



Chair, Rep. Garnet Coleman

Treasurer, Rep. Elliott Naishtat

LSG Floor Report For General State Senate Bills – Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
SB 2004 By Sen. Eltife SP: Rep. Geren	Relating to deferred maintenance funding for state facilities.	Appropriations	<p><i>It is important to note that this bill creates a dedicated fund. While it dedicates funds for a worthwhile cause, the legislature must continue to move away from dedicating funds in order to free general revenue so that potential budget crises may be successfully dealt with, without the need to cut critical education and healthcare services.</i></p> <p>Many state facilities' maintenance needs currently remain ignored. If not dealt with, deferred maintenance needs will continue to worsen, causing the facilities shortfall to grow exponentially across biennia. SB 2004 addresses this issue by establishing a dedicated fund for facilities' deferred maintenance. The fund will consist of money appropriated by the legislature. A joint oversight committee, consisting of three members of the House and three members of the Senate, will be tasked with measuring deferred maintenance project progress and reporting to the legislature.</p> <p>SB 2004 not only provides for crucially-needed deferred maintenance, it ensures that these funds go towards their dedicated purpose, and enhances legislative oversight. However, funding this critical need without the use of a dedicated fund would be a more ideal solution.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House with Concerns</u></p> <p>Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org</p>

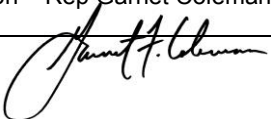
LSG Floor Report For Postponed Business – Wednesday, May 13, 2015

HB 3113 By Rep. Gonzales, L., et al.	Relating to the authority of certain municipalities to pledge revenue from the municipal hotel occupancy tax for the payment of obligations related to hotel projects.	Ways & Means	HB 3113 is a local bill that allows the cities of Taylor and Round Rock to dedicate a portion of the hotel occupancy tax to construct a convention center hotel project. This bill would only affect the regions of Round Rock and Taylor.	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p> <p>Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
HB 2271 By Rep. Sheffield, et al.	Relating to a pilot program for donation and redistribution of certain unused prescription	Public Health	Currently, the United States wastes as much as one billion dollars annually on unused medications. Often, drugs are left unused and discarded, particularly for in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, because of a change in prescription, the death of the patient, or the transfer of a patient from one facility to another. Often, these medications that are unused remain in the blister pack packaging that is sealed and tamper-evident and could be used for another patient, but instead gets wasted. Some states have programs to recycle unused medications so they can be used rather than waste taxpayer dollars.	<p><u>Favorable</u></p> <p>Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>

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	medications; authorizing a fee.		HB 2271 establishes a prescription drug donation and redistribution pilot program. DSHS shall be required to accept, store, and distribute donated drugs and establish and maintain a searchable electronic database of donated drugs for use by medical professionals. In the pilot program, drug donors will include licensed nursing facilities; licensed hospices, hospitals, physicians, and pharmacies; certain pharmaceutical sellers and manufacturers; and licensed healthcare professionals who administer drugs in penal institutions. These donors will be allowed to donate certain prescription drugs to DSHS for redistribution. The same licensed groups shall be permitted to administer drugs to patients that have been redistributed to them from DSHS. Because of the inherent risks related to prescription drugs, there are significant safeguards in place that describe when and how drugs may and may not be donated. DSHS may not charge to collect the drugs, nor shall they sell the drugs when they distribute them. HB 2271 is designed to save taxpayers’ money by redistributing in a hygienic, responsible way unused drugs that would otherwise be discarded. DSHS shall report to the legislature on the results of the pilot program, including health and safety concerns that may come up and recommendations going forward.	
HB 3787 By Rep. Bonnen, G.	Relating to a claim filing period and contractual limitations period in certain property insurance policies.	Insurance	<p>HB 3787 will shorten the period for homeowner/property owners to file insurance claims. Currently, claims must be filed within four years of discovery of the loss. This bill will shorten the claim limitation time to one year from date of loss. HB 3787 also stipulates the contractual limitations period from ending two years from the date the insurer accepts or rejects the claim, or three years from the date of the loss that is the subject of the claim. An authorized policy form or endorsement for residential or commercial property insurance will notify applicants and insured of contractual limitations.</p> <p>This bill comes as a result of an increase of insurance claims in conjunction with a lawsuit for losses almost at the end of the statute of limitations. After almost four years, it is difficult for insurance companies to adequately investigate claims. By shortening the filing time, insurance companies claim they can more adequately investigate claims, and better prevent fraudulent claims resulting in payouts. Ensuring proper payout will benefit both insurers and insures, as prompt payment will allow insurers to repair damages, and insurance companies will have fraudulent claims reduced, lowering premium costs.</p> <p>Unfortunately, HB 3787 also comes with serious concerns. Because the claim limit will be contingent on the date of loss, instead of discovery, property owners may not have adequate time to realize the damage before time expires. Texas weather is unpredictable to say the least. An area may experience several damaging hailstorms one spring, then not experience significant rainfall for over a year. It is possible a property owner may know about damage until another significant weather event occurs. Additionally, this bill will disallow any future contracts allowing for additional length of time between policyholders and insurers; something that should be allowable. This short limitation may also result in forced unnecessary filings, as policyholder get closer to the payout deadlines, and they are trying to close on a settlement.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u> Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
HB 1490 By Rep. Huberty, et al.	Relating to public school intervention for truancy and eliminating a criminal penalty and authorizing a civil penalty for truancy.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues	<p>At present, 47% of Class C misdemeanors are related to truancy with an astonishing 7,500 students going through the juvenile justice system for truancy issues. Current law mandates that schools refer a truant student with 10 or more absences to juvenile courts with no intermediary action to address the problem. The impact is dire for many Texas students and their families because it affects the student’s ability to receive a diploma, graduate on time, apply for college, enlist in the military, or seek employment.</p> <p>HB 1490 creates a “progressive truancy intervention” program, a tiered approach to truancy, which creates an intermediary process to address student attendance issues instead of sending students directly to juvenile system.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org

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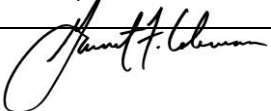


			<p>The bill requires an adopted program to include at least three tiers of interventions. The first tier stipulates that if a student has 3 or more absences then a student conference with the student, parent, and school staff person will meet to address the problem and create signed attendance contract effective for 45 days that outlines consequences.</p> <p>If the first tier is completed and unexcused absences continue to accrue, HB 1490 lays out provisions for subsequent tiers but does not directly mandate chronological order to follow, but offers suggestions for “subsequent tiers” to follow. An example of a subsequent tier offers that the school staff member will refer the student to a community- or school-based counseling program that addresses the attendance issues.</p> <p>If the student misses 10 or more days in a 6 month period, or 3 or more days within a four-week period, the student and parent are referred to the local municipal court and assessed a fee; a maximum penalty of \$100 can be imposed, but the penalty cannot be considered a conviction for any reason.</p> <p>Current law mandates that schools refer a truant students with 10 or more absences to juvenile courts with no intermediary action to address the problem. The impact has proven dire for many Texas students and their families because it effects the student’s ability to receive a diploma, graduate on time, or apply for college, enlist in the military, or seek employment. HB 1490 gives school districts another tool to address truancy without bombarding the juvenile court system and allows schools to be proactive to determine and redress the cause of a student’s repeat absences.</p>	
<p>HB 3330 By Rep. Otto, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to directing payment, after approval, of certain miscellaneous claims and judgments against the state out of funds designated by this Act; making appropriations.</p>	<p>Appropriations</p>	<p>HB 3330 appropriates the funds necessary to pay certain claims and judgments against the state. These payments come from general revenue, Fund 6 (the State Highway Fund), the Game, Fish, and Water Safety Account No. 9, the State Parks Account No. 64, Compensation to Victims of Crime Account No. 469, and the Compensation Clearance Account No. 936, as appropriate.</p> <p>The bill requires that before payment, any claim or judgment must be verified by each special fund’s administrator, and approved by the attorney general and comptroller. Each claim or judgment must contain its reason, specific identification, and an invoice for unpaid goods or services. The comptroller must mail or deliver to each entity one or more warrants in payment of all claims.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u> Evaluated By: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 1485 By Rep. Rodriguez, E., et al.</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of a grocery access investment fund program.</p>	<p>Economic & Small Business Development</p>	<p>It is common to overlook the luxuries of being able to drive down the street to H-E-B, Randalls, or Krogers and having plentiful options of food to purchase to make homemade, fresh, healthy meals. Unfortunately this is not the case for more than 3.4 million Texans living in an underserved area with limited or no grocery store access. The inability to have fresh, healthy foods can significantly increase the rates of costly chronic diet-related diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and certain cancers. Chronic diseases such as obesity affect many Texans, 20% of children and ⅓ of the adult population are struggling with obesity. This has a detrimental impact on the state, costing Texas businesses more than \$1.1 billion a year. If Texas continues to ignore the desperate need for grocery stores in rural and impoverished communities, then the state will have rapidly worsening health conditions and increasing costs.</p> <p>HB 1485 requires the Department of Agriculture (TDA) to establish the Texas grocery access investment fund program to finance the construction, rehabilitation, or expansion of grocery stores in underserved, low-income or moderate-income communities. The bill specifies that “underserved area” is based on the most recent U.S. Bureau of the Census data and the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) determination of an area with low supermarket access by the agency’s Food Access Research Atlas, or another</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org</p>

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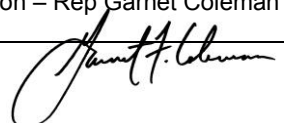


			<p>governmental and philanthropic healthy food initiative. The fund is comprised of appropriated money, federal, state or private grants or loans, federal tax credits, plus any other additional monies. The fund is required to use 25% of the funds at minimum to provide grants or forgivable loans distributed under the program. Additionally, a maximum of 10% of the fund can be reserved for administrative or operational costs for the program. Before December 15, 2015 TDA is required to contract with at least one nonprofit or a community development financial institution to administer the program. The following are requirements necessary for financing the construction, rehabilitation, or expansion of grocery stores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• for-profit or nonprofit entity• demonstrate the capacity to successfully implement the project and the likelihood that the project will be economically self-sustaining• demonstrate the ability to repay any loan required to be repaid• agree, for a period of five years, to accept WIC and SNAP benefits• allocate 30 percent of the retail space for the sale of perishable foods, which may include whole grains, fresh produce, meat, poultry, seafood, and fresh or frozen dairy products• comply with all data collection and reporting requirements established by the department• promote the sale of fresh produce, including Texas-grown fruits and vegetables, and fresh Texas-raised meat, poultry, and seafood products <p>promote the hiring of local residents.</p>	
<p>HB 1091 By Rep. Schofield, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to special three-judge district courts convened to hear certain cases.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>Introducing greater oversight and transparency to the adjudication process is favorable to all parties concerned because more legal minds addressing the problem are more inclined toward greater impartiality and fortitude in solving the problem in a manner that is reasonable and fair. HB 1091 seeks the creation of a three-judge panel to specifically oversee redistricting and school finance cases in which the state is a defendant. The bill would give the AG discretion over requesting the three-judge panel so long as the following three provisions are met: the state is a defendant in the suit; it is a case arising under school finance or redistricting; and meet a discretionary proceeding, or informally referenced as the three-prong test. If all three factors are met, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court would select two of the judges on the panel. There are strong concerns regarding the three-prong test and the appointment of the Chief Justice as selector of two of the judges to sit on the panel.</p> <p>Firstly, the three-prong test requires the claim has the potential to significantly impact (1) state finances; (2) state policies or programs; or (3) it is so exceptional that it should not be decided by one district judge. This appears to a catch-all provision that could extend the potential adjudication of the panel to include eminent domain cases, Texas tort law cases, contract actions against the state, or any kind of administrative appeal brought under state licensing. While, one can't be certain that these cases will be brought, the statutory language is simply too vague and should be more clear in indicating cases that are precluded from being brought before the three-judge panel.</p> <p>Secondly, giving discretionary authority to the AG's office to opt-in for the panel court and empowering the Chief Justice, who will sit as final adjudicator if the case proceeds to the highest court, to select two of the three judges, offers an unfair balance to the proposed preceding and suggests an unintended impropriety. While the panel court proposed under HB 1091 is closely aligned to the federal statute, which has ample precedent in anti-trust, railroad, and civil rights cases, this statute defers in logistical matters pertaining to</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org</p>



			<p>procedural impartiality.</p> <p>HB 1091 has good intentions in raising the bar in adjudicated matters that concern all Texans and should certainly be considered as a way to offer more transparency and fairness in proceedings concerning the state; however, greater consideration should be given to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The trial judge, should be requesting for the three-judge panel, not the AG as defender to the State 2. Consolidating similar cases without the consent of the parties is problematic to maintaining transparency to the proceeding <p>The discretionary proceeding, or three-prong test is too broadly construed and should be reconsidered so to eliminate cases coming before the court that could be a waste of judicial time and resources.</p>	
HB 506 By Rep. Rodriguez	Relating to the issuance of tax-supported bonds by certain school districts and increasing the tax rate limitation on the issuance of those bonds.	Public Education	<p>Within the Foundation School Program (FSP) exists the interest and sinking (I&S) tax rate, a facilities funding component that assists schools in their debt from school facilities. Current law states that the I&S rate is capped at \$.50 per \$100 to pay off a bond. This threshold cap was set in 1991 and has yet to be modified to accommodate fast growth districts and the desire to build more schools to address a district's growing needs. Districts are unable to raise the cap, which results in longer repayment periods of the bond issued and higher interest rates accrued. In order to meet the needs of these rapidly expanding districts, the 50-cent cap must be updated for appropriate school campus expansion.</p> <p>HB 506 puts forth changes to the cap to assist fast-growth districts and communities. The rate for debt service payment is raised to 20% above the cap or \$0.60. This applies to independent school districts (ISD) that demonstrate fast growth, by enrolling 3,500 new students or 10% growth over the past 5 years. Additionally, an ISD must achieve 3 out of 5 stars on the Financial Allocation Study for Texas (FAST), determining if an ISD is efficient with taxpayer dollars. Qualifying ISD's must adopt a capital improvement plan to demonstrate a need for taxpayers and indicate the bond they issue will save taxpayers money, with at least 5% savings. School districts who have currently set their I&S tax rate at \$0.45 and above must conduct a capital improvement plan as well.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org
HB 1069 By Rep. Rodriguez, E.	Relating to services for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and certification requirements for interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing; providing an administrative penalty; requiring a fee and changing the rate of a fee; requiring an occupational certification.	Human Services	<p>In Texas, interpreters for the deaf and hearing-impaired are not required to obtain certification for practice. This has caused many instances in which individuals who are deaf or hearing-impaired receive incorrect translations and have been misled with wrong information. There are certain situations, such as receiving medical treatment or attending in college, where having a qualified interpreter to translate important information is critical. HB 1069 addresses this issue by requiring DARS to establish a certification program for deaf and/or hard of hearing interpreters. Any person practicing as an interpreter, in any manner, must obtain a DARS certificate. Certificates are not required for interpreters until June 1, 2017. Penalties are imposed for any person violating the certification requirement. The deaf and hearing-impaired community deserve quality services for their needs and requiring certification ensures their needs are met with minimum standards.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org

