



Chair, Rep. Garnet Coleman

Treasurer, Rep. Elliott Naishtat

**LSG Floor Report for Postponed Business – Monday, April 27, 2015**

Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
<b>HB 1076</b> By Rep. Thompson, S.	Relating to the authority of a magistrate to prohibit certain communications in an order for emergency protection; amending provisions subject to a criminal penalty.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>A Magistrate’s Order of Emergency Protection (MOEP) is a temporary order, typically in effect for 61 days, which can be issued to a party arrested for domestic violence, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, and/or stalking. Like a protective order, under a MOEP, the arrested party can be prohibited from the following: continuing to abuse or stalk a protected person and their family, from going near their home, work, or school, from possessing a weapon, and from communicating in a threatening manner. HB 1079 expands the authority of a magistrate to issue a “no contact order” as part of a MOEP, which would prohibit the defendant from communicating with the protected person or their family except through an attorney or another court-appointed person.</p> <p>Opponents contend that it is inadvisable to prohibit communication between an arrested party and their children. However, in cases involving protective orders, “no contact orders” are typically only issued when children are not involved; custody agreements prevail in those situations when they are involved. It is important to understand that a MOEP does not directly protect a survivor, but prohibiting communication might deter an abuser from being in the vicinity of the survivor. Adding a “no contact” provision to a MOEP is essential to protecting an abuse survivor and providing peace of mind, as an arrested individual might be angered by police intervention and more likely to retaliate against them afterwards.</p>	<b><u>Favorable</u></b> Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
<b>HB 1344</b> By Rep. Sheets	Relating to credit to certain ceding insurers for reinsurance ceded to certain assuming insurers.	Insurance	HB 1344 positively affects the way in which Texas can invest funds that are held as security for reinsurance contracts. Under current provisions, insurance investments are restricted to securities that are marketable over a national exchange, have a maturity date of less than 1 year, and are listed by the Securities Valuation Office (SVO). Only Texas and Minnesota limit investments of this type. National standard allows states to invest the assets in securities listed by SVO; this bill will align Texas with that standard. This bill removes the time limit criteria and allows assets to be invested in Texas, so long as they are SVO approved investments. This will allow insurers to get the best return possible on their investment, and allow business to stay in Texas.	<b><u>Favorable</u></b> Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
<b>HB 1388</b> By Rep. Bohac	Relating to certain diseases or illnesses suffered by firefighters and emergency medical technicians.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	HB 1388 makes it easier for firefighters and emergency medical technicians to obtain worker’s compensation for certain diseases and illnesses associated with long-term exposure to smoke and fire. Currently, the burden of proof that the illness was caused by the job is on the firefighter or medical technician. This makes it difficult for them to collect money to help pay for deteriorated health. This bill would put the burden of proof on the insurer, who typically has better lawyer representation. HB 1388 offers additional protection to firefighters and emergency medical technicians, who put their lives on the line for our safety.	<b><u>Favorable</u></b> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org

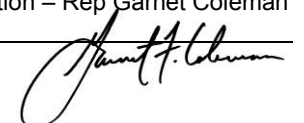
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<p><b>HB 822</b> By Rep. Sheets</p>	<p>Relating to increasing the punishment for the offense of fraudulent or fictitious military record.</p>	<p>Defense &amp; Veterans' Affairs</p>	<p>HB 822 increases the penalty from a Class C misdemeanor to a Class A misdemeanor for offenders that fraudulently claim military service, aligning Texas law with federal law. This bill will only apply to those who seek economic gain for falsifying service. Those who simply wear the uniform, such as a Halloween costume, are exempt. Stolen Valor not only demeans the military members who have sacrificed so much, it also falsely uses the compassion of business owners and citizens wishing to honor military service.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2903</b> By Rep. Davis, S.</p>	<p>Relating to training requirements for certain child-care workers.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>Many working parents use child-care facilities as their primary choice of day-care for children under five years old. Children from birth to five years of age experience significant cognitive development, becoming familiar with their sensory, motor, language and behavioral skills. Therefore, it is extremely important to set high standards for child-care workers so that they can best assist and support children in their experiential learning.</p> <p>HB 2903 requires new minimum training for an employee, director, or operator of a day-care center, group day-care home or registered family home, with no previous training or less than two years of employment experience in a regulated child-care facility. The new training required is as follows: at least 16 hours of initial training before the employee is given responsibility for a group of children, 32 hours of the initial training no later than the 90th day after the employee's first day of employment, and 48 hours of initial training that must be completed no later than the first anniversary of the first day of employment. Additionally, employees working in a day-care center or group day-care are required to complete 24 hours of training, 6 hours of which must be completed in teacher-child interaction, each subsequent year.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2825</b> By Rep. Coleman</p>	<p>Relating to the provision and administration of indigent defense services.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>Currently, The Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TDIC) provides financial and technical services to counties to assist them in improving their indigent defense system. HB 2825 allows TDIC to provide grants to a collection of counties that are operating through an inter-local agreement to improve indigent defense services. HB 2825 promotes county collaboration and cost savings within counties by simplifying the grant distribution process and decreasing the administrative work</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Marisela Gomez 512-763-0031 marisela.gomez_HC@house.state.tx.us</p>

