments.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Serena@Texaslsg.org">Serena@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2009</b> By: Bonnen, Greg/ Bonnen, Dennis</p>	<p>Relating to an exemption for certain law enforcement and military personnel from the requirement to complete a hunter education program.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation, &amp; Tourism</p>	<p>HB 2009 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code by exempting specific military, state guard, and law enforcement personnel from completing a hunter education course. The Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife Department has offered hunter education courses since 1972. The current course structure offers courses in classroom, field, and internet only settings. The courses on average last 4-6 hours, and range in price from \$15 to \$29. In addition to firearm use, hunter education courses teach the law and ethics of hunting, best practices to collect and manage game, and how to locate vital zoning points on animals. While military, state guard, and law enforcement personnel have experience in utilizing firearms, the use of a firearm for the purposes of combat is different than its use for hunting animals. Obtaining knowledge on the appropriate behavior and ethics of hunting would preserve the safety and responsibility for the sport and the hunting education law.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Fabeain Barkwell 281-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Fabeain@Texaslsg.org">Fabeain@Texaslsg.org</a></p>



<p><b>HB 3103</b> By: Darby</p>	<p>Relating to the jurisdiction of this state to tax tangible personal property that is used continually in this state.</p>	<p>Ways &amp; Means</p>	<p>This bill seeks to clarify the definition of “continual use” as it relates to real property for property tax calculations. A recent shift in how the Dallas County Appraisal District interprets the statute has led to certain transportation companies facing a significantly higher property tax bill; the appraisal district began including any vehicles that crossed state lines en route to the company’s maintenance facility as real property, instead of equipment used in the support of routine corporate activities. HB 3103 sets the standard for continual use at three distinct utilizations, eliminating the source of the irregularities in interpretation. HB 3103 explicitly states that it is clarifying existing statute. The situation that sparked the filing of the bill only affects one county at this time, and the company described above is currently in litigation with the appraisal district. The legislature should exercise caution in exerting undue influence on the court’s process as the interested parties resolve the case. It would be more appropriate to wait for the case to run its course and then reevaluate if legislation is necessary.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House w/ Concerns</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Kirages 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Katherine@Texaslsg.org">Katherine@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3150</b> By: Burns/ Leach/ Canales/ et al.</p>	<p>Relating to a merchant allowing a person suspected of committing or attempting to commit theft to complete a theft education program.</p>	<p>Business &amp; Industry</p>	<p>This bill allows a merchant to offer a person, who is suspected of stealing or attempting to steal property, the opportunity to complete a theft education program, instead of reporting the suspected offense to a law enforcement agency. If the merchant offers this program, they must notify the suspected person of the opportunity in writing, and explain that they retain the right to report the suspected offense to a law enforcement agency if the person does not successfully complete the program. The bill specifies that a theft education program provider may not charge more than \$500 for participation, and that if a person is indigent, the provider shall develop a plan to offer discounts, alternative payment schedules, or scholarship funds, and may reduce or waive the fee. A person is not eligible to participate in the program if they have already in the preceding 5 years of the offense, unless there is authorization from the court.</p> <p>Theft education or diversion programs mitigate time and costly resources for the criminal justice system and for retailers. They also conserve necessary resources to deal with more serious crimes. Additionally, such programs serve as alternative methods for rehabilitation of offenders, and reduce rates of recidivism. For low-level theft, this sort of opportunity is vital in reducing the likelihood that a person’s entire life is impeded by the petty crime, ranging from ability to procure employment to education to securing housing.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Serena@Texaslsg.org">Serena@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 3376</b> By: Holland</p>	<p>Relating to forms of notice that may be provided by the Department of Public Safety during certain enforcement proceedings and actions.