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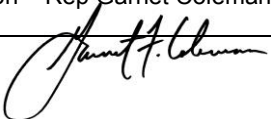


HB 2769 By Rep. Rodriguez, E., et al.	Relating to the date of expiration of a certain pilot revolving loan program established under the Loanstar revolving loan program to provide for energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technology for certain organizations.	Energy Resources	In the 82 nd session, legislation was passed establishing a pilot program offering loans to promote renewable and energy efficient technology for non-profit organizations & churches. HB 2769 extends this program two years to end on Dec. 31 st , 2017 instead of the current expiration date on Dec. 31, 2015. Utility bills are often some of the largest expenses for non-profit agencies and places of worship. This bill would help to alleviate those costs, allowing these organizations to focus their funds on serving the community.	Favorable Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
HB 2039 By Rep. Burkett	Relating to the exclusion of certain information from the Department of Family and Protective Services central registry of child abuse or neglect cases and the report of certain information regarding those cases to the legislature.	Human Services	<p>The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) currently maintains a central registry of all state cases of child abuse or neglect. DFPS shares these records with local child service agencies, such as hospitals, clinics, and schools, plus other states regarding a national registration system. Although this practice is in place to ensure the safety of children who have experienced trauma, not all parents within the registry have committed child abuse or neglect.</p> <p>Some parents have been placed in the registry for relinquishing their parental rights to the state, as a last resource, so their emotionally disturbed child could receive desperately needed mental health services. These parents have exhausted all other options and because they gave up their parental rights for the emotional safety of their child they are labeled as refusing to accept parental responsibility. This is seen by DFPS as child abuse or neglect. Once on the registry, individuals cannot obtain employment at businesses that serve children. HB 2039 ensures that parents have protection in such cases by prohibiting DFPS from finding parents guilty of abuse or neglect, if the department is given conservatorship of a child whose parents were unable to obtain mental health services for a child with severe emotional disturbance. The bill also requires the central registry of child neglect or abuse cases to be reviewed for any records that hold families guilty for such instances and will then be removed. Before DFPS files a lawsuit for conservatorship of a child, the department must discuss the option of joint managing conservatorship with the parents. Parents that release their parental rights of their child to the state in order for the child to receive costly mental health services should not be punished when they are acting in the best interest for their child.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org
HB 1543 By Rep. Alvarado, et al.	Relating to the creation of the Advisory Council on Hispanic Affairs in the office of the governor.	International Trade & Intergovernmental Affairs	<p>HB 1543 attempts to address the needs of Texas' increasing Hispanic population by establishing the Hispanic Advisory Council. This Council would serve to advise the governor and act as a voice for the Hispanic community in economic, social, legal, and political matters.</p> <p>The bill requires the Council to be made up of nine members -- one former member of the legislature appointed by the lieutenant governor for a two-year term, another former member of the legislature appointed by the speaker of the house for a two-year term, and seven members appointed for the governor for staggered four-year terms. The Council's key duties are focused on monitoring programs and legislation to ensure equality for the Hispanic community. For example, strengthening Hispanic employment opportunities, analyzing the equality of workplace policies for Hispanics and other minorities, working to lessen Hispanic school dropout rates, and addressing equal treatment of Hispanics in judicial systems. The Council must meet at least quarterly every year. Hispanics comprise more than 40% of Texas' population and growing. Despite this, Hispanics make up only 23% of the Texas legislature. Further, Hispanic household median incomes are between \$35,000 and \$37,000, while white household median incomes fall between \$60,000 and \$64,000. This is a problem for the entire state's economy. If the Hispanic population continues to grow but is not afforded</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org

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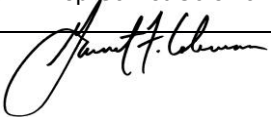


			<p>greater opportunities for economic advancement, state poverty rates could increase from 14.4% to 17.7% in 2050. The establishment of the Hispanic Advisory Council could help ameliorate some of these issues, and use the potential of a growing Hispanic community to strengthen Texas' economy and competitiveness. The Council could also serve as a springboard for other underrepresented minorities to gain a similar voice in Texas government.</p>	
<p>HB 3846 By Rep. Smithee</p>	<p>Relating to the confidentiality of certain information regarding procedures and substances used in the execution of a convict.</p>	<p>Government Transparency & Operation</p>	<p>HB 3846 requires identifying information of any person involved in the execution procedure, including people who use, supply, or administer lethal injection drugs and people who manufacture, transport, test, procure, compound, prescribe, dispense, or provide any lethal injection drug used in execution to be kept confidential and exempt from disclosure requirements. This bill takes away transparency and accountability, allowing pharmacies and manufacturing plants that dispense or produce substances used in lethal injection to avoid public scrutiny. Recently, there have been several high-profile cases in other states related to botched executions when using experimental drugs or drug combinations, often because the combinations were concocted in secret. With that in mind, it is unconscionable that we would allow suppliers and compounders anonymity when such mistakes are being made. The Constitution protects against cruel and unusual punishment in the 8th amendment, and this is an 8th amendment issue.</p> <p>There are concerns that credible threats to suppliers and compounders of lethal injection substances have caused some suppliers to fear for their safety and stop supplying the drugs. However, many pharmacies that have declined to supply the lethal injection drugs have done so for moral reasons related to the drugs' use in executing people. Since 2001, 9 companies have released statements indicating they would no longer produce or dispense drugs used in lethal injection, or that they do not want their drugs used in lethal injection because they do not want a part in the execution process. If suppliers indeed feel threatened, law enforcement can step in, but obfuscating the process is not the answer. There is already a caveat in statute allowing for confidentiality of suppliers on a case-by-case basis if there are concerns for physical safety. Blanket confidentiality is not necessary. Death is the ultimate punishment the state can wield and it should do so with utter transparency. Obscuring the process destroys public trust and takes away the right to know where lethal drugs are produced.</p>	<p>Unfavorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 2351 By Rep. Harless, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to conflicts of interest and discrimination policies for an ethics or medical committee review of an advance directive.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>Given the intricacy of end-of-life care, Texas' Advance Directives Act needs clarity. Currently, an ethics committee reviews a doctor's decision when there is a disagreement between the family of a patient and a doctor over treatment decisions, but current statute does not offer any definite policy or guidance for an ethics committee to implement for conflicts of interest arising during an assessment or for the consideration of a patient's permanent physical or mental disability during an assessment.</p> <p>HB2351 directs each health care facility that provides review by an ethics or medical committee to adopt a policy to prevent financial and health care professional conflicts of interest that may arise during a review under that section. Each facility must also adopt a policy to prohibit consideration of a patient's permanent physical or mental disability during a review unless the disability is relevant in determining whether a medical or surgical intervention is medically appropriate.</p> <p>HB2351 requires health care facilities to adopt and implement policies to prevent financial conflicts of interest and discrimination based on disability. These committees need to be operating with the highest ethical standards. This is a reasonable first step toward more transparency in the composition & decision processes of ethics committees, without overreaching by setting policy that every hospital in Texas would have to comply with, regardless of regional differences and local communities. This bill recognizes that decisions regarding treatment should be made through the lens of inherent sanctity of human life, while understanding that sometimes major medical conditions do have an impact on the effectiveness or appropriateness of a given medical intervention. The approach in HB</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>



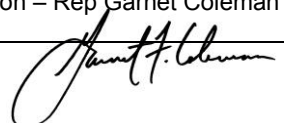
			2351 is reasonable, implementable, and enforceable and protects the most vulnerable among us.	
HB 3241 By Rep. Price, et al.	Relating to state agency contracting; creating an offense.	State Affairs	<p>An enormous part of our state budget is spent through contracts ranging from tiny amounts to over a billion dollars. For instance, DSHS contracts out for almost all of the services that they directly delivered 30 years ago, but no new accountability or oversight mechanisms were established. Guidance is needed not just in DSHS, but across Texas government there is a need to make sure all necessary processes and safeguards are up to date to ensure that tax payer dollars funneled through these contracts are spent appropriately, efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>HB3241 is an extensive bill that does the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directs the state auditor to work with Medicaid/CHIP Division to review performance on HHSC contracts worth over \$100 million/ year• Directs the state auditor to work with governor’s budget and policy staff to conduct a study about the practicability of consolidating state purchasing agencies.• Outlines document retention requirements• Provides 2-year waiting period before a state employee who managed contracts can work for the entity who received the contract and vice versa.• Includes “solicitations and contracting” under Enterprise Resource Planning• Details expanded training requirements, including ethics training• Mandates state agency conduct performance review and report of terminated or completed contract and specifies how vendors can protest a review.• Dictates that comptroller manage tracking system and contract database for agencies to enter performance reviews• Restricts state agencies that buy goods & services listed as schedule or state agencies buying goods off their specialized list from establishing contracts over \$1 million and provides bid structure for eligible contracts• Requires state agencies to develop, execute and post statements of work for contracts exceeding \$50,000• Summarizes disclosure of conflict of interest requirements for TXDOT and Higher Education including posting requirements for transparency• Defines requirements for Higher Education and TXDOT contracts exceeding \$1million and \$5 million• Requires each state agency develop and implement risk analysis procedure and publish their contract management handbook• Adds a member from TEA, TXDOT and TCEQ to the Contract Advisory Team (CAT), and expands their duties to include determining justification for contract price increases of 20% or more, and reporting to the comptroller if justification was not found.• Mandates that CAT submit a quarterly report to LBB about number of contracts and whether CAT recommendations were followed.• Dictates that the Board of Regents for Higher Education prescribe framework for code of ethics, policies for internal audits,	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org

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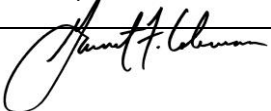


			disclosure rules for outside activities etc.	
			Are the contracts the state is entering into ethically procured and efficiently borne out? Additional oversight requirements, scrutiny, fairness, competitive processes, ethical training, transparency & accountability are all greatly needed to make sure the answer to that question is a yes.	
HB 1125 By Rep. González, M.	Relating to a study on the availability of natural gas utility service in certain counties.	Energy Resources	<p>Texas is larger than many countries. Having a state that is this vast means that there are wide variations in the land, resources, culture, population, economics, cost of living, quality of life and just about every other local feature that you can find, all under one government. This means that residents of urban cities like Houston, Dallas, or San Antonio are often surprised to know that there are counties with over 250 communities without natural gas, sewers, running water or sidewalks. One of these communities attempted to obtain natural gas service because it is a far cheaper way to heat their homes than electricity or propane, which many use now. The average family of four in some regions of El Paso County pays \$300 a month for propane, while it would pay only \$160 for natural gas.</p> <p>Texas Gas told the community residents requesting service would have to identify all of the lots that would be covered, and owners of at least half of them would have to sign a petition asking for it and promise to pay infrastructure costs. In addition, residents would also have to get clearance from the Texas Railroad Commission and TxDOT. Texas Gas originally estimated that it would cost \$4 million to extend service to the area, but continued to revise the estimate multiple times. The latest figure is four times what the company said the job would cost five months prior.</p> <p>HB1125 requires the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC), to conduct a study on the availability of natural gas utility service in each border county in Texas that has a population of more than 800,000. This study must find each census-designated place that has a population of at least 500 and that lacks natural gas utility service, consider why they don't have natural gas, estimate the cost of getting natural gas out to them, an study the methods for doing so. This bill is a direct first step toward raising the quality of life for Texas families.</p>	Favorable Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
HB 3325 By Rep. Gutierrez	Relating to requirements for barber schools and private beauty culture schools.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures	<p>HB 3325 establishes less stringent requirements for barber and private beauty schools to receive permits. It authorizes the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) to grant permits to all barber schools that provide adequate classroom space and offer instruction to those seeking a Class A certificate. It also authorizes TDLR to grant permits to private beauty schools if they provide a permanent and adequate space in a building divided into an area for instruction and an area for clinical practice. Under the bill, stringent requirements now only apply to schools granting operator licenses to students.</p> <p>Lessening regulation on barber and private beauty schools will encourage entrepreneurship and training in this area, and will foster the creation of jobs and opportunities.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org
<u>LSG Floor Report For Major State Calendar – Wednesday, May 13, 2015</u>				
HB 1798 By Rep. Deshotel, et al.	Relating to local control school districts.	Public Education	<p>Current statute lists home-rule school districts as a permitted class of charters. HB 1798 replaces home-rule school districts with local control district charter (LCSD). The LCSD keeps certain statutory governing rules from what was previously permitted for home-rule school districts. The major additions of this bill are related to the local control commission and the local control plan developed from the commission.</p> <p>This commission is appointed by the board of trustees of a school district to frame a local control plan for the district, if the board receives a petition by at least 5% of the registered voters of the district. Additionally, % of the board's membership must adopt a local</p>	<u>Will of the House with Serious Concerns</u> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org

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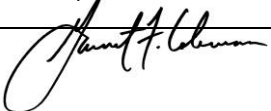