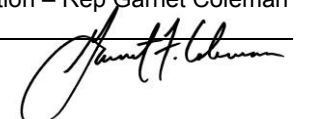
**LSG Floor Report For Major State Calendar – Monday, April 27, 2015**

<p><b>HB 6</b> By Rep. Otto, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the creation and re-creation of funds and accounts, the dedication and rededication of revenue, and the exemption of unappropriated money from use for general governmental purposes.</p>	<p>Appropriations</p>	<p>Each session, the legislature consolidates certain newly created or re-created General Revenue – Dedicated (GRD) accounts into GR to allow for certification of the budget. HB 6 consolidates certain GRD funds, but exempts certain others, allowing for reduced reliance on GRD for budget certification. Among these exempt accounts are those created before the 84<sup>th</sup> legislative session that were previously exempt from funds consolidation. Other exempt accounts include newly created trust funds, bond funds, or funds that are constitutionally or federally mandated. If passed, this bill will override any other act passed this session that creates or re-creates a dedicated fund. It also authorizes the use of non-exempt GRD to be used as provided by legislation.</p> <p>HB 6 is a routine measure used to consolidate GRD for budget certification. It places caps on GRD funds that may be consolidated, successfully bringing down the amount relied upon for certification. Decisions regarding which specific accounts will be exempt or consolidated will be further discussed and amended in conference committee.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 7</b> By Rep. Darby, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the amounts, availability, and use of certain statutorily dedicated revenue and accounts; reducing or</p>	<p>Appropriations</p>	<p>HB 7 reduces reliance on General Revenue – Dedicated (GRD) funds by authorizing fee reductions, dissolving certain GRD accounts, and directing \$652 million in funds from certain GRD accounts to their intended purposes. This bill reduces GRD funds that would otherwise be used to certify the budget by approximately \$1 billion, bringing the total amount of GRD relied upon for certification down to \$3 billion. This bill also requires the comptroller to publish and make publicly available a report that itemizes each GRD account.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031</p>

