



TEXAS LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP

An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

STEERING COMMITTEE

Chair, Rep. Garnet Coleman
 Co-Vice Chair, Rep. Yvonne Davis
 Co-Vice Chair, Senator Jose Rodriguez
 Co-Vice Chair, Rep. Ana Hernandez
 Treasurer, Rep. Armando Walle
 Secretary, Rep. Victoria Neave
 General Counsel, Rep. Lina Ortega
 Freshman Rep., Rep. Vikki Goodwin

Rep. Diego Bernal
 Rep. Abel Herrero
 Rep. Mando Martinez
 Rep. Eddie Rodriguez
 Rep. Toni Rose
 Sen. Jose Menendez
 Rep. Harold Dutton
 Rep. Chris Turner
 Rep. Rafael Anchia
 Rep. Jessica Farrar

Rep. Mary Gonzalez
 Rep. Gina Hinojosa
 Rep. Rhetta Bowers
 Rep. John Turner
 Rep. Ina Minjarez
 Rep. Sergio Munoz
 Rep. Carl Sherman
 Rep. Alex Dominguez
 Rep. Nicole Collier
 Rep. Julie Johnson

Representative:

Desk:

LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Tuesday, March 26, 2019

<p>HB 61 By: White SP: SB 169, Nichols</p>	<p>Relating to the use of certain lighting equipment on escort flag vehicles.</p>	<p>Transportation Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>HB 61 allows for escort vehicles (vehicles preceding or following an oversized load) to be equipped with amber and blue flashing lights. Currently, escort companies report that they don't have the necessary tools to facilitate safety on the roadways. Deaths on the road increased in 2017 with a major reason being distracted drivers. Testimony suggests that people seem to pay more attention to blue lights and research shows that vehicles with flashing lights more effectively gain drivers' attention. HB 61 seeks to address this issue and increase road safety by allowing amber and blue flashing lights for escort vehicles.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Sophia Creede (832) 865-4774 Sophia@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p>HB 382 By: Ortega Moody González, M. Blanco Fierro SP: SB 257, Rodriguez</p>	<p>Relating to the authority to establish a customer assistance program for certain municipally owned utilities.</p>	<p>State Affairs Vote: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, municipalities with populations of over a million, but less than two million, offer municipal-utility discounts or relief for disadvantaged residential customers. HB 382 achieves the same intent but for municipalities specifically with populations of at least 800,000, and that are located on an international border. HB 382 would authorize the board of trustees of said municipalities to establish a bill payment assistance program to customers who have exhausted all private and non-profit sources for assistance. It would also require that customers receiving assistance have received notice of disconnection of service for nonpayment, or that the utility has determined they are low-income customers.</p> <p>The request for such legislation comes from El Paso Water because it wants to be able to work with customers who have repeated disconnections of service, typically those from low-income households and the elderly.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Merci Mohagheghi (713) 382-7007 Merci@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p>HB 428 By: Shaheen</p>	<p>Relating to the solicitation of pen pals by certain inmates of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.</p>	<p>Corrections Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 428 seeks to limit sex offenders' ability to solicit pen pals online by requiring the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to adopt a policy prohibiting inmates sentenced for sex crimes from placing an advertisement soliciting a pen pal on a website operated for that purpose.</p> <p>The Austin Justice Coalition expressed concerns that this will cut off access to a resource that can have potential positive effects for an inmate. For example, writing to a pen pal can be beneficial for socialization back into society upon being released from prison. In addition, HB 428 seeks to punish inmates for crimes they have not yet committed.</p>	<p>Will of the House Evaluated by: Sophia Creede (832) 865-4774 Sophia@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p>HB 547 By: Canales Cyrier Bucy Springer Geren</p>	<p>Relating to verification of hunting and fishing license information.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation & Tourism Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 547 allows for the display of hunting and fishing licenses on wireless communications devices (either photograph or directly from TPWD website) as proof of possession, congruent with modern practice by game wardens. HB 547 does not permit law enforcement personnel to access other contents of the device and specifies that the telecommunications providers cannot be held liable for failure of the device to display the license. Additionally, HB 547 clarifies that this would not prevent a court from requiring a paper copy of the license for hearing, trial or discovery.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Eli Davis (713) 855-3285 Eli@TexasLSG.org</p>

OK for Distribution – Rep. Garnet Coleman

<p>HB 638 By: Capriglione Bonnen, G.</p>	<p>Relating to the issuance of posthumous high school diplomas to certain students.</p>	<p>Public Education Vote: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, parents of children who die during their high school years are only allowed to request a posthumous diploma if their child was on track academically to complete graduation and if their child was enrolled during their senior year in the district. The posthumous diploma is issued at the end of that year of the student's death when they were enrolled in the 12th grade.</p> <p>HB 638 allows for parents to request a posthumous diploma for their child regardless of their grade level at the time of their child's death. HB 638 would also allow for the request of the posthumous diploma to be issued at the time of the graduation date when the child would have graduated and not before the graduation date of the class in which the student was enrolled at the time of death.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Marissa Gorena (956) 867-7232 Marissa@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p>HB 925 By: Springer Frank SP: SB 872, Perry</p>	<p>Relating to the composition of the board of directors of the Gateway Groundwater Conservation District.</p>	<p>Natural Resources Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 5 Absent</p>	<p>The Gateway Groundwater Conversation District was created by Hardeman and Foard counties through election in 2001. The counties of Childress, Cottle, and Motley later joined in subsequent years. King County was recently annexed in 2018, yet does not have representation on the District's board due to current language in the Special District Local Laws Code.</p> <p>HB 925 would rectify this by requiring equal representation from all counties. HB 925 achieves this by changing the language from "not fewer than 5 and not more than 11 directors" to "not more than two directors for each county in the district." HB 925 would also authorize the board to change the total number of directors if the district were to annex territory in the future.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Merci Mohagheghi (713) 382-7007 Merci@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p>HB 1101 By: Darby SP: SB 828, Seliger</p>	<p>Relating to the name of the Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf.</p>	<p>Higher Education Vote: 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Prior to the 1970's, there was not a community college for the deaf and hard of hearing. The Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf (SWCID) was established in 1979 and is a full community college serving deaf students. Today SWCID is the 3rd self-contained institution for the deaf and hard of hearing in a community college style setting.</p> <p>HB 1101 changes the name of the Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf to Southwest College for the Deaf.</p> <p>The word "institute" in sign language is problematic because it holds a negative connotation because it's a medical term and could allude to something non-academic that needs to be changed. In addition, the word institute does not clearly indicate that SWCID is a full community college. Current students and alumni are advocating for the renaming of the school.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Marissa Gorena (956) 867-7232 Marissa@TexasLSG.org</p>

OK for Distribution – Rep. Garnett Coleman