		<p>control school resolution. A petition that is submitted may designate one or more persons as a lead petitioner. The board must then appoint the 15-member local control commission. Eight of these residents may be selected by the lead petitioner. The commission of the district must frame a local control plan. The commission must hold three public hearings, at minimum, to allow for comments on their proposed local control plan.</p> <p>The content of the local control plan must include information that was previously prescribed to a home-rule school district charter. However, a local control plan must include provisions that impose requirements on the district, similar or identical to federal or state laws.</p> <p>After the approval of the proposed local control plan, the board of trustees of the district shall conduct an election on the plan. Voters of the district will be able to vote on the plan on the first uniform election date in November on even-numbered years, occurring 78 days after the date on which the board of trustees orders an election. Only until after the fourth year that the school district has operated in the local control plan, the governing body of the LCSD can submit amendments to the plan. Once again, the amendment will undergo a petition process that falls under the same requirements as the original petition. Rules regarding rescission of the local control plan are similar to the rules applied to a home-rule school district.</p> <p>Several education organizations have voiced significant concerns about this legislation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. HB 1798 would allow an entire school district to convert into a local control school district governed by a group that could bypass important state regulations, specifically class size limits. As one of the major cost drivers of education, it is important to keep all schools with a capped class size.2. The self-appointed lead petitioner of the local control effort is allowed to appoint the majority of the 15-member commission that would determine the entire governance structure of the district. This is in contrast with traditional school board members, who are democratically elected by the community.3. If passed, this bill could most likely result in the same scenario as the recent Dallas ISD attempt to become a home-rule charter. The situation was pushed significantly by an affluent individual from Houston who wanted to create a home-rule charter, avoiding safeguards in state law for all involved.4. The change in the law from home-rule to local control is unnecessary and confusing. A home-rule district is well-understood, in which people know they are not under state law. The change to local-control district is not truly indicative of its title, as the petitioner who has significant choice in the commission doesn't have to be local resident. <p>While we realize that all school districts are unique and require a degree of local decision-making, HB 1798 does not do enough to ensure that local control districts adhere to important state standards and are governed democratically. Amendments that address these concerns would ensure that the bill most appropriately meets the individualized needs of each school district.</p>	
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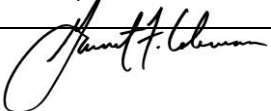


HB 3994 By Rep. Morrison, et al.	Relating to notice of and consent to an abortion for a minor; amending provisions subject to a criminal penalty.	State Affairs	<p>Existing law requires a minor to obtain the consent of her parent, managing conservator or legal guardian if she wishes to have an abortion. She may obtain a bypass to consent if she demonstrates to the court by a preponderance of the evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• she is sufficiently mature and well informed to consent to the abortion, or• notification of her parents would not be in her best interest, or• notification may lead to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. <p>To pass constitutional muster, the court proceeding must be expeditious and completely confidential. As a whole, the proceeding may not serve as an undue burden or an “an absolute, and possibly arbitrary, veto” over a minor’s right to decide to have an abortion; rather, the bypass procedure must amount to an “effective opportunity for an abortion to be obtained.” The state must pay all costs, including fees for her court-appointed attorney ad litem and guardian ad litem. Under a special exception in Chapter 33 of the government code, her attorney ad litem and guardian ad litem may be the same person. Minors are called “Jane” in these cases to protect their anonymity.</p> <p>The Texas judicial bypass procedure works as a safety net for teenagers whose parents cannot or will not support them and should not be amended. These cases are rare. In 2012, 68,298 abortions were performed in Texas, but only 2.7% were on minors. Of those, only a few hundred sought a judicial bypass.</p> <p>Many of the teenagers who seek a bypass are living in the worst possible circumstances, having already been failed by state family planning policies and by their family’s circumstances. Jane’s Due Process reports that of the youth they assist in the bypass process, 39% do not live with a parent because of death, incarceration, deportation, or abandonment. More than half of Jane’s Due Process clients have parents who abuse them or would kick their daughter out of the house if they found out she was pregnant. Imposing additional barriers between these young people and the health care they need is both cruel and unconstitutional.</p> <p>HB 3994 would make multiple changes to the law that would be detrimental to the safety of courts and Janes, the confidentiality and expeditiousness of the process, and access to both the courts and abortion care.</p> <p>HB 3994 restricts access to the courts and amount to an arbitrary veto for Janes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deleting a requirement that the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) assist abuse victims in its custody applying for a bypass. Right now, if is a minor is a ward of the state, that minor is in a catch 22, the state is her legal guardian, but despite the circumstances, the state cannot provide consent for an abortion. However, HB 3994 would also prevent the state from picking her up and taking her to court, helping her confirm her pregnancy for reasons of termination etc.• Prohibiting Jane from appearing by video, teleconference, or other remote electronic means. If a minor is not able to leave the house or make the journey to the court room, there are options that allow for remote cases. If Jane believes that she will be abused if she her parents find out, then finding the time and transportation to get to court is another burden she will have to undertake.• Requiring a court clerk to issue a deemed granted certificate to the physician (who does not go to court) instead of to Jane or her attorney.• Rewriting the grounds for the granting of a bypass, taking the statute outside the constitutionally-tested framework in current	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p> <p>Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
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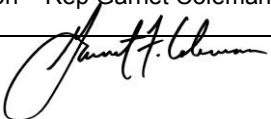


			<p>Texas law. Currently the law requires a judge to determine if notification of Jane’s parents’ is in her best interest. This statute would have the judge determine if the abortion itself is in Jane’s best interest- this is a huge change that cannot be underestimated. This is not allowing her to make her own choice, this is granting or denying a medical procedure based on whether the judge thinks that medical procedure is in Jane’s best interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raising the burden of proof from “preponderance of the evidence” to “clear and convincing evidence.” <p>CSHB 3994 also endangers the confidentiality of Janes seeking a bypass by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limiting venue to county of residence, or if that county is less than 10,000 in population a neighboring county, or the county where the abortion facility is located. Some counties only have 12,000 people. This means that the likelihood of Jane’s Judge being her Dad or her Aunt working as a county clerk or someone she knows being in a position to view her appearance at and reason for being in court is extremely high. Even if she goes to a neighboring county, that county also might have a small population and sometimes counties have visiting judges, so she still might see her dad (if he is a judge), even if she changes the venue of her trial.• Requiring court clerks to maintain and retain records for bypass cases like all other civil cases, exempting minors (and judges) to the protection the current confidentiality requirement affords. <p>Disregarding the expeditiousness requirement of these cases, HB 3994 would allow cases to linger and disregard the trial court’s judgment in appointing ad litem by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extending the time for trial and the court of appeals to rule from two to five business days each, potentially dragging the case out for weeks. If she appealed on Friday, it could take up to 5 calendar days for her to have a hearing. The same for the initial court hearing. This is a maneuver that can be used to draw down the clock so that Jane is past her 20 week window.• Deleting the current requirement that the court rule immediately after the hearing. There is now no time limit and thus the ruling could come down with the intent of denying Jane the right to appeal simply by waiting out her 20 week window.• Prohibiting the attorney ad litem and guardian ad litem from being the same person — even though in CPS cases such dual representation is the standard. This involves another person that Jane then hopes doesn’t betray her confidentiality and trust, and that person has to drop everything to be able to meet with and work with her. There is no good reason to involve another person in this case except to provide another burden for Jane. <p>HB 3994 further compels a physician to presume that a pregnant woman is a minor unless the woman presents a valid governmental record of identification showing that she has reached the age of majority. Between 1997 and 1999, 197 births were reported among mothers over the age of 55. It is insulting and fallacious to presume that a physician practicing healthcare would be unable to tell if a 50 year old woman was over the age of majority if she didn’t have an ID with her. HB 3994 decimates current avenues for minors to pursue an abortion if it is inappropriate or impossible for the minor to obtain parental consent.</p>	
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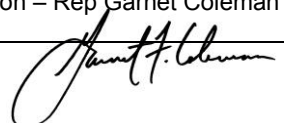
HB 2433 By Rep. Burkett	Relating to the continuation and functions of the Department of Family and Protective Services and procedures applicable to suits affecting the parent-child relationship, investigations of child abuse and neglect, and conservatorship of a child; affecting fee amounts and authorizing an administrative penalty.	Human Services	<p>The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is a health and human service (HHS) agency that works to protect children and vulnerable adults by conduct investigations on alleged abuse and neglect. The state agency provides adult protective services (APS), child protective services (CPS), child care licensing, statewide intake, and prevention and early intervention. The Sunset Advisory Commission recently reviewed DFPS along with all other HHS agencies and recommended all agencies be consolidated. HB 2433 contains the recommendations that Sunset provided if DFPS were to continue as a separate agency.</p> <p>The bureaucratic procedures that currently exist within DFPS have prevented caseworkers from performing quality work by overloading caseloads and burdensome paperwork requirements, and thus has resulted in a high employee turnover rate. The bill addresses this issue, as well as focuses on improving basic process and management to effectively serve the agency’s clients. Below are the major provisions that occur in HB 2433:</p> <p>Eliminates, clarifies, or streamlines burdensome and prescriptive statutory requirements that affect Child Protective Services’ ability to do its job by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reducing unnecessary caseworker and overall agency workload,• Providing DFPS with additional flexibility to make its processes more efficient,• Conforming state law with federal law to eliminate confusion, and• Repealing archaic or unnecessary language and clarifies disorganized statutes <p>Makes changes to improve safety, permanency, and well-being of children in DFPS conservatorship, including changes to improve educational stability and opportunity for foster youth. Children in the guardianship of the state must be made a priority, especially when it comes to serving their unique needs.</p> <p>Requires CPS to implement an annual business planning process to focus its overall goals for improvement and demonstrate results. It’s important that the agency plan their goals and desired results to that it remains focused in the overall mission.</p> <p>Requires DFPS to develop and maintain a long-range foster care redesign implementation plan to mitigate inherent risks of this outsourcing approach to administering foster care. Redesigning the foster care system requires DFPS to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for its prevention and early intervention programs.</p> <p>Strengthens DFPS’ child care licensing enforcement efforts by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authorizing the agency to assess administrative penalties for high-risk licensing violations without first having to pursue non-monetary administrative sanctions;• Requiring DFPS to develop an enforcement policy in rule to guide child care licensing enforcement efforts; and• Granting cease-and-desist authority to DFPS for taking action against unlicensed child care facilities.	<p>Favorable</p> <p>Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org</p>
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			Gives DFPS flexibility in setting child care licensing and administrative fees, and establishes a child care license and registration renewal process.	
<u>LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Wednesday, May 13, 2015</u>				
HB 2082 By Rep. Laubenberg, et al.	Relating to developing a program to provide telemedicine medical services to certain children.	Public Health	HB 2082 requires HHSC to develop and implement a plan to deliver telemedicine services to children using Medicaid with complex or chronic medical needs. It allows for children with complex or chronic medical needs to be treated with telemedicine that is reimbursable by Medicaid plans in tandem with traditional medicine. Many medically fragile children in Texas see multiple specialists and sometimes these specialists are several hours away from the children's homes, particularly in rural Texas. HB 2082 would help physicians stay in contact with their charges more regularly and eliminate some of the arduous journeys that are hard on the children, as well as minimize exposure to germs. Telemedicine will help doctors catch problems quicker and intervene sooner, resulting in fewer emergency room visits and better health outcomes for the children.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2286 By Rep. Parker, et al.	Relating to the eligibility of certain victims of trafficking of persons for an order of nondisclosure; authorizing a fee.	Criminal Jurisprudence	Certain person are eligible to petition the courts for an order of non-disclosure to prohibit release of their criminal record, if placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for the offense. HB 2286 expands the eligibility for non-disclosure to include those who have been placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for compelled prostitution -- so those <i>victims of human trafficking, who have been criminally, sexually exploited</i> . After a hearing verifying that the person was a victim of sex trafficking, the court would be required to prohibit criminal justice agencies from releasing information regarding the victim's criminal record related to the offense except to certain exempted agencies. HB 2286 allows those victims to more easily obtain employment and housing so that they may begin to piece their lives back together.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 234 By Rep. Farrar, et al.	Relating to certain costs associated with court proceedings for cruelly treated animals; authorizing fees and costs.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	Upon an adjudication that an owner has cruelly treated its animal, HB 234 allows the municipal court the authority to order the owner to pay administrative court costs and reasonable attorney's fees. Costs for the animal's impoundment, investigation, and expert witnesses are considered administrative court costs. Often, court fees in animal cruelty hearings are used as a negotiation tool to avoid the case going to the bench and having a cruelty order rendered against the owner. This may seem like a questionable practice, but the notion of receiving a cruelty judgment is far worse because it could land a pet owner in the criminal court system, whereas, the use of attorney's fees offer the district attorneys a mediation approach that is generally effective in getting the owners to correct problems related to the treatment of their pets. A lot of the abusers qualify for indigent status or enter into payment agreements with court recognized non-profits. Due to the limited number of attorneys that handle these cases, HB 234 seeks to protect the costs allocated to the proceedings, despite the decrease in personnel available to oversee them.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org