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	<p>affecting the amounts or rates of certain statutorily dedicated fees and assessments.</p>	<p><b>Human Services</b>                  This bill requires that all fees collected from sexually-oriented businesses, such as strip clubs, go towards the sexual assault program fund. It ends the diversion of sexual assault program funds to the Texas health opportunity pool. The bill authorizes the use of sexual assault program funds to go towards conducting human trafficking enforcement programs, support for sexual assault and human trafficking victims, and research on sexual assault and domestic violence.                  HB 7 addresses the lack of compensation for trauma centers. It dissolves the regional trauma account, transfers the balance to the trauma facility and EMS account, and authorizes the spending down of \$96 million to trauma centers from its balance. This bill also authorizes surcharges from convictions of driving without a license to go towards this account.                  The bill authorizes funds from the volunteer fire department assistance account to go towards the Texas Emergency Services Retirement System.</p> <p><b>Public Education</b>                  HB 7 dissolves the educator excellence innovation fund, which is a name-only GRD account, and directs the remaining balance towards GR.</p> <p><b>Higher Education</b>                  HB 7 repeals requirements that universities must allocate portions of tuition towards the Texas B-On-Time account, and portions of medical school tuition towards the physician education loan repayment program account. The bill authorizes Texas B-On-Time account balances to be refunded to universities, proportionate to their net contribution to the fund. Excess funds from tobacco taxes collected in the physician education loan repayment account are authorized to be used for federally qualified health center (FQHC) funding.</p> <p><b>Public Safety</b>                  HB 7 authorizes approximately \$150,000 per year to DPS from the law enforcement officer standards and education account to pay for officer training on incident-based reporting systems. These systems are used to report information and statistics on crimes.</p> <p><b>Natural Resources</b>                  HB 7 authorizes the use of solid waste management program account funds for grants encouraging natural gas-powered solid waste collection vehicles. It also requires that fees in the hazardous and solid waste remediation account collected from battery sales be used to remediate battery recycling facilities located in populous municipalities.                  The bill requires that all fees from exception-to-rule applications to the Texas Railroad Commission be deposited into the oil and gas regulation and cleanup account. It redirects crude oil production tax revenue from GR to this account, and authorizes its funds to be used for pipeline safety and regulatory programs. It also repeals statute dictating that crude oil production tax revenue must go towards Texas' oil and gas conservation law administration.                  HB 7 limits the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) surcharge to be imposed only on counties that are in nonattainment areas or are affected under TERP.                  The bill authorizes the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to calculate fee collections from utility providers proportionate to each provider's profit from customers. These fee collections are to be used for PUC administrative costs.                  HB 7 also addresses the balance remaining in the System Benefit Fund, which was set to be incrementally depleted last session. The System Benefit Fund provides assistance to low-income electric customers. Instead of adhering to the two-year timeline to finish depleting funds, the bill requires the PUC to deplete the fund within one year to cut down on administrative costs. This results in</p>	<p>tara@texaslsg.org</p>
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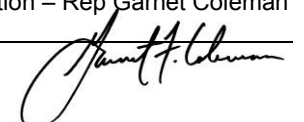
			beneficiaries receiving more assistance for electric bills over a shorter amount of time.	
			<p><b>Business and Economic Development</b>                  HB 7 repeals the occupational licensing fee that was temporarily assessed against certain professions, which, at the time of the fee enactment, were not subjected to a franchise tax. These professions have since had a franchise tax imposed against them. The bill decreases fees for Class M driver’s license renewals, and decreases motorcycle and moped license fees. It also abolishes the motorcycle education account into GR.</p>	

**LSG Floor Report For Constitutional Amendments Calendar – Monday, April 27, 2015**

<p><b>HJR 111</b> By Rep. Darby</p>	<p>Relating to proposing a constitutional amendment to prohibit using revenues, other money, or account or fund balances dedicated by law for nondedicated general governmental purposes or for certification of appropriations for nondedicated purposes or entities.</p>	<p>Appropriations</p>	<p>Dedicated (GRD) accounts are funds intended for specific purposes -- such as supporting trauma centers or law enforcement -- and are usually collected through fees. Current law allows the legislature to withhold portions of these funds in order to balance the budget. This has resulted in billions in GRD funds being held to certify allowable GR spending, instead of to support the crucial services they are intended for.</p> <p>HJR 111 functions as the final strategy in a two-part approach (along with HB 7) to reduce reliance on GRD accounts. It expressly prohibits the comptroller or the legislature from considering any GRD funds when making the biennial revenue estimate or certifying the budget. The bill also prohibits the legislature from appropriating GRD funds for anything other than their intended use.</p> <p>These measures will ensure that GRD funds are not diverted and that they are fully appropriated for their original purpose. If successfully approved by voters, this bill will take effect on January 1, 2023. The time period between now and then will allow legislation each session, such as HB 7, to incrementally reduce the amount of GRD relied upon for certification to \$0 so HJR 111 will be made possible.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b>                  Evaluated by:                  Tara Blagg                  512-763-0031                  tara@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HJR 64</b> By Rep. Elkins</p>	<p>Proposing a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of certain property owned by or leased to or by a university research technology corporation.</p>	<p>Government Transparency &amp; Operations</p>	<p>HJR 64 proposes a constitutional amendment to legalize tax exemptions for ad valorem taxation to special-purpose corporations partnering with universities to commercialize university-developed technology. This amendment is in conjunction with HB 590, which grants special-purpose corporations tax exemption status for 15 years to bring more business cooperation to universities in Texas.</p>	<p><b>Will of the House</b>                  Evaluated by:                  Paige Reitz                  512-763-0031                  paige@texaslsg.org</p>