</p>	<p>Homeland Security &amp; Public Safety</p>	<p>This bill amends a wide variety of sections within the Transportation Code to include electronic notifications for offenses, hearings, and other administrative purposes in addition to traditional mail. No substantive changes are made to the programs covered in the amended sections. In each case, where communication by standard mail was permitted, a corresponding permission is added for electronic mail. In the digital age, electronic communication is integrated in every facet of society and should be an option for interactions with governmental agencies. This change may even result in an increase to response rates to summons due to its immediate nature.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Andrea Elizondo 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Andrea@Texaslsg.org">Andrea@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 2051</b> By: Huberty</p>	<p>Relating to the new instructional facility allotment under the foundation school program.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>HB 2051 increases the allotment under the New Instructional Facilities Allotment (NIFA) of the Foundation School Program from \$250 to \$1,000 for each student in average daily attendance. A new instructional facility, as defined by this bill, includes: a newly constructed facility, a repurposed instructional facility, and a leased facility operating for the first time as an instructional facility with a minimum lease term of not less than 10 years. HB 2051 simply increases this allotment to address the increased costs to school districts of operating new facilities. Existing Education Code caps NIFA appropriations at \$25 million annually, and the bill does not adjust this statutory cap.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a></p>





<p><b>HB 3548</b> By: Parker</p>	<p>Relating to the applicability of certain immunity and liability laws to the nonprofit corporation established by the Texas Public Finance Authority to issue revenue bonds to open-enrollment charter schools for those schools to provide educational facilities.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>HB 3548 grants immunity from liability for a director, officer, or employee of a nonprofit established by the Texas Public Finance Authority (TPFA). Charter School Finance Cooperation (CSFC), a non-profit corporation established by TPFA, is mandated by the state to act on behalf of the state to issue revenue bonds to finance facilities to open enrollment charter schools. CSFC qualifies as the corporation rather than a state agency, so the CFFC board of directors are not granted the same protection against liability and risk that state officials have. HB 3548 amends the Education Code to give CSFC board members the same status as state officials for purposes of indemnification for both state and federal causes of action in lawsuits arising from actions taken in the courts that lie within the scope of a board member’s official duties.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 4011</b> By: Burrows</p>	<p>Relating to prohibited reporting of information regarding debt incurred for nonemergency medical care</p>	<p>Business &amp; 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 <b>unless</b> 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 front about the costs.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Serena Ahmed 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Serena@Texaslsg.org">Serena@Texaslsg.org</a></p>
<p><b>HB 4095</b> By: Klick/etal.</p>	<p>Relating to safety requirements of assisted living facilities</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>HB 4095 codifies requirements around safety standards in assisted living centers. As issues have arisen regarding safety standards between local and state regulations, the bill requires that twice a year the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) put out a technical memorandum providing guidance on interpretation of minimum life safety standards. Any new requirements would have to be added to the memorandum before being adopted. Enforcement of the code through this bill would be upheld by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). This also adds in protections for facilities who have not been inspected, but have received citations for noncompliance with accessibility standards, allowing for the citation to be repealed if an inspection has not been conducted. HB 4095 requires that HHSC adopts life safety code from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). With regards to this, if a facility within a municipality is required to meet that entities building or fire code, the facility may not be cited on a basis for having to require with the local government's safety codes, but must still maintain the NFPA life safety code. As assisted living centers</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Kylie@Texaslsg.org">Kylie@Texaslsg.org</a></p>



			can provide care to both elderly individuals and those with disabling conditions, this bill will help to clarify accountability and regulate life safety, helping to protect patients.	