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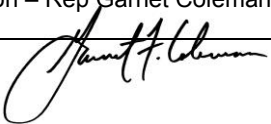
HB 681 By Rep. Sheets, et al.	Relating to the eligibility for service retirement annuities of certain persons, including elected officials convicted of certain crimes.	Pensions	HB 681 prohibits a member of the elected class of the ERS who holds or held a state office or is or was a member of the legislature from receiving a service retirement annuity if the member was convicted of a qualifying felony (specified in the bill and including bribery, embezzlement, and perjury), committed while in office and connected directly to official duties of that elected office. HB 681 provides that, in the event of an overturned conviction, the individual is entitled to all previously withheld payments and interest earned, as well as future payments. It also provides that an innocent spouse of a convicted member of the elected class is entitled to up to half of the service retirement annuity. HB 681 only affects service retirement annuity related to time in office, and does not affect any other retirement payments. Members of the elected class are elected to serve the best interests of the people. It is an abuse of the public's trust to commit a felony while serving public office. HB 681 prevents an individual from financially continuing to benefit from a state-funded pension after being convicted of doing disservice to the state and, by extension, its citizens.	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 3396 By Rep. Phillips	Relating to the reporting requirements for a person who makes direct campaign expenditures.	State Affairs	Currently, if a person wants to make a direct campaign expenditure- such as buying an ad in the paper to support or undermine a candidate, if that expenditure is more than \$100, they would need to file a campaign expenditure report with the Texas Ethics Commission, (TEC). According to the author of HB 3396, this is burdensome and the law is not well known so people who do this may not know that they are committing a crime if they don't file. To that end, HB 3396 changes the \$100 threshold to \$1000 expenditure before a person is required to file a campaign expenditure report with the TEC. Filing a report with the TEC is not particularly burdensome and does not suppress freedom of speech. In addition, moving the threshold from \$100 to \$1000 does nothing to increase awareness that the report must be filed. HB 3396 may have trouble meeting the goals it purports to be created to address.	Unfavorable Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
HB 2558 By Rep. Isaac	Relating to the length of a billing month for a propane gas customer.	Energy Resources	Limits on the length and frequency of billing cycles are common in the utilities industry, but there are currently no billing cycle restrictions on captive propane providers. Currently, captive propane providers are not prohibited from billing their customers in irregular time intervals. This creates a "loophole" in the way that their prices are regulated, allowing captive propane companies to "game" the system by extending billing periods when propane prices are high and shortening billing periods when prices are low. HB 2558 provides uniformity and consistency in billing for propane gas customers. The bill restricts a propane invoice from including charges for more than 31 or 32 days, excepting during extreme conditions. HB 2558 prevents Texas Families from being taken advantage of.	Favorable Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
HB 4182 By Rep. Lucio III, et al.	Relating to the creation of the Cameron County Healthcare District; granting the authority to impose a tax and issue bonds; granting the power of eminent domain.	County Affairs	Cameron County has among the highest number of uninsured individuals. Currently, the county is responsible for administering the indigent care program. HB 4182 allows the county voters to create a healthcare district, and along with the newly established University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine, the county will be able to administer quality indigent care. The healthcare district would be authorized to contract with providers for health care delivery, as well as cap the maximum tax rate to 25 cents per \$100 valuation of all properties in the county. HB 4182 would enhance the ability of the county to provide to the community's most disadvantaged residents with quality health care services and provide a foundation for the UT RGV medical community.	Favorable Evaluated by: Mya Strauss 512-763-0031 info@texaslsg.org
HB 548 By Rep. Johnson, et al.	Relating to the consideration of criminal history record information regarding applicants for state	Government Transparency & Operations	A major part of rehabilitation and successful re-entry into society for individuals with criminal convictions is being able to work. Formerly incarcerated individuals who have jobs are significantly less likely to re-offend than those who cannot find gainful employment. Unfortunately, many otherwise-qualified individuals are discounted for employment before they even get to the interview stage. It is common practice for job applications to ask about criminal background and it is illegal for an applicant to lie about past convictions. Once an applicant admits to a criminal conviction, that individual's application is usually discarded. This makes re-entry into	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org

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	employment.		<p>society difficult and can lead to increased recidivism rates.</p> <p>HB 548 prohibits state agencies from asking about an applicant’s criminal background in the initial employment application. There is a carve-out for specified jobs, such as those working with children or where a background check question is mandated by law. This only affects state agencies. It does not apply to private businesses or local governments. State agencies may ask about, and consider, criminal background history at a later point in the application and hiring process, after it has been otherwise determined that the applicant is qualified for the job and the individual has either been offered conditional employment or has been offered an interview. HB 548 will increase employment opportunities for qualified individuals who may have past criminal convictions, which in turn may lead to reduced recidivism and improved re-integration into communities for formerly incarcerated individuals.</p>	
<p>HB 3374 By Rep. Morrison, et al.</p>	Relating to information regarding Down syndrome.	State Affairs	<p>Anecdotal evidence, as well as published academic studies, find that many women want but do not receive current, accurate information about Down syndrome and Down syndrome associations during their prenatal or postnatal diagnosis.</p> <p>HB 3374 requires DSHS make available certain information about down syndrome that is evidence-based and has been reviewed by medical experts and local Down syndrome organizations. The information must be published in English & Spanish & include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• physical, developmental, educational, and psychosocial outcomes, life expectancy, clinical course, and intellectual and functional development• available treatment options• contact information for national and local Down syndrome education and support programs, services, and organizations, including organizations in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin, and information hotlines, resource centers, and clearinghouses• any other information required by the department <p>HB 3374 mandates healthcare providers who test for or diagnose Down syndrome to provide the information detailed above to any expectant parents or parents of children with Down syndrome. A health care provider may provide additional information about Down syndrome that is current, evidence-based and has been reviewed by medical experts and national Down syndrome organizations.</p> <p>While we support providing medically accurate, current information and resources to expectant parents who have received a positive diagnosis of Down syndrome, there are concerns that the legislation mandating how this is to be provided actually hinders physicians from providing that. Laws should not interfere with the ability of physicians to determine appropriate treatment options and have open, honest, and confidential communications with their patients. Laws should also not interfere with the patient’s right to be counseled by a physician according to the best currently available medical evidence and the physician’s professional medical judgment.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House with Concerns</u></p> <p>Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>HB 3074 By Rep. Springer, et al.</p>	Relating to the provision of artificially administered nutrition and hydration and life-sustaining treatment.	State Affairs	<p>Current statute lacks clarity for this complex, end of life situation. Right now the law allows food & water to be withdrawn with no medical standard for their withdrawal. This has been an issue for 12 years and during that time, no state or Federal laws prohibit the withdrawal of food or water. Life sustaining treatments are appropriate when benefits outweigh burdens. However, there are times when the physician recommends against certain life-sustaining treatment that the family wishes to continue. At this time, should the doctor refuses to comply with an advance directive or other request for life-sustaining treatment because of the physician’s judgment that the treatment would be medically inappropriate, the case is reviewed by the ethics board. If the ethics board sides with the doctor, then the doctor will help the family find another doctor or facility and provide the family with information about referral groups to help with the transfer.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p> <p>Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>

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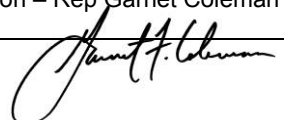
			<p>HB 3074 requires patients to receive food & water for the first 10 days after notification of the ethic board’s decision unless based on reasonable medical judgment, providing artificially administered nutrition and hydration would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hasten the patient's death • be medically contraindicated such that the provision of the treatment seriously exacerbates life-threatening medical problems not outweighed by the benefit of the provision of the treatment • result in substantial irremediable physical pain not outweighed by the benefit of the provision of the treatment • be medically ineffective in prolonging life • be contrary to the patient's or surrogate's clearly documented desire not to receive artificially administered nutrition or hydration <p>A person can be fined up to \$10,000 if you don’t provide a horse with food & water, there is no such provision for humans.</p>	
HB 1892 By Rep. Rodriguez, E., et al.	Relating to the establishment of a Texas community school grant program.	Public Education	<p>HB 1892 requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to create a competitive grant program for schools to transition into Texas community schools. Texas community schools are campuses that seek partnerships between the school and the community, offering an array of resources in addition to academic instruction. From appropriated funds, TEA will award two-year grants for up to \$85,000 per academic year to schools transitioning, of which no more than \$60,000 will be for a full-time community school coordinator’s salary and no more than \$25,000 will be used to develop and implement a community school plan. The plan must demonstrate campus improvement and be approved by 75% of campus faculty and staff, 75% of parents whose children are student of the school, and the board of trustees. Ten percent of the funds appropriated to TEA for Texas community schools must set aside for public or private contracting, which will act as a technical provider in the implementation of the school plan. TEA is required to establish benchmarks and performance measures to determine the progress of a transitioning school and analyze how the community school will perform once the award is expired. The transition of a school will be monitored by TEA so that any deficiencies are addressed. This bill is critical in order to ensure a stable funding process for Texas community schools.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org
HB 2020 By Rep. Martinez, “M.” et al.	Relating to the scope of duties of an emergency medical technician- paramedic and a licensed paramedic.	Public Health	<p>Currently paramedics and licensed paramedics can work in a hospital, but only as an orderly, which does not allow them to use the skills they have cultivated and been trained to use. Paramedicine does not allow for much room for advancement, and this would provide an additional avenue of work for them, especially as paramedics get older and the fieldwork becomes too strenuous. Paramedics are already trained to do this type of work and this would just allow them to use their skills. This is a policy that already exists in some other states, such as Florida, and has been successful. Paramedics will be licensed and only perform the skills they are trained to perform; in addition they will be supervised by physicians. In accordance with department rules, a hospital must authorize the paramedic to work in the hospital. This would not take away from other professionals in hospitals, but add to the wealth of professional knowledge.</p> <p>Paramedicine is a young career, and it is often a career for the young. It requires a lot of physical stamina. If a paramedic gets injured on the job, their career is often over because climbing in and out of trucks, into ditches, and into dangerous environments requires able-bodied individuals. Giving paramedics a place to work in emergency rooms can help them by allowing them to continue to use their skillset when it is no longer feasible to do so in the field.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2205 By Rep. Crownover	Relating to educator preparation programs and appointment to the State Board for Educator Certification, including the appointment of a	Public Education	<p>HB 2205 changes the number of members of the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) to 15 members from 14 members. Immediately after passage, the Governor is required to appoint a nonvoting member to SBEC, who is not affiliated with a higher education institution and has experience with an alternative educator preparation program. The rules for educator preparation programs regarding sanction measures must include the Board’s procedures on changing accreditation status of programs. The bill expands the required information SBEC must make available for each educator preparation program to include:</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org

	nonvoting member with experience and knowledge of alternative educator preparation programs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> average ratio of supervisors to candidates completing student teach, clinical teaching, or an internship in the program and percentage of teachers employed under a teaching certificate after one year of completing the program. <p>Teachers are a significant influence in a student's life and it is important that legislation such as HB 2205 passes so educator preparation programs can be held accountable for preparing quality teachers to enter the workforce.</p>	
HB 1624 By Rep. Smithee	Relating to transparency of certain information related to certain health benefit plan coverage.	Insurance	Under current law, health insurance providers update their provider directories quarterly, leading to inaccurate or outdated information. In addition, health insurance providers do not post complete or easily accessible prescription drug formularies online and there is often no information about cost-sharing for prescription drugs under the plan available for shoppers until after a plan is purchased. This can leave a consumer with incomplete information when deciding on what insurance plan is right for them. HB 1624 ensures that the list of covered prescription drugs (called the drug formulary) is easily accessible by requiring a direct link to the formulary on the health insurance website. TDI will work with insurance companies to create a standardized formulary template that will include information about cost-sharing for each drug, and any requirements that the insurance company has before a certain drug can be accessed. The provider directory list must be updated monthly, as opposed to the current quarterly mandate, and easily accessible online. In addition, this bill will require provider directories to display a phone number or email address for consumers to report inaccurate information, and require plans to follow up within a week. Currently, plans have no obligation to respond to, and correct reports of inaccurate information.	Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
HB 3781 By Rep. Crownover, et al.	Relating to the creation of the Texas Health Improvement Network.	Public Health	HB 3781 creates the Texas Health Improvement Network (THIN), a multidisciplinary and multi-institution network to serve Texans, administratively attached to the University of Texas System. THIN would develop initiatives and translate research into best practices, to be disseminated to healthcare institutions and professionals. THIN would have stated goals of reducing per capita healthcare costs, improving the experience of care, and improving the health of Texans. It will have the authority to fund pilot programs, fund internships, and conduct research. The network shall be made up of faculty of general academic and health-related public and private institutions who have expertise in a variety of subject areas, including public health, mental health, nursing, social work, biostatistics, engineering, and computer science. The network shall work to reduce health disparities, improve quality of life, and reduce healthcare costs.	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 799 By Rep. Capriglione, et al.	Relating to a study conducted by the Legislative Budget Board on the impact to state agencies of federal regulations and mandates enacted by federal law.	State & Federal Power & Responsibility, Select	HB 799 addresses concerns that federal regulations and mandates over state agencies are costly and inefficient. It establishes that the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) must conduct a study over the fiscal effects of federal regulations and mandates for each state agency. The report must include a cost-benefit analysis of federal regulations, a list of all federal mandate costs lacking federal reimbursement, and recommendations for reducing the federal regulatory burden. This report must then be provided to the legislature. Federal regulations and mandates are necessary to continue receiving federal matching contributions which comprise a large portion of the state's budget. While more information is never a bad thing, we worry about the difficulty of seeing a report that is unbiased and informative. We do not agree with the premise that federal regulations and mandates are costly and inefficient in the first place.	Will of the House Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org
HB 1265 By Rep. Wu, et al.	Relating to a deceptive act or practice involving a solicitation in connection with a good or service.	Business & Industry	In 2014 the attorney general received 67 complaints regarding commercial entities that sent solicitations by mail, imitating governmental forms. Ironically, many of these entities fraudulently pretend to be the attorney general's office. The notices often carry insignia similar to the state's and threaten criminal penalties should the victim fail to remit payment. HB 1265 adds to the Deceptive Trade Practices Act statute, expanding the purview of misleading practices to include: delivering or distributing a solicitation imitating government and sending a solicitation resembling a check or invoice, unless labeled "SPECIMEN-NON-NEGOTIABLE." Some concern has been raised that this disclaimer will not be readily understood by the lay person, and something to the effect of "this is an ad" might	Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org

			work better. Deceptive mail solicitation often targets the elderly, who might not have the faculties to discern such deceit. HB 1265 will assist the attorney general in going after these bad actors and will hopefully put a stop to duplicitous tactics that diminish the brand of our state and government and extort our most vulnerable.	
HB 71 By Rep. González, M., et al.	Relating to the prosecution of the offense of indecency with a child.	Criminal Jurisprudence	When one is charged with indecency with a child, there is an affirmative defense to the accusation, if the actor is not more than three years older than the victim – colloquially known as the “Romeo and Juliet” defense. Currently, this defense is only available if the defendant is of the opposite sex of the victim. HB 71 removes this specificity, allowing for those of same or opposite sex from the victim protection under law. We don’t want to criminalize teen relationships, nor should we discriminate against young LGBT individuals, who are already at higher risk of suicide and depression. HB 71 applies current law more fairly. Further, it will relieve social workers and other mental health professionals from the discriminatory duty of having to report when a client is 17 years old and in a relationship with a 16 year old of the same sex.	Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 2150 By Rep. Alvarado, et al.	Relating to the organization of a grand jury and qualifications for service as a grand juror.	Criminal Jurisprudence	This bill updates the juror selection rules for grand juries to more closely align with the rules for petit juries. Currently, a challenge to a grand juror can only be made if the juror is not qualified or if he is the prosecutor of an accusation against the challenging party. HB 2150 adds to the causes by which an oral challenge may be made to attempt at impaneling a more competent grand jury. HB 2150 adds the following causes to challenge a grand juror: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insanity • suffers mental or physical defect • legally blind • is the witness in an investigation of the grand jury or served on a petit jury on another trial for the same conduct • reflects bias or prejudice toward the person accused • established a conclusion regarding innocence or guilt of the accused • is related to the accused within 3rd degree • demonstrates a bias against law relevant to the indictment. <p>HB 2150 also allows the recusal of a juror during the grand jury proceeding; an oral challenge would require the recusal of the juror until the cause no longer exists. If the juror refuses, they will be in contempt. HB 2150 also increases the number of alternate jurors from 2 to 4 and adds a cause of unavailability when a juror demonstrates unwilling or neglect in to serving.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Amanda Foster 512-763-0031 amanda@texaslsg.org
HB 603 By Rep. Davis, S., et al.	Relating to the creation of the offense of unlawful dissemination of certain visual material; providing penalties.	Criminal Jurisprudence	Revenge porn is the fairly recent criminal phenomena in which a retaliative person publicly shares sexually explicit visual material without consent of the person depicted in the material. HB 603 addresses revenge porn by creating a criminal offense for knowingly: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Disseminating materials of another engaged in sexual conduct or containing exposed intimate parts; 2) Obtaining the materials under circumstances that a reasonable person would have understood to be private; 3) Disseminating the materials without the individual’s consent; and 4) Disseminating the visual material in which the depicted person’s identity may be discerned from any information in the video. 	Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org