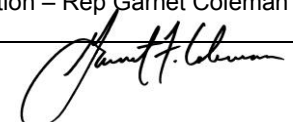
**LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Monday, April 27, 2015**

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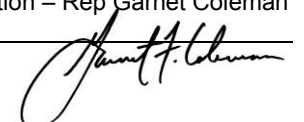
<p><b>HB 15</b> By Rep. Otto, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the management and oversight of state contracts, including contracts for information technology commodity items.</p>	<p>Government Transparency &amp; Operations</p>	<p>HB 15 increases oversight for contract management to prevent future scandals. It requires a bidding process be used for all state contracts for information technology commodity items with at least 3 bid offers for any contract where at least 3 vendors offer the services being sought. Any contracts over \$50,000 related to information technology commodity items shall work closer with DIR regarding statements of work. Contracts over \$50,000 for certain construction projects, consulting services, or professional services require the state agency commissioning it to submit a written notice regarding the contract to LBB, who will develop a Contract Oversight and Management Team. This team will develop criteria for determining which contracts are high risk. High-risk contracts will be monitored more closely and require more oversight than other contracts, including approval by the Contract Oversight and Management Team, before spending any money. These extra protections will help avoid future bad contracting experiences and ensure that there is proper oversight when tax dollars are spent on contracts with private vendors.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2505</b> By Rep. Clardy, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to health benefit plan coverage for abuse-deterrent opioid analgesic drugs.</p>	<p>Insurance</p>	<p>Opioid medication abuse is a rampant problem and costs Texas an estimated \$2 billion a year. Patients diagnosed with opioid abuse have health care costs that are six times higher than non-abusers. HB 2505 will grant both providers and patients medical options to prevent opioid misuse and abuse by requiring insurance providers cover the use of Abuse Deterrent Formulations (ADF) opioids. ADF opioids have been formulated to make it more difficult to crush, break, or dissolve the tablets, significantly reducing the ability for abusers to tamper with these drugs. This bill will require the same authorization as opioid analgesic drugs and prohibits fail first policies (patients must misuse or abuse opioids before abuse deterrent options are available.) There is no expected large-scale rise in insurance costs, but it is expected to provide overall savings, such as hospitalizations, ER visits, outpatients, opioid treatment visits, etc. By granting Texans the option to be provided with abuse deterrent medication, the risk of abuse for all Texans is reduced.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 23</b> By Rep. Davis, S., et al.</p>	<p>Relating to disclosure of certain relationships with local government officers and vendors; creating criminal offenses.</p>	<p>General Investigating &amp; Ethics</p>	<p>HB 23 addresses local government procurement of contracts. Compared to state contract procurement, standards are weak for local government to procure contracts through vendors. This bill lowers the threshold for disclosing gifts given to local government entities or agents by vendors from \$250 worth of value to \$100. It also updates the definitions of “family member,” “family relationship,” “gift,” “agent,” and “vendor,” to better account for disclosure. HB 23 makes disclosure standards, particularly for conflict of interest disclosures, stricter at the local government level. This will provide for more transparency to the people of Texas. Additionally, the bill makes knowingly failing to submit the required conflict of interest questionnaire a Class A, B, or C misdemeanor depending on the amount of money in the contract. HB 23 simplifies, streamlines, and enhances how disclosure shall be determined by state statute.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 3390</b> By Rep. Larson</p>	<p>Relating to a written agreement concerning a projectile that travels across a property line.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation &amp; Tourism</p>	<p>HB 3390 simplifies the process for property owners, who have agreements concerning firearm discharge in regards to hunting or recreational shooting, across property lines to contact one another. Currently, neighboring property owners must have a written agreement of consent should a firearm discharge cross property lines. This bill adds the stipulation that the contact information of the persons allowed to hunt and perform recreational shooting to include their telephone number and mailing address in the agreement.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 1794</b> By Rep. Geren, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the maximum penalties for certain environmental violations.</p>	<p>Environmental Regulations</p>	<p>HB 1794 places a lawsuit cap on local municipalities that sue companies for harmful waste and pollution violations. The violation limits are set at \$50 to \$25,000 per day per violation, violations cannot exceed \$4.3 million per violation, and a suit must be brought within five years of the violation. Ultimately, some companies would only have to pay pennies on the dollar for serious indiscretions. Local municipalities and taxpayers will bear the costly cleanup along with EPA and TCEQ regulatory fines for being out of compliance.</p> <p>Enacting HB 1794 into law ties the hands of local government by proactively preventing local government from protecting its communities, and reactively, stifles any form of retribution. The harmful effects from the average waste spill, gaseous leak, oil clean up, or landfill seepage takes local municipalities a decade or more just to triage the initial damage. In addition, it takes decades just to restore the environment and its citizens back to wholeness, most restoration efforts do not occur in a single lifetime. This doesn't account for the time before any violation is detected. For example, the 2014 San Jacinto waste pits lawsuit seeking remedy for the dioxin released into Galveston Bay was discovered over 40 years after the initial dumping. Under HB 1794, Harris County would have</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org</p>