<b>HB 3533</b> By: Raymond	Relating to inspection procedures in certain long-term care facilities and the creation of a long-term care legislative oversight committee.	Human Services	<p>This bill amends the Health and Safety Code to add uniform regulation for inspections for long-term care facilities and creates a long-term care facility oversight committee. As it stands, there is not codified regulation surrounding long-term care facilities between regions. Some regions require an annual inspection while others require one every five years. HB 3533 seeks to unify inspection between regions, providing provisions for the inspector. It also helps to protect the care facility from any retaliation that an inspector might use against them for any complaints filed against them. Likewise, this bill protects the facility from being required to make any changes that violate recommendations written by a physician.</p> <p>HB 3533 also implements a long-term care oversight committee. Appointment to the committee and their duties are laid out in the bill. The committee would be required to provide HHSC with an annual report regarding their findings on long-term care facilities. The committee would set to expire September 1, 2021. Oversight such facilities is overdue and will help to regulate the system as a whole, and allow HHSC to further understand what needs to be done to serve a vulnerable population. This bill will serve to mitigate long standing issues with facilities that care for the growing population of our state's elderly.</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kylie McNaught 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Kylie@Texaslsg.org">Kylie@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>HB 2235</b> By: Murphy/ Anderson, Charles "Doc"/et al.	Relating to accounting principles applicable to pension and other postemployment benefit expenses for electric utilities.	State Affairs	HB 2235 seeks to bring Texas regulatory law into compliance with recently adopted federal accounting standards for the purpose of protecting the pension and postemployment benefits of electric utility workers. The bill strikes the word "operating" from operating expenses in Section 36.065 of the Utilities Code, bringing it into compliance with Federal regulations and effectively preserving the regulatory environment surrounding utility workers' pensions and postemployment benefits. This minor change will protect benefits for over 10,000 currently employed utility workers, providing them with economic stability through valuable postemployment benefits.	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tyler Anderson 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Tyler@Texaslsg.org">Tyler@Texaslsg.org</a>
<b>LSG Floor Report For General Calendar- Senate Bills- Friday, May 5, 2017</b>				
<b>SB 7</b> By: Bettencourt /et al. SP: King, Ken/Dale/ Huberty	Relating to improper relationships between educators and students and reporting of educator misconduct; creating a criminal offense and expanding the applicability of an existing offense; authorizing an administrative penalty.	Public Education	<p>Over the past several years there has been a considerable increase in the number of teachers found to have engaged in romantic and sexual relationships with their students. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) opened 222 investigations that involved inappropriate relationships between educators and students in fiscal year 2016. Many teachers who have inappropriate relationships with their students remain in the educational system, even after their offenses have been discovered, by moving between schools from one district to another. SB 7 seeks to close loopholes that allow those teachers to remain in the educational system, and it creates penalties for conduct relating to an inappropriate relationship between an educator and a student. To achieve that purpose, SB 7 does the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An educator who receives deferred adjudication or is placed on the sex offender registry would have their teaching certificate revoked.</li> <li>• Principals would be required to notify the superintendent or school district director of an educator's termination or resignation if it follows an alleged incident of misconduct between that educator and a student. They have 7 business days to do so.</li> </ul>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Arielle Day 210-382-4295 <a href="mailto:Arielle@Texaslsg.org">Arielle@Texaslsg.org</a>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A superintendent or principal who fails to report an incident would be subject to a fine, \$500-\$10,000. Payment of the fine would be required for certification renewal. A superintendent or principal who intentionally conceals an educator’s criminal record or alleged incident of misconduct would be subject to a state jail felony.</li> <li>• A principal who discusses a teacher’s criminal record or alleged incident(s) of misconduct with another district would be immune from civil or criminal liability.</li> <li>• Teachers would be required to receive continuing education training regarding appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students.</li> <li>• Principals would be required to receive continuing education training regarding the prevention, recognition, and reporting of any sexual conduct between an educator and student.</li> <li>• An educator who assists another person in obtaining employment that they know has previously engaged in sexual misconduct with a student could have his/her certificate suspended or revoked.</li> <li>• The TEA’s subpoena authority would be expanded to include attendance of relevant witnesses during the investigation process.</li> <li>• A teacher or administrator evaluation document may be provided to the TEA for disciplinary proceedings against a teacher or administrator based on a report concerning an alleged incident of misconduct. Evaluation documents would be confidential.</li> <li>• School districts would be required to adopt, implement and enforce a policy regarding teacher-student electronic communications.</li> <li>• The commissioner may authorize a special accreditation investigation when a school district fails to comply with a request from the TEA to provide evidence or an investigation report.</li> </ul>	
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