			<p>The bill provides a defense to prosecution if the dissemination is made in the lawful course of medical treatment, law enforcement, or a legal proceeding; if it was made in reporting unlawful activity; if the visual material is set in a commercial or public place; or the actor is an interactive computer service and the material was provided by another person. An offense of revenge porn is a state jail felony, punishable by a possible prison sentence of up to 6 months to 2 years and a fine of up to \$10,000.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised that “exposed intimate parts” might need to be more narrowly tailored in the bill, than intimate parts that are “visible through less than fully opaque clothing.” Opponents of such a law also questions its constitutionality. However, our Supreme Court upholds child pornography statute that is based upon <i>intentional action</i> and not the material itself, which is protected speech. This bill is based upon the active transgression of disseminating this material against another’s consent.</p> <p>Revenge porn degrades and dehumanizes women and often affects younger women who are more naïve in making life choices. It has become so pandemic that the major social media sites have all crafted policy preventing these obvious violations against persons. It’s time that we implement such a policy, as our laws should keep pace with technological advances and their abuses. It is imperative that HB 603 be adopted to stop subjecting Texas families and women to flagrant harassment and cruelty.</p>	
HB 211 By Rep. Rose	Relating to resuming a criminal case after a defendant is determined to be competent to stand trial.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>When someone is found incompetent to stand trial, they can then be sent for psychiatric treatment at the state hospital or to an out-patient program in order to restore their competency. Once competency is temporarily regained, they are sent back to the county jail, where once again their mental health capacity to stand may have deteriorated as they wait to stand trial. HB 211 seeks to establish a humane timeline for such proceedings. The bill requires the court to notify the defendant’s counsel within 24 hours of the defendant’s return to the county. The defendant’s attorney and the defendant must confer within three days of this notification to evaluate if there is a suggestion of incompetency present. The court must take action 5 days after the defendant returns to the court, or 20 days from the date that notification was made to the court that the defendant’s competency period was set to expire, which ever date is earlier. Court proceedings must resume within two weeks of the date that it was determined the victim’s competency was restored.</p> <p>Establishing a short timeline for adjudication for defendants with severe mental illness is necessary for a host of reasons: 1) county jails can’t force medication on detainees, and their policies can leave gaps in treatment; 2) delays in adjudication congest jails; 3) these patients are particularly expensive to house and care for; and 4) protracted proceedings, sending a defendant back and forth to restore competency, presents potential for a civil rights lawsuit. All persons have the right to a speedy trial. HB 211 promotes quicker adjudication for those who need it most, mindful of county resources, and more importantly, mindful of the health and well-being of the presumed innocent.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 2356 By Rep. Bohac	Relating to the territory that may be included in a single county election precinct.	Elections	<p>HB 2356 allows authorities to more easily combine county election precincts, nullifying statute requiring that each county election precinct or consolidated precinct only contain each of the following: a commissioners precinct, a justice precinct, a congressional district, a state representative district, a state senatorial district, or a State Board of Education district. This might mean that for consolidated precincts, an election official might be handling separate electronic ballots for the precincts represented, which they currently do on Election Day.</p> <p>The bill applies to a county with a population of fewer than 250,000 people and with only 500 registered voters in the precinct. Allowing these smaller counties to combine precincts will enable them to effectively pool resources (election personnel, equipment, and supplies) for an election, avoiding unnecessary costs.</p> <p>However, the bill also somewhat illogically applies to a county with a population of greater than 250,000 people but without a limit set</p>	Will of the House Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org

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			as to the number of registered voters in the precinct. The election code caps the number of registered voters in a precinct at 5,000, and that cap would prevail here. However, this could still create a cumbersome precinct if the county over-consolidates, causing confusion and long lines at a polling location. We are concerned about deterring voting.	
HB 2221 By Rep. Huberty, et al.	Relating to the procedures for municipal annexations.	Land & Resource Management	<p>Texas' current annexation laws were put in place as a grand compromise following Houston's annexation of Kingwood earlier in the 90's. The law is designed to encourage regional cooperation, and it has worked very well. This bill will undo all of that and does not exist.</p> <p>While there are understandably issues with unfettered annexation, there are also issues with limiting annexation. Unincorporated areas immediately outside city boundaries will proliferate with residents who access city services without having to pay for them. That is why the current legal structure works so well: it balances the competing interests in a way that is fair for both urban and rural Texans.</p> <p>It's one thing to tweak or update the law; HB 2221 instead dismantles it.</p> <p>HB 2221 will establish new procedures for and restrictions on annexation by municipalities. This bill prohibits municipalities from annexing an area for the limited purposes of applying its planning, zoning, health, and safety ordinances in the area. A municipality may annex an area that is noncontiguous to the boundaries of the municipality, if the area is in the municipality's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The municipality must negotiate a written agreement for the provision of services in the area with the owners of land in the area.</p> <p>Additionally, if the population of the area in question is less than 200, consent for annexation must be provided by 50% of the registered voters. If they do not own 50% of the land in question, then consent must be made by at least 50% of landowners. The bill sets out a 60-day petition period, and requires the petition be verified and residents will be notified of the results. Two public hearings will also be required, in addition to required number of signatures allowing for annexation. If the municipality does not garner enough signatures, they must wait one year before attempting to annex again.</p> <p>In areas with a population of 200 or more, consent, petition, and waiting period requirements are the same. However, two additional public hearings are required for final approval of annexation.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p> <p>Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
HB 2303 By Rep. Kuempel	Relating to a landowner's liability for injuries incurred during certain recreational activities.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	HB 2303 seeks to add off-road vehicles to the list of acceptable recreational activities under the Civil Practice and Remedies Code. Landowner's of agriculture lands that are designated for recreational use are not liable for injuries sustained by parties partaking in recreational activities; an exception to liability is if the landowner is willfully or grossly negligent.	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p> <p>Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org</p>
HB 2703 By Rep. Simmons, et al.	Relating to the establishment of the Texas Board of Behavior Analyst Examiners and the requirement to obtain a license to practice as a behavior analyst or assistant	Public Health	<p>HB 2703 creates the Texas Board of Behavior Analyst Examiners and requires licensure to practice as a behavior analyst or assistant behavior analyst. It clearly defines what is and is not under the purview of behavior analysis. It specifies membership requirements and the breakdown of the board; designates how often the board shall meet; and lays out training requirements for board members. The bill lays out provisions for when the board will issue licenses, perform disciplinary actions, and how filed complaints will be handled. It also provides title protection to the terms "licensed behavior analyst" and "licensed assistant behavior analyst," specifying that only those who are licensed may use that title.</p> <p>21 states already require behavior analysts be licensed. Currently, there is no licensing or regulating body for behavior analysts in</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p> <p>Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>

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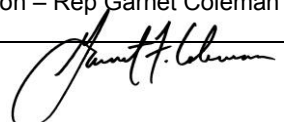


	behavior analyst; imposing fees; providing an administrative penalty; creating a criminal offense.		<p>Texas. This has resulted in some behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts being well-trained and others being untrained or poorly trained. These individuals work with children with Autism and other developmental delays, teaching life skills and working toward therapeutic goals. With Autism and other disorders, it is crucial to get proper services early for the best life outcomes. When parents cannot find qualified professionals because of a dearth of licensure requirements, the children suffer.</p> <p>Behavior analysis, or applied behavior analysis (ABA), is often expensive and, when done correctly, can be of tremendous value for children with Autism. Parents deserve to get the qualified services they are paying for, which could be helped by better regulation of behavior analysis in Texas. HB 2703 empowers parents to make informed decisions about the therapeutic services for their children, and protects children from being treated inappropriately by untrained individuals.</p>	
HB 3750 By Rep. Simmons	Relating to interim studies on real property owned by the state.	Land & Resource Management	<p>Of the 19 state agencies and numerous higher education institutes, no comprehensive list of real property held by the state exists. This lack of information is irresponsible and causes many problems, including the inability to properly insure state property. No successful business would operate for long without knowing the full degree of assets held, or if they were properly insured. Texas cannot afford to function so blindly.</p> <p>HB 3750 will require an interim study on insurable state assets to be conducted by the State Office of Risk Management (SORM). The study must be conducted using information provided by the LBB, which is required to collect a comprehensive list of real property data in conjunction with state agencies. In this way, SORM may develop a statewide strategy to ensure all state property is properly insured. SORM will also consolidate the LBB's information in a database by June 1, 2016, making it accessible to all legislators, state agencies, and institutes of higher learning.</p> <p>Additionally, Senate and House select committees on State Real Property Data Collection, Reporting, and Assessment will be created. These committees must study the factors specified in the bill in order to adopt recommendations and provide a report to the legislature.</p>	<p>Favorable</p> <p>Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
HB 2318 By Rep. Ashby, et al.	Relating to a credit or refund for diesel fuel taxes paid on diesel fuel used in this state by auxiliary power units or power take-off equipment.	Ways & Means	<p>HB 2318 states that if a motor fuel tax license holder or person paid tax on diesel fuel and the diesel fuel is used in Texas by auxiliary power units or power take-off equipment on any motor vehicle, that license holder can take a credit on a return. A person who does not hold a license may file a refund claim with the comptroller. The comptroller can use a percentage determination for ascertaining the amount of fuel that was purchased and is to be used for the aforementioned purposes, or they can use a device that measures the fuel separately from the fuel used to propel the vehicle should such a measurement be available. HB 2318 prohibits a credit or refund for the climate-control air conditioning or heating system of a motor vehicle that has a primary purpose of providing for the convenience or comfort of the operator or passengers</p> <p>This tax is specifically to pay for construction & maintenance of highways and roads, and tax comes from the fuel used to propel the vehicles own those roads. The state previously provided a tax refund for both gas and diesel, not just gas. This bill reinstates the provision. One small Texas business owner has 80 refrigerated trailers for food and pharmaceuticals that run on diesel. Last year, he bought 38,000 gallons of diesel fuel for them. The tax paid was roughly \$10,000, which could be a huge loss to a small company like his.</p> <p>However, while this seems like a reasonable cause to allow someone a tax exemption, there are some who are concerned that this-- combined with all the other 'reasonable' tax exemptions, and sales tax and franchise cuts-- will leave Texas with a budget deficit in future years.</p>	<p>Will of the House</p> <p>Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>