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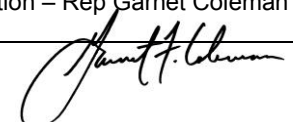


			<p>been only able to sue McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corp up to \$4.3 million, instead of the estimated \$100 to \$600 million to cleanup the waste or the \$29.2 million awarded settlement.</p> <p>Under current law, TCEQ leads the initial investigation and turns the most serious cases over to local governments to pursue criminal action. HB 1794 allows local governments to pursue criminal action against violators they can prove committed the violation, if TCEQ pursues no criminal action. Under HB 1794, if TCEQ institutes a criminal investigation, the municipalities are helpless in pursuing legal action and it is anticipated that companies will use this provision as a loophole to keep investigations ongoing to allow the statute of limitation run out.</p>	
<p><b>HB 590</b> By Rep. Elkins, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of research technology corporations for the development and commercialization of technologies owned by institutions of higher education or by certain medical centers with members that are institutions of higher education; providing for tax exemptions; providing a penalty.</p>	<p>Government Transparency &amp; Operations</p>	<p>HB 590 encourages research and development in Texas by authorizing public universities to create special-purpose corporations in order to commercialize university owned technologies. The bill stipulates that any goods or services must be produced in Texas, and that the main offices of the corporation must be located in Texas. This bill provides a 15-year exemption from specified taxes for the corporation to encourage them to partner with universities. If the corporation engages in activities prohibited by HB 590, they will have to pay back taxes up to four years prior to the first violation, as determined by the Comptroller. HB 590 helps universities disseminate technology through commercialization aided by corporations, the tax exemption is concerning. Already, universities struggle with conflicts of interest when tied with corporations. In 2012, UT-Austin produced research related to fracking and failed to disclose that a primary researcher had significant ties to the oil and gas industry. When funding for a project is coming from an industry that has a stake in the results, results may be skewed and this can lead to development of bad research or findings. Corporations already partner with universities, and making it easier by providing significant tax breaks in a time when many other taxes are predicted to be cut is not sound policy.</p>	<p><b><u>Will of the House</u></b> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 324</b> By Rep. Dutton</p>	<p>Relating to a requirement that a peace officer obtain a search warrant before conducting a body cavity search during a traffic stop.</p>	<p>Homeland Security &amp; Public Safety</p>	<p>HB 324 prohibits peace officers from conducting a body cavity search of a person during a traffic stop without a warrant. To conduct a body cavity search, the officer must obtain a warrant first under this bill. This will protect citizens from incredibly invasive and unconstitutional searches without a warrant. There have been several cases in Texas in which people have been submitted to body cavity searches – meaning anal cavity or vaginal cavity searches – on the side of the road by peace officers with no warrant whatsoever and these incidents must be avoided in the future to protect Texans.</p>	<p><b><u>Favorable</u></b> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 426</b> By Rep. Howard, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the acceptance of employment applications through the online system for listing state agency employment openings maintained by the Texas Workforce Commission.</p>	<p>Government Transparency &amp; Operations</p>	<p>HB 426 requires the Texas Workforce Commission to post applications for job openings on their website, simplifying the application process for state agency employment. Currently, state agencies may submit their applications to the TWC for their website, but are not required to. Agencies would be permitted to continue to post applications on their websites, but they will be required to accept applications submitted online from TWC. This will make applying for state jobs more accessible to people searching for jobs.</p>	<p><b><u>Favorable</u></b> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>