HB 3835 By Rep. Isaac	Relating to the use of certain alternative fuels by state agency motor vehicles.	Energy Resources	<p>Currently 50% of Texas’s fleet is required to use alternative fuels. HB 3835 wants to remove the option for ethanol or ethanol/gasoline blends of 85 percent or greater to be one of those alternative fuels. According to some reports, some fleets have been getting around the alternative fuels requirement by renting or leasing vehicles using traditional fuels. This bill requires the leased or rental vehicles to use alternative fuels as well. HB 3835 also disallows a state agency from purchasing or leasing a vehicle designed or used primarily for the transportation of individuals, including a station wagon, that has a wheelbase longer than 113 inches or that has more than 160 SAE net horsepower unless it will be converted to use the allowable alternative fuels, excluding ethanol or ethanol/gasoline blends of 85 percent or greater, and biodiesel or biodiesel/diesel blends of 20 percent or greater. Further, the bill removes an agency’s air quality reporting requirement in its annual financial report to the legislature.</p> <p>The premise behind such a bill is that ethanol and biodiesels don’t burn as cleanly and aren’t as good for the environment as the other fuels available. There has been much debate on that and the results are still inconclusive. Closing the leasing loop is great, and allowing fleets time to achieve this new standard is also reasonable. However, without conclusive evidence that this fuel is better for the environment, this may be more bureaucracy for little benefit.</p>	<u>Will of the House</u> Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
HB 2525 By Rep. Coleman	Relating to the appointment of counsel to represent indigent defendants in criminal cases.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>Current law does not designate which county is responsible for appointing counsel for an indigent person on an out-of-county warrant. This has led to arrestees remaining in jail for longer periods than necessary, particularly where the warrant-issuing county does not transport the arrestee to the warrant issuing count's jail or communicate with the arresting county. The legislation fills a gap in state law regarding which county is responsible to appoint counsel for an indigent person in custody on an out-of-county warrant. HB 2525 provides that the county that issued the warrant has the primary duty to appoint counsel for an out-of-county warrant. The bill creates a process for the arresting county to send the request for counsel to the warrant-issuing county. Upon receipt of the request, the warrant-issuing county has the same time limits for appointment of counsel that apply to other appointments of counsel under Texas law. If the county responsible for the warrant does nothing for more than ten days after the arrest of the person, the bill also provides that the arresting county has a duty to appoint counsel for the person for limited purposes related to release from custody. The arresting county may also seek reimbursement for the cost of this appointment of counsel from the warrant-issuing county. This bill clarifies an area of confusion for the counties regarding appointment of counsel on out-of-county warrants and creates an incentive for counties to transport arrestees to the county where the warrant originated in a timely manner.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Marisela Gomez 512-463-0760 info@texaslsg.org
HB 2571 By Rep. Johnson	Relating to the establishment and governance of certain regional transportation authorities.	International Trade & Intergovernmental Affairs	<p>When agencies produce strategic plans for the biennium, they currently do not take into account changes in weather patterns, climate variability, and water availability. HB 2571 addresses this concern by requiring the Texas state climatologist to provide a report detailing these items for use in pertinent agencies’ strategic plans. The report must include water availability, weather changes, and climate variability for a five year projected period and a 20 – 50 year projected period. The state agencies this bill applies to are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Agriculture • Texas Commission on Environmental Quality • General Land Office • Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs • Texas Department of Insurance • Parks and Wildlife Department • Department of Public Safety • Public Utility Commission of Texas • Office of the Comptroller 	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas A&M Forest Service • Texas Water Development Board <p>These agencies must incorporate into their strategic plans an analysis of the climatologists' data, a plan to manage risks associated with these projections, and any financial resources that will be needed to manage these risks.</p> <p>Incorporating weather, climate, and water projections will ensure that agencies are best prepared to face issues that will directly impact their planning and financial need. This is especially pertinent in light of Texas' frequent droughts.</p>	
HB 2646 By Rep. Giddings	Relating to the disclosure of information regarding communicable diseases to first responders and certain entities.	Public Health	<p>HB 2646 stipulates that medical or epidemiological information regarding cases or suspected cases of communicable diseases or health conditions is authorized to be released to government entities, providing first responders who need to be aware that they are potentially coming into contact with a highly contagious disease. Information regarding cases or suspected cases of communicable diseases is also authorized to be released to health authorities and health departments.</p> <p>HB 2646 comes as a result of the ebola outbreak in the last year, in which it became clear that a more uniform policy was needed in dealing with such diseases. This bill is tightly worded to protect both first responders and the individuals with the communicable diseases. First responders shall be informed that the individual they are to attend has a communicable disease, but after the monitoring period for the disease expires, the individual's identifying information will be removed from any computer database it was put in for responders. HB 2646 is a good balance of protecting patient privacy and public health.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2684 By Rep. Giddings	Relating to the creation of a model training curriculum and to the required training for school district peace officers and school resource officers.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues	<p>HB 2684 will mandate a school-site peace officer to undergo training specific to working within a school community with diverse cultural, socio-economic, and behavioral needs. Training is comprised of a 16 hour curriculum that is created, developed, and adopted by Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE). The training must be completed 120-days prior to site placement and the officer with receive a certificate of completion upon meeting all training requirements. TCOLE will update the training curriculum every four years.</p> <p>In today's public school climate, on-site police officers play a multi-faceted role within the school community. While their role in the course of a day can span from law enforcement officer to mediator, or counselor, often these officers are working with adolescents for the first time. More significantly, when disruptions occur in a classroom setting or a disciplinary intervention is required immediately, it is more likely that the peace officer is the first responder. This officer is tasked with the role of problem solving the root of the student's behavior, determining whether there are issues at home, and essentially talking the student off the ledge, so when he returns to class, he will no longer be a disruption to learning. The presence of a peace officer within a school community can have a tremendously positive impact on students and staff alike, if the officer is equipped with the proper tools.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to working with TEA, so that educational practitioners who are experienced in working with adolescents are involved in the development and training aspects of the curriculum. Further, training hours should be renewed every year, as new issues arise annually in working with adolescents. Teachers and peace officers alike need as much professional development as possible to be ready and equipped to best serve Texas' student population.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org
HB 2609 By Rep. Farney	Relating to providing training academies for public school teachers who provide mathematics instruction	Public Education	<p>In the school year 2013-2014, only 33% of third graders passed the STAAR test, and scored most poorly on the math section. Basic math is an essential component for children to learn, and teachers are struggling to help students succeed in this subject. Further, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields are currently in need of more graduates than the Texas school system is producing. It is important for teachers to learn and develop skills and techniques in math that can assist them in their teaching.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org

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	to students in kindergarten through grade three.		HB 2609 addresses this by requiring the commissioner of education to develop and create mathematics achievement academies. The academies will train K – 3 grade level teachers in effective and systematic instructional practices of math. The commissioner will decide criteria for selecting teachers eligible to attend an academy, but priority must be dedicated to selecting teachers whose district has 50% or more educationally disadvantaged students. A stipend will be provided for teachers attending the academies. Regional education service centers are required to assist the commissioner and the Texas Education Agency with activities relating to the development and operation of mathematics achievement academies, if requested.	
HB 3082 By Rep. Oliveira	Relating to increasing the amount of burial benefits required to be paid by an insurance carrier under the workers' compensation system.	Business & Industry	HB 3082 increases the burial benefits a worker's compensation insurance carrier is required to pay from \$6,000 to \$10,000, or the actual cost of the burial if it is less than \$10,000, when an employee's death is resultant of a compensable injury. It is unfair that Texas families' should shoulder the financial burden of a burial on top of the loss of their loved one, when we have failed to protect that worker. Texas has a high fatal occupational injuries rate, with 508 deaths reported in 2013. HB 3082 accounts for inflation, more accurately reflects funeral costs, and provides necessary relief to Texas families.	Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 2969 By Rep. Herrero	Relating to the provision of funding for indigent defense services.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>The need for indigent defense services is only increasing. However, since counties fund indigent defense through their property tax base, smaller counties are struggling to appoint counsel where it is desperately needed. Rural counties appoint attorneys for misdemeanors at a rate of 27%, compared to the 41% state average. HB 2969 seeks to assist counties in providing indigent defense services by providing 50/50 matching funds from the state when two or more counties enter into a partnership with a law school or non-profit indigent defense services office to provide lacking effective legal counsel. The bill requires Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) to determine eligible entities in a county to distribute grants to: the county, legal clinics within law schools, and/or a regional public defender. Each county that enters into an agreement to create or designate and to jointly fund a regional public defender's office would submit operational costs directly to the office, alleviating TIDC of an additional administrative burden of handling payment.</p> <p>HB 2969 maps a means to establish reliable indigent defense services for citizens in rural counties. It has been stated that the grants proposed under the bill will be continual, so as not to disrupt efforts and momentum made in these areas and to sustainably support programs. As a state we passed the Texas Fair Defense Act to better serve justice and to uphold the 6th Amendment rights of Texans, but we have largely left the counties to shoulder the cost. This bill uses existing resources to thoughtfully address the dearth of indigent defense in rural Texas.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 3163 By Rep. Cyrier, et al.	Relating to civil suits filed against board members of a groundwater conservation district and the liability of a member for certain actions taken by the board.	Natural Resources	<p>We are generally wary of putting immunity into law when our common law precedent is already appropriate, and this bill provides blanket immunity with no exceptions for malicious actions. Immunity from lawsuit for official actions is fine, but we want to be sure that this does not shield those who act outside their normal course of service and in a harmful manner.</p> <p>When resources get scarce, tensions rise. Texas has been in drought for over 10 years and as the population keeps growing the demand for water keeps rising and conflicts arise between property owners and the Ground Water Conservation Districts (GCD), elected to manage water in that region. HB 3163 aims to protect GCD directors and board members from individual liability when tempers escalate into litigation. HB 3163 classifies a GCD director as a district employee regardless if that director does not receive fees. The bill also grants immunity from suit and liability for official votes and actions for district board members.</p>	Will of the House with Concerns Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org

HB 3316 By Rep. Miller, D.	Relating to the time for recording a durable power of attorney for certain real property transactions.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	HB 3316 seeks to prevent breaks in title of real property by mandating that the power of attorney (POA) for a real property must be filed on or before the 10 th day of the transaction or it will be void. Unfortunately, this does not account for persons who are unable to file the POA with the ten day designation because they are on military deployment or have another viable reason to not meet the deadline. Of course, these concerns are measured and interest parties do not advocate for allowing years to pass that would allow someone to show up and file a POA. 10 days does not seem to be a reasonable time delay; however, there is merit to ensuring there are procedural safe guards that will protect the rightful owner’s chain of title.	<u>Will of the House with Concerns</u> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org
HB 1891 By Rep. Rodriguez, E., et al.	Relating to Texas community schools.	Public Education	<p>When a school cannot meet achievement standards, there are limited options on how to improve the campus. Only a few schools have taken the initiative to transition into a community school. These types of schools seek partnership with the community to provide an array of resources beyond academic instruction. The schools that transitioned are now successfully meeting and surpassing standards and have significantly increased participation of staff, parents, students, and the community. Integrating social services with education curriculum is the best method of ensuring that students get quality attention in and out of the classroom, which increases the likelihood of student success.</p> <p>HB 1891 allows schools that meet specified requirements—such as creating a community partnership team—to transition to a Texas community school. If a school transitions, it must satisfy stipulations of hiring an employee to implement and direct the transition and seek assistance from community resources. After the transition, the new Texas community school will hold meetings for the community, describing the school’s progress and seek improvements. Schools can receive support from gifts, grants, donations, and funds from federal or state agencies and private sponsors. The transition of becoming a Texas community school will be considered with existing options for a low-performing campus by a campus intervention team, and the commissioner of education is allowed to provide Texas community schools as an alternative to restoring a campus. Campuses labeled as unacceptable for two consecutive years can choose to transition to a Texas community school, as opposed to reconstitution by the commissioner, if the campus notifies the commissioner within two weeks of his order of reconstitution. Additionally, the commissioner is prohibited from closing an unacceptable campus, if he has not allowed the opportunity for the campus to transition to a Texas community school and successfully do so in two years.</p> <p>Allowing campuses to transition to Texas community schools, if facing significant challenges, offers schools the opportunity for restoration in a way that brings back success and liveliness into the once failing schools.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org
HB 2641 By Rep. Zerwas, et al.	Relating to the exchange of health information in this state; creating a criminal offense.	Public Health	HB 2641 allows medical and health professionals to access health information regarding their patients through Health Information Exchanges that meet national interoperability standards and can “talk” to each other fluidly, rather than having to go through multiple channels that are not easily accessible or efficient. Currently, patients with complex medical needs that see several specialists may have disjointed care because the specialists may not communicate well with each other. HB 2641 would help providers by standardizing how data is shared and help patients, who could avoid having additional unnecessary treatments, such as vaccines that had already been administered. HB 2641 promotes interoperability so that patients get the best possible care, while maintaining patient confidentiality standards.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2475 By Rep. Geren	Relating to the establishment of the center for alternative finance and procurement within the	State Affairs	HB 2475 directs the Partnership Advisory Commission to establish the center for alternative finance and procurement to assist government entities in providing current best practices for procurement and financing of qualified projects. In addition, the center would assist in the receipt of proposal negotiations of interim and comprehensive agreements and the management of qualifying projects. HB 2475 also requires a responsible governmental entity to receive assistance from the center to adopt and make publicly available guidelines before requesting or considering a proposal for a qualifying project. The entities must include criteria for the	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org

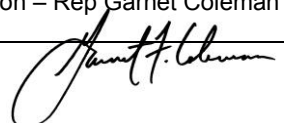
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	Texas Facilities Commission and to public and private partnerships; authorizing a fee.		<p>center's involvement in the procurement and delivery of the qualifying project and allows the responsible government entity to charge fees for the center's review and consultation.</p> <p>Going forward, capital investments may be difficult as states and local governments face budget deficits, revenue shortfalls and opposition to new taxes. Some say that Texas will need to invest \$46 billion in the next 20 years- \$34 in water, and the rest in wastewater, just to maintain the current standards. Local governments in Texas, when confronted with the need to replace obsolete assets, build new facilities, while facing ever increasing Federal regulatory standards will need every financing tool available to upgrade and maintain municipal and utility systems.</p> <p>HB 2475 is an excellent way to make sure that private public partnerships are fair, transparent and take into account the public's best interest. It is a resource that enables mayors, county executives and agency leaders to conduct a thorough financial review and analysis of the potential public/private initiatives.</p>	
HB 964 By Rep. Howard, et al.	Relating to the calculation of the rollback tax rate of a school district.	Ways & Means	HB 671 gives school districts the flexibility to raise property tax rates without an election as long as it is within limits already approved by voters. Currently school districts must have a Tax Rate Election (TRE) any time they raise the property tax rate. If rates are lowered in a time of surplus, the district must bear the cost of another election to raise rates again, even if it is within limits previously approved.	Favorable Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
HB 215 By Rep. Harless, et al.	Relating to waiving the fee for a fishing license for residents of this state who are at least 65 years of age.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism	HB 215 amends the Texas Parks and Wildlife code to allow senior citizens waivers for the resident fishing license.	Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
HB 2804 By Rep. Aycok	Relating to evaluation of public school performance.	Public Education	<p>HB 2804 reduces reliance on standardized testing for measuring school performance by making three major additions: (1) revised domains for evaluating district, (2) new indicators for quality of learning and achievement to assess districts and campuses, and (3) campus A-F performance ratings.</p> <p>The bill requires the commissioner of education to adopt achievement indicators that evaluate school districts and campuses based on five domains. The current performance rating system has four performance indexes, which are very similar to the proposed 1-4 domains in this bill, but certain additional information is added to each. HB 2804 adds a fifth domain that considers community and student engagement. The new domain requires districts and campuses to choose three programs or categories, in which the district and campus will be evaluated. As of today, campuses must meet all 4 indexes to be deemed acceptable. If one of the indexes is not successfully achieved, the campus is labeled unacceptable.</p> <p>When determining a campus rating, domains are weighted as such: 55% for domains 1-3, 35% for domain 4, and 10% for the newly added fifth domain. Based on all five domains, each district and campus will be given an overall performance rating A-F. Additionally, a separate performance rating will be given based on the first four domains.</p> <p>Furthermore, in this bill the commissioner is required to adopt indicators of the quality of learning and achievement to measure and evaluate school districts and campuses in the following:</p>	Unfavorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org

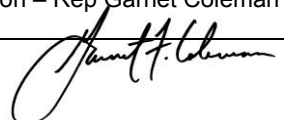
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving student preparedness for success in subsequent grade levels and entering the workforce, the military, or postsecondary education reducing, with the goal of eliminating, student academic achievement differentials among students from different racial and ethnic groups and socioeconomic backgrounds informing parents and the community regarding campus and district performance in the five domains, with the fifth domain in accordance with local priorities and preferences. <p>Although this bill makes necessary changes to evaluate schools a bit more holistically, the performance rating of A-F for districts and campuses is a system that stigmatizes schools which serve impoverished communities. School campuses who are most likely to receive an unacceptable rating are lower-income schools with majority of educationally disadvantaged students and ethnically minority students, who have limited resources and continuously struggle. In addition to this concern, districts are unable to receive an 'A' performance rating, if any of the campuses within the district receive a 'D' or 'F' rating. The district is thus reprimanded by not being able to achieve an exemplary rating because of campuses that were labeled unacceptable.</p>	
HB 1754 By Rep. Pickett	Relating to the conveyance of property by a municipality for the public purpose of economic development.	Economic & Small Business Development	Through HB 1754, municipalities with an economic development agreement are permitted to transfer real property or an interest in real property to an entity. The transfer is only authorized if the entity who receives the property uses it to promote the economic development of a municipality. Before the transfer is initiated, the municipality will publish two notices in a newspaper that describes the real property and location, ten days before the property is transferred. Allowing municipalities to transfer properties to businesses encourages local economic growth that can open up opportunities such as employment.	Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org
HB 777 By Rep. Riddle, et al.	Relating to the punishment for the offense of indecent exposure.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>Obviously sex-related crimes are horrible, but we often run into the problem of people receiving a correspondingly severe penalty for actions that are not in the spirit of the law. There are obvious distinctions between an individual exposing themselves and someone caught reliving themselves in public or a college student doing something common-but-dumb. While neither instance is appropriate, we were all young and obviously these acts are not the target of our laws. We therefore hesitate to recommend increasing the severity of these laws – particularly for a one time offense – without further justification that this is necessary or even helpful.</p> <p>HB 777 enhances the penalty for the offense of indecent exposure. It makes it a Class A misdemeanor if the defendant has previously been convicted of the offense, or a state jail felony if the defendant has been convicted two or more times previously. Currently, the offense of indecent exposure is a Class B misdemeanor, regardless of how many times the person has been convicted. There are concerns that this creates a loop of continuous re-offenses because of the lack of stringent penalties.</p> <p>However, a felony is a serious concern that can block people from getting a job or housing when they are dinged on a background check. People committing minor crimes often do not consider the long-term consequences. A felony can ruin someone's life. Indecent exposure is not necessarily a major crime and may be committed when a person is intoxicated or otherwise impaired, or even by a person with an intellectual or developmental delay.</p>	Will of the House Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2088 By Rep. Rodriguez, J., et al.	Relating to an interim study regarding the method by which certain trial and appellate judges are selected.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	HB 2088 establish an interim committee for the 2016-17 biennium to review methods of fairness, effectiveness, and desirability by which judges and justices are selected to the Texas judiciary. The committee will be comprised of senators and house representatives, who will be selected by the Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House, respectively. Membership from each chamber must include three members each from the minority and majority parties. The Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the house will each select a co-chair. The interim committee will be called to session by the co-chairs.	Favorable Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org

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			Justices and judges comprise the most powerful body of the judiciary branch, so it is imperative that the selection of these officers to the Texas courts are of the upmost integrity and impartiality in their duties. Additionally, given the high rate of Blacks and Latinos incarcerated in Texas jails, single mothers as heads of household, concerns regarding border security and immigration, and disparities between rural and urban municipalities, it would be of equally great benefit to see women and people of color selected to the committee.	
HB 3481 By Rep. Goldman	Relating to a fishing license fee waiver for certain residents.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism	HB 3481 waives the resident fishing license fee for individuals aged 65 years older.	Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
HB 1845 By Rep. King, S.	Relating to increasing the criminal penalty for causing certain assaultive physical contact with a child.	Criminal Jurisprudence	HB 1845 increases the penalty from a Class C misdemeanor to a Class A misdemeanor when assault involving physical contact is committed against a child. This enhanced penalty will bring statute in line with how assault against elderly and disabled individuals is penalized. Since children are a vulnerable group similar to the elderly and disabled populations, it is inconsistent to treat offenses against children differently. HB 1845 moves to better protect children by strengthening the laws protecting them.	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 3977 By Rep. Dukes	Relating to increasing the penalty for causing injury to a child; changing the eligibility for community supervision.	Criminal Jurisprudence	HB 3977 enhances penalties for first degree felony offense of serious bodily injury to a child. It increases the incarceration term to at least 10 years, rather than five years, and removes eligibility for community supervision in the form of probation. Parole would still be an option. The charge most often filed when addressing child fatalities due to abuse is “injury to a child causing serious bodily injury.” This would only apply to those who knowingly and intentionally caused the serious disfigurement or death of a child, and it would not extend to recklessly or accidentally causing the death or disfigurement of a child. HB 3977 will more severely punish individuals who cause the permanent disfigurement or death of a child, bringing Texas statute in line with other states. Child abuse is a serious crime and punishment needs to fit the crime.	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 1777 By Rep. Giddings	Relating to prohibiting an employer from accessing the personal online accounts of employees and job applicants through electronic communication devices; establishing an unlawful employment practice.	Business & Industry	HB 1777 prohibits employers from accessing personal social media and other online accounts of employees and job applicants, or from requesting account information or passwords from employees or job applicants. There are exceptions for individuals in the financial sector who have a written agreement with the employer, as well as for those who update social media platforms for the employer or accounts used to conduct business. In recent years, there have been an increasing number of incidents in which employers are mandating that employees or job applicants give out their password and user account information for personal accounts. This violation of privacy puts employees and applicants in a difficult position: Give up their right to private personal lives or lose their job or job opportunity. Additionally, access to such information could give rise to incidents of discrimination against potential employees on the basis of sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, or religion. HB 1777 protects employees from unnecessary and unlawful invasions of privacy and discrimination, while protecting employers’ rights to monitor how employer-issued technology is used on company time.	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org

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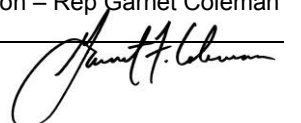
HB 3579 By Rep. Alonzo	Relating to the expunction of records and files relating to an offense for which a person is arrested.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>In current Texas statute, the terms “arrest,” “charge,” and “offense” are used almost interchangeably, creating confusion regarding expunction laws. For example, if a person is arrested and charged with multiple offenses and one of those charges is unjustly accused, can that one charge be expunged or is it an issue of the whole arrest staying on record or being expunged? Many Texas courts took the former as the spirit of the law, allowing individual charges to be expunged when they were inappropriate. However; a recent court case interpreted the statute more stringently, resulting in the needing to keep arrests on the books if any charge is valid. Because background checks are required for most employment opportunities, most housing units, and professional licensure application, even a dismissed case can negatively impact an individual’s life. For that reason, it is important that individual charges that were unjustly accused be expunged.</p> <p>HB 3579 updates statute to clarify what may and may not be expunged from public record. It clarifies what records and files may be expunged, to include dismissed cases, as well as conditions that must be met for expunction. It reduces the wait time for expunction when a person has met all other conditions for expunction: a person is entitled for expunction for a Class C misdemeanor after 30 days, rather than 180 and for a Class B or Class A misdemeanor after 90 days rather than one year. HB 3579 expands the information an individual is entitled to have expunged from their records to include identifying information of the person in another person’s arrest, including if the other person falsely identified themselves as the non-implicated person. HB 3579 upholds the spirit of the law, maintaining the standard of innocence until proven guilty. It prevents innocent individuals from having their names tarnished with something they were accused, but never convicted, of.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2503 By Rep. Zerwas	Relating to examination requirements for certain applicants for a license to practice medicine.	Public Health	<p>HB 2503 requires each physician applying for license to practice medicine to pass the whole medical examination within 12 attempts. The bill does not affect current statute that each individual section must be passed within 3 attempts. It solely specifies that the collective exam must be passed in 12 attempts. The bill also gives an applicant who is (1) licensed in another state, (2) specialty board certified by a specialty board that is approved by the American Board of Medical Specialties or the American Osteopathic Association, and (3) is to practice in a medically underserved area for at least three years, five attempts to pass each section. HB 2503, in essence, encourages out-of-state qualified doctors to come to Texas to practice, relieves some of the burden in health professional shortage areas, and brings care to underserved populations.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2893 By Rep. Frullo	Relating to the licensing of insurance agents and adjusters; providing a penalty.	Insurance	<p>Recently, there has been an increased demand for agent and adjuster licenses in Texas. This, coupled with the greater complexity of certain filings, has strained agency resources and TDI's ability to deliver licensing services in a timely manner while simultaneously providing high-quality customer service. HB 2893 subjects license renewals for a license issued by TDI for surplus lines agents, insurance agents, and insurance adjusters to the same expiration schedule as newly issued licenses and specifies that each such license expires on the second anniversary of the date the license is issued to or renewed by a person. In effect, the license acquired by an insurance adjusters shall be in need of renewal, every two years, on their birthday, whether they received licensure on even or odd number years. This will alleviate confusion on behalf of the licensee, and create an easier remembered license renewal date.</p> <p>Additionally, HB 2893 mandates that continuing education requirements for insurance licensure is increased and TDI’s purview over continuing education is expanded. It clarifies waiting period provisions for license reapplication after a revocation or denial. It authorizes TDI to grant licensure to individuals who were licensed in another state and move to Texas, if the license is comparable and certain requirements are met. HB 2893 improves and cleans up insurance licensure statute.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org

HB 3010 By Rep. Simmons, et al.	Relating to the consideration of ownership interests of certain persons with disabilities in determining whether a business is a historically underutilized business for purposes of state contracting.	State Affairs	HB 3010 expands the definition of ‘economically disadvantaged person’ to include persons with a disability for the purposes of qualifying as a historically underutilized business (HUB). Currently HUBs consist of business where at least 51% of the stock, ownership, assets or interest are held by an economically disadvantaged person. Economically disadvantaged people for the purpose of HUB include people of color, women, and veterans. State agencies are encouraged to contract with HUBs, and HUBs are eligible for the mentor-protégé program to foster long-term relationships between prime contractors and historically underutilized businesses.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
HB 3500 By Rep. Thompson, S.	Relating to judicial proceedings on a petition to set aside a conviction or an order of expunction of criminal history record information for certain victims of trafficking of persons or compelling prostitution who are convicted of prostitution.	Criminal Jurisprudence	HB 3500 would allow for convictions related to prostitution committed as a trafficking victim to be set aside and expunged if the victim can prove that criminal activity was compelled of the victim by a trafficker. HB 3500 sets up a process for victims to petition to get these convictions set aside. The petition will be heard in court if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the facts alleged in the petition are accurate. All due process and rights to the defendant, including counsel if the defendant is indigent, apply to the petition hearing. If the records that are to be expunged are needed to apprehend and try the trafficker or traffickers that compelled the victim to engage in criminal acts, law enforcement agencies may retain the expunged records solely for that purpose providing the victim’s identifying information is redacted. HB 3500 would protect victims who have been sexually abused by pimps and traffickers, who engaged in prostitution under duress, from further violations of civil rights. Victims convicted of prostitution often struggle to find work, to be able to rent an apartment, and from going to college because felony convictions often preclude people from accessing those things. This makes it difficult, sometimes impossible, for victims to move on with their lives. HB 3500 provides an avenue so that these individuals can successfully start over.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 3980 By Rep. Frullo	Relating to requiring a coverage summary or other informational material to accompany certain insurance policies; adding a provision that may be subject to a criminal penalty.	Insurance	Current residential or automobile insurance can be difficult for everyday Texans to understand. It is very difficult for anyone not an expert in insurance policy matters to fully comprehend the policies being purchased. HB 3980 seeks to alleviate some of the confusion by requiring insurance companies to issue a coverage summary, or other informational material, that helps the policyholder understand the insurance policy when policy is delivered.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
HB 4047 By Rep. Allen	Relating to the extension to open-enrollment charter school employees of certain rights granted to school district employees.	Public Education	HB 4047 protects open-enrollment charter school teachers, extending protections currently given to public school teachers. It stipulates that teachers at charter schools shall not be coerced or otherwise forced to join any group, club, committee, or organization. It also states that educators at charter schools have the right to join or refuse to join any professional association or organization they wish. HB 4047 extends equal protection under the law to charter schools, which are operated partly on taxpayer dollars and should be treated equally.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org

HB 1124 By Rep. Workman	Relating to adjudicating of claims arising from written contracts with state agencies.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	<p>HB 1124 creates continuity across existing statutes by waiving sovereign immunity when a breach occurs between state agencies in contracts with engineering, architectural, or construction services. This only applies in situations in which the amount of controversy is not less than \$250,000. If the state is in breach of a contractual obligation, then it should be responsible to the parties with which it contracted.</p> <p>HB 1124 also amends current adjudication awards owed by the state for breach of contract by removing the necessity for an express provision for compensation. It adds that compensation owed to a contractor must be paid based on additional work owed as per the contract, along with reasonable attorney's fees and certain consequential damages.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org
HB 3196 By Rep. Miller, D., et al.	Relating to the prosecution of the offense of improper photography or visual recording; increasing a criminal penalty.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>Photography and visual recording is generally construed to be protected speech, but when a person's photography or recording violates another person's right to reasonable privacy, it becomes problematic. There have been instances in which a person has photographed or recorded another person's intimate or sexual parts up skirts or in changing rooms under doors. Cell phone cameras make this much easier, and people have been coerced into having photographs taken of their intimate parts or else photographs were taken without the victim's knowledge.</p> <p>HB 3196 clarifies what is considered improper photography or visual recording of another person. The act of knowingly being involved in the photography or visual recording, broadcasting, or transmitting inappropriate images, defined as another person's clothed or unclothed intimate or sexual parts, for sexual gratification or other sexual purposes when a reasonable person would believe that the person's sexual or intimate parts or sexual conduct would not be visible to the public is a state jail felony. If a minor is the victim, it is a third-degree felony. Without consent is defined to include if the victim is unable to consent due to intoxication or unconsciousness; being under 18 years old; if the victim was compelled to consent through violence or threat of violence; the victim lacks the mental capacity to consent and the actor knows this; and/or the actor uses their position as a public official to coerce a person to participate.</p> <p>HB 3196 makes positive strides to protect people from being photographed or recorded in sexually explicit ways without their knowledge or consent.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2012 By Rep. Sheets	Relating to occupational license application and examination fees for certain military service members, military veterans, and military spouses.	Defense & Veterans' Affairs	<p>While many veterans take advantage of Hazelwood and GI, not all veterans wish to attend college. Many veterans already have families, and need to provide for them upon discharge. Often, duties and training in the military go above and beyond training received by civilians as it related to licensure training for certain jobs, such as welding or mechanics. In addition, military spouses also have the undue burden of having to resubmit to examination and licensure for certain professions when the military spouse is relocated to Texas. Requiring our veterans to undergo the examination and licensure process for skills they in which they have the military equivalent is unnecessary and burdensome.</p> <p>HB 2012 will waive the examination and license fees for a member of the military, or veteran, whose service, training, and education meet the requirements set forth in the license. Military spouses will also be exempt, should they hold a current license issued by another jurisdiction that is substantially equivalent to the Texas licensure requirements.</p> <p>This bill will allow for an easier transition into civilian life for those exiting the military, and allow spouses to more quickly provide for their families.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org