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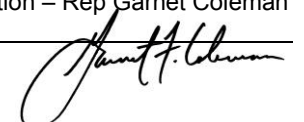


<p><b>HB 1902</b> By Rep. Howard, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the regulation and use of graywater and alternative onsite water.</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p>	<p>Population growth, a changing climate and recurring drought are straining Central Texas' limited water resources. Conserving and recycling water are the cheapest and best ways to meet future water needs. As a state, it is imperative that we use all practical methods to curb fresh water usage. Grey water is waste water that is dirty, but not unusable, such as wastewater from washing machines and showers. Right now grey water can be used for gardening, composting. HB 1902 expands acceptable grey water sources to include alternative onsite water &amp; expands acceptable use to include flushing urinals and toilets. The bill specifies that TCEQ would be able to adopt and implement rules regarding inspections and annual testing; if TCEQ does, they must create a regulatory guidance manual to explain them. This bill would allow individuals to aid in the reduction of water usage, which is good for all Texans.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2083</b> By Rep. Darby, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the determination of the appraised value of property for purposes of an ad valorem tax protest or appeal.</p>	<p>Ways &amp; Means</p>	<p>The property appraisal industry sets high standards for certified appraisers to adhere to in both government and the private sector. HB 2083 will provide more clarity, consistency, and fairness to the equal and uniform appraisal process by requiring such an appraisal be performed with the application of, "generally accepted appraisal methods and techniques," which has been the standard for market value appraisals for many years. The goal is to level the playing field for all property protests in Texas and that is good for Texas families.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2068</b> By Rep. Coleman</p>	<p>Relating to automatic employee participation in and administration of a deferred compensation plan provided by certain hospital districts.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>HB 2068 allows hospital districts, to create an opt-out pension system where employees are automatically enrolled in the pension plan upon hiring, unless the employee elects to opt-out of the plan. HB 2068 requires a hospital district that acquires the provisions under this bill to make certain that all employees upon hiring are cognizant of all components within the pension plan and their ability to opt-out at any time. The default rate of contribution from each employee is 1%, which will be automatically deducted from payroll. An opt-in pension plan will be beneficial not only to the employee but to the district as a whole. Increasing participation in the plan will provide employees with a greater return and benefits.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated By: Marisela Gomez 512-763-0031 marisela.gomez_HC@house.state.tx.us</p>
<p><b>HB 1022</b> By Rep. Moody</p>	<p>Relating to the eligibility for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the residence homestead of certain persons with a life estate in the homestead property.</p>	<p>Ways &amp; Means</p>	<p>Currently, property taxes are waived for homestead property owned by 100% disabled veterans or surviving spouses of 100% disabled veterans. This does not extend to otherwise-eligible surviving spouses who have been bequeathed a life estate in the property instead of ownership in fee simple. HB 1022 creates uniformity by allowing the surviving spouse of a 100% disabled veteran the same property tax exemption regardless of whether the surviving spouse owns the property or has a life estate in the property.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 409</b> By Rep. Turner, C.</p>	<p>Relating to liability insurance or other proof of financial responsibility for persons holding certain alcoholic beverage permits; adding a provision that is subject to a criminal penalty; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>Licensing &amp; Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>HB 409 requires bar owners or establishments that hold certain alcoholic beverage permits must also have liability insurance to establish financial responsibility. Coverage amounts must be at least \$500,000 for each occurrence and \$1 million for any annual aggregate limit. In addition, the bill allows for a person to file for a bond with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission in lieu of insurance. Requiring establishments that sell alcohol to maintain liability insurance protects the establishment in the event the intoxicated patron leaves the establishment and harms others while in a drunken state. In many instances, it's the smaller mom and pop businesses that do not have liability insurance and are forced out of business because they do not have the funds to cover their portion of the damages. While the insurance costs may challenge businesses to bear an additional expense, in the long run it may be the difference between staying in business or closing up shop indefinitely.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org</p>



<p><b>HB 699</b> By Rep. Nevarez, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to requiring public institutions of higher education to establish a policy on campus sexual assault.</p>	<p>Higher Education</p>	<p>Sexual assault continues to be a huge problem on college campuses, with up to one quarter of all college students being assaulted during their academic careers. It remains underreported due to many factors, including a lack of a formal reporting guidelines.</p> <p>HB 699 requires all institutions of higher education to develop and adopt a policy to deal with sexual assault on campus. The policy must include definitions of prohibited behavior, sanctions for violations and how violations should be reported and responded to. The governing body of the institution must approve the policy before the institution adopts it. The policy will be distributed to the students and staff in both student and staff handbooks, as well as be put on a web page created by the university and requires freshman students to be introduced to the policy in an orientation before or during the first semester. Institutions will review the policy every two years and updated as necessary.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 3619</b> By Rep. Capriglione</p>	<p>Relating to a surcharge imposed for the use of a debit card or stored value card; providing a civil penalty.</p>	<p>Investments &amp; Financial Services</p>	<p>HB 3619 creates enforcing procedures for illegal surcharges on debit or stored value cards. If a person is believed to have imposed a surcharge for debit or stored value card use on a buyer then a series of steps will be committed by the attorney general. First, the AG must send a letter detailing the provisions and requirements on the prohibition of surcharges, along with the penalty for subsequent violations. The AG or county prosecutor where the violation occurred, are authorized to sue the person who committed subsequent violations.</p> <p>Providing a series of steps to be taken before a civil penalty is made against the violator allows the person to understand their wrongdoing and gives them the opportunity to correct their actions. The bill enhances the state's ability to catch violators who knowingly and repeatedly impose a surcharge instead of accidental violations, saving the state unnecessary costs.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2053</b> By Rep. Farney, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the protection of certain children who may be subject to child abuse or neglect through the operation of the child safety check alert list.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice &amp; Family Issues</p>	<p>HB 2053 - Colton's Law - will make agencies more vigilant when a child who has been assigned the highest priority for risk of abuse cannot be located by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. When this situation occurs, DFPS is to immediately notify the Texas Department of Public Safety, which must then use all available resources to locate the child.</p> <p>This bill and its name arise out of the tragic situation of Colton Turner that could have been prevented had this legislation been in place. Colton, who was just two years old, suffered from repeated abuse and neglect at the hands of his mother and his mother's boyfriend. When Colton's paternal and extended maternal family members reported him missing, the lengthy statutory process in place prevented DPS from finding Colton alive. At the time Colton was reported missing, his mother was pulled over with Colton in the back seat by DPS for a minor vehicle infraction. Since DPS had no knowledge of Colton's missing status, Colton and his mother were free to go. The next time DPS saw Colton was when his body was discovered in a shallow grave.</p> <p>Just last year, CPS closed 2,493 active cases as "Unable to Complete" because the family or the child could not be located. Empowering DPS to communicate directly with Texas Crime Information Center (TCIC) removes delays in reporting any missing child and family is classified by CPS as highest priority for abuse and neglect. HB 2053 ensures Texas agencies are equipped with the necessary tools to respond quickly and cohesively to locate and recover a missing child.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2771</b> By Rep. Martinez, "Mando", et al.</p>	<p>Relating to employment activities of certain emergency response personnel for purposes of the Texas Workers' Compensation Act.</p>	<p>Business &amp; Industry</p>	<p>Nationally, approximately 70% of firefighters serve in a volunteer capacity, responding to fires, natural disasters, car accidents, and other emergencies in our communities for no pay. The Texas Worker's Compensation Act is unclear, however, as to whether or not volunteer firefighters and other emergency services personnel are covered by worker's compensation if injured on the way to an accident. Claims have been contested and denied due to this ambiguity, though these individuals were responding to calls and at heightened risk of injury. Paid firefighters are covered, because they are at the station when responding, but volunteers are under a unique set of circumstances in that they might be out and required to travel to obtain proper gear and equipment to respond to an emergency.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org</p>

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		<p>HB 2771 expands the scope of employment for firefighters and emergency services personnel to explicitly include travel to an emergency call to provide for proper coverage of our volunteers. Volunteer firefighters give their time, risk their own safety, and go through extensive training and EMS certification in order to administer CPR, first aid, wound care, and to perform other functions necessary to save lives and prevent injuries. It is only prudent that we extend our firefighters the same consideration and protect them when injured.</p>	
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