HB 3090 By Rep. Miles	Relating to the regulation of for-profit legal service contract companies, administrators, and sales representatives; providing an administrative penalty; authorizing a fee; requiring an occupational registration.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures	HB 3090 updates outdated statute relating to the licensing and regulation of for-profit legal service contract companies. HB 3090 establishes a mandatory review process for companies seeking legal contract services through TDLR. Under HB 3090, for-profit legal entities will need to submit to TDLR a deposit of surety, and upon registration and renewal, undergo an audit process laid out in the bill. TDLR can impose penalty against companies that are not complicit. In the event the legal company becomes bankrupt or cannot perform in good faith, TDLR has authority to distribute funds trust. HB 3090 also lays out provisions for group service legal contracts and cancellation of contracts.	Favorable Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org
HB 2852 By Rep. Nevárez	Relating to municipal fees charged to public school districts for water and sewer service.	Natural Resources	<p>Water bills are normally based on the amount of water an entity has used, as well as applicable taxes and fees. In 2009, however, the school districts, La Feria ISD and La Villa ISD, were charged per head each employee and student on top of the volume of water consumed. At one point, the bills were so excessive that one of the schools had to temporarily shut down services.</p> <p>HB 2852 prohibits municipally owned utilities from taking advantage of school districts in this fashion and mandates that a municipally owned utility that provides retail water or sewer utility service to a public school district may not charge the district a fee based on the number of district students or employees in addition to the rates the utility charges the district for the service. Furthermore, the bill provides unfairly charged schools a recourse via filing a petition with the Public Utility Commission (PUC), with burden of proof of compliance held by the municipality.</p> <p>This bill was originally meant to be local and consent, but it was expanded to make sure that other schools in Texas are not taken advantage of.</p>	Favorable Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
HB 2594 By Rep. Parker, et al.	Relating to the modification or termination of restrictions by petition in certain real estate developments with certain amenities.	Business & Industry	Currently, there are restrictions that prevent unused or unkempt golf courses and country clubs in neighborhoods from being used for any other purpose, which has led to some golf courses and country clubs becoming rundown because upkeep is not tended to, thus driving property values down. HB 2594 allows an unused neighborhood golf course or country club to be repurposed for alternative use provided it has been unused and/or unkempt for the previous 36 months and a petition with at least 75% of the homeowners affected approving of the alternative use using a restricted dedicatory instrument. Dedicatory instruments that already have provisions in place to allow for modification or termination of a golf course or country club with 100% of residents' approval are exempt from HB 2594. The bill lays out rules and regulations for the circulation of a petition, including who may circulate it, what a petition must include, and how the petition may be circulated. HB 2594 allows communities to decide by petition and majority agreement how <i>unused or dilapidated</i> property in the neighborhood may be used.	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 108 By Rep. Guillen	Relating to certain lottery prize winners' choice to remain anonymous.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures	HB 108 allows lottery prize winners to preserve anonymity from the general public. The lottery winner or winning entity may remain anonymous so long as the prize is equal to or greater than \$1 million and not paid in installments. If installment payments are made, then after 30 days, the Texas Lottery Commission (TLC) can disclose the winner's identifying information. TLC can disclose the winner's city and county of origin; this does not preclude federal tax provisions.	Favorable Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org

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HB 2642 By Rep. Thompson, S.	Relating to the transfer of the licensing and regulation of charitable bingo to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation and regulation by counties of amusement redemption machine game rooms on bingo premises; requiring an occupational permit; authorizing fees and taxes; creating civil and administrative penalties; increasing a criminal penalty.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures	<p>The Texas Legislature convened a special committee during the last biennium to review the licensing and regulation of charitable bingo, based on concerns that the state was profiting more than the charitable bingo establishments or local municipalities. HB 2642 proposes the greatest reform to charitable bingo legislation that Texas has seen in 30 years.</p> <p>The reform strategy proposed under HB 2642 would adopt the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A three-tiered system requiring charities to meet specific performance standards established in the bill (2) Convert the state prize tax into a player contribution that is deposited directly into the charity's general fund instead of routing through state coffers, which are time consuming and costly to local municipalities (3) Regulation through the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR), which will give local municipalities greater enforcement over illegal gaming rooms <p>Enacting HB 2642 will allow charitable bingos to receive enough money under the tiered system to make a profit and successfully compete against illegal gaming operations. This tiered approach will be phased in over approximately 3 years.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org
HB 3443 By Rep. Laubenberg	Relating to a written policy of certain state agencies on the collection and possible sale of an individual's personal information.	Government Transparency & Operations	HB 3443 mandates state agencies that use or sell personal information must adopt policy to govern the collection, use and sale of such data. Further, the agencies must post on their websites the policy and a disclaimer that personal information collected by the agency is used or sold. HB 3443 increases transparency in government by alerting the public as to when personal information may be collected, used, or sold by state agencies.	Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2762 By Rep. Laubenberg, et al.	Relating to certain petitions prescribed by law outside the Election Code.	Elections	<p>HB 2762 allows citizens to file a petition to repeal a city ordinance, order, or resolution no later than 90 days after the later of the passage or publishing of the order. If the municipal authority responsible for verifying the authenticity of the petition finds that there are not enough valid signatures, the authority is required to provide all grounds for invalidating a signature. If a petition is invalidated and refiled, the authority may not make a second determination of invalidity based on grounds that existed but were not expressed for the initial petition. These changes would not apply to municipal charters.</p> <p>The bill requires the municipality to make a petition form available on their website that complies with all applicable state and local law. A filed petition may not be invalidated for failure to supply information that the municipality's form did not provide or did not request. While framed to encourage democracy, HB 2762 seems to be proposed in response to recent fracking bans, equality ordinances, and other ballot initiatives.</p>	Will of the House Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 339 By Rep. Farias	Relating to leave for certain veterans returning to state employment.	Defense & Veterans' Affairs	<p>There are often numerous duties a service member must complete when returning from active duty. Reintegration programs are beneficial to veterans returning to employment, as readjusting to civilian life can be difficult. The need for post-deployment leave or reintegration time for returning state employees who are veterans is currently not adequately addressed.</p> <p>HB 339 will grant service members, who were employed by a state agency, who return work after military service to be granted 15 days each fiscal year to attend to reintegration requirements and needs. This allows veterans time to obtain medical or mental health care and receiving employee assistance counseling. The veteran will be granted the 15 days with no penalty to sick time, vacation days, or a</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org

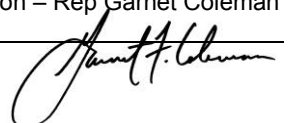
			decrease in salary. This will help veterans better adjust to life after military duty, and help create a more stable home and work environment for all associated with said veteran.	
HB 1181 By Rep. Shaheen	Relating to the maintenance of information entered into a fee record.	Criminal Jurisprudence	Counties often have outstanding debt on their books when court fines and fees cannot be collected. HB 1181 authorizes officers who have reason to believe that a defendant is deceased, serving a life sentence, or has a fee that has gone unpaid for 10 years, to request that such debt be designated as uncollectable. This will allow counties to write off these uncollected fees to provide for more accurate financial reporting and to quit wasting human resources seeking out fees that cannot reasonably be recouped.	Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 2161 By Rep. Simmons	Relating to the regulation of certain private security companies and occupations; expanding the applicability of an occupational license.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	HB 2161 strengthens licensing requirements for private security companies that install camera equipment in homes, schools, and businesses. It prohibits any person from acting as a camera services company without being licensed to do so. HB 2161 requires that all people representing themselves as camera system installers have a background check done on them in the last year verifying that the individual has no sexual offenses or Class A misdemeanors or felonies in their past. Currently, there are concerns that some installers have criminal backgrounds, including child molestation charges, because current regulations do not necessarily require background checks. While it is important that employers not discriminate based on criminal background, it is equally important that children and the public be protected from individuals who are prohibited from working with or around children due to past offenses. Licensure and oversight is important and needs to be used to protect the public, but overzealously presuming that any individual who commits any Class A misdemeanor is unsuitable might not be wise.	Will of the House Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 934 By Rep. Dale, et al.	Relating to the disqualification from receiving unemployment benefits of certain individuals who are terminated from employment after giving notice of resignation.	Economic & Small Business Development	HB 934 prohibits an individual from collecting unemployment benefits after voluntarily leaving work if one of the following reasons occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an individual left their last employer after giving advance notice to the employer of the individual's resignation an individual left for a reason that isn't considered qualifying circumstances for individual to not be disqualified for such benefits an individual's employer terminated the employee before the date stated in an advance notice of resignation. Disqualification for unemployment benefits applies regardless of whether the employer paid the individual for the entire notice period. Although, this bill is intended to address a loophole for legitimate concerns, it inevitably causes another loophole. The language from the bill allows an employee who gives their employer significant advance notice of resignation, such as six or nine months ahead of time, to be disqualified for unemployment benefits if he or she is fired within the time before they leave their position. The effort is conducted in a considerate and polite manner, but may easily be taken advantage of. This bill sends the message that employees should not give notice unless absolutely required, otherwise you risk losing employment benefits.	Unfavorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org
HB 37 By Rep. Cook, et al.	Relating to the reporting of certain contributions and political expenditures by certain persons; adding provisions subject to a	State Affairs	Current law requires Political Action Committees, (PACs), to disclose their political expenditures and contributors, but some groups do not meet the technical definition of a PAC, even though they are spending a considerable amount of money to influence campaigns. HB 37 closes the gap on current campaign money disclosure laws and seeks to protect voters. The bill requires all non-PACs to report on its expenditures if it accepts one or more contributions over \$2,000 during a reporting period, or spends more than \$25,000 in a calendar year to influence elections.	Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org

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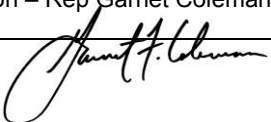
	criminal penalty.		<p>The initial report disclosing contributions in an amount between \$2,000 or \$25,000 must include all contributions in connection with campaign activity accepted from a person that exceed \$2,000, as well as, all political expenditures made in the immediate preceding 12 months of the contribution, or the making of the political expenditure that triggers the reporting requirements.</p> <p>This legislation is necessary to make political expenditures and contributions more transparent. It is imperative to make changes requiring everyone to play by the same rules, so that Texas can maintain the transparency in its democracy. More importantly, elected officials need to be held to a higher standard because they hold great influence and the public needs be informed if their political leaders are working for the citizens of Texas or working out of someone else's pocket.</p>	
HB 4105 By Rep. Bell, et al.	Relating to the issuance, enforcement, and recognition of marriage licenses and declarations of informal marriage.	State Affairs	<p>HB 4105 bars state and local officials from granting, enforcing or recognizing marriage licenses for gay and lesbian couples even if the U.S. Supreme Court strikes down the state's ban on same-sex marriage. Furthermore, if a state agency finds that a marriage fee or a declaration of informal marriage fee was collected, then \$30 or \$12.50 respectively shall be remitted to the comptroller by the country clerk.</p> <p>There is nothing good about this bill. HB 4105 would bring to Texas the same firestorm of criticism that swept through Indiana and other states that have passed bills promoting discrimination against gay and transgender people and their families. Passing bills that make Texas look intolerant and unwelcoming will harm the state's brand and undermine its economy by alienating businesses, tourists and national organizations that will refuse to come here.</p> <p>Texas would be constitutionally bound by a Supreme Court ruling striking down state bans on same-sex marriage. But litigation to overturn bills like HB 4105 would be costly and could take months or even years. This lengthy litigation would impose great financial burden on Texas tax payers, many of whom do not agree with the discrimination of LGBT couples that this bill fosters.</p> <p>Equality is good for individuals and good for the economy. Let's not exacerbate the legal discrimination mistakes that we have made in the past.</p>	<p>Unfavorable</p> <p>Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
HB 1048 By Rep. Farias, et al.	Relating to the redesignation of veterans court programs as veterans treatment court programs, the administration of those programs, the expunction of arrest records and files for certain participants who successfully complete a program, and the issuance of orders of nondisclosure for	Insurance	<p>Too often, our men and women returning from combat suffer from emotional and physical issues, such as PTSD and traumatic brain injury. Treatment and care at VA clinics is woefully inadequate, leading many service members to self-medicate, either through alcohol, tobacco, or prescription drugs. Although illicit drug use is lower among U.S. military personnel than among civilians, heavy alcohol and tobacco use-- and especially prescription drug abuse-- are much more prevalent and are on the rise. Veterans who enter the criminal justice system often reflect these needs and addictions. Recognizing the issues faced by our veterans, Texas has a significant number of court programs currently operating. These programs offer an alternative to jail or prison for eligible veterans who enter the criminal justice system, many of whom are dealing with drug or substance dependence. The programs mimic drug and mental health courts, but are specifically tailored to suit the need of veterans.</p> <p>HB 1048 will allow more veterans access to these courts by widening the criteria for inclusion. Now included are veterans convicted of any misdemeanor or felony offense who are placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for their offense(s). This bill also removes the eligibility requirement that a brain injury, illness, disorder, or trauma (sexual or non) must have occurred in a combat zone or other similar hazardous duty area, and makes all veterans with such conditions eligible. In addition, a veteran will be included in the program should it be determined that their rehabilitation will ensure public safety, based on the veteran's conduct, personal and social</p>	<p>Favorable</p> <p>Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>

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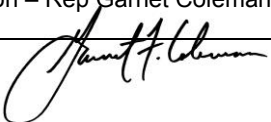
	participants convicted of a misdemeanor; changing a fee.		background, and criminal history.	
HB 2701 By Rep. Pickett	Relating to the regulation of motor vehicles by the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Public Safety; creating and modifying criminal offenses; amending provisions subject to a criminal penalty; imposing, authorizing, and increasing fees.	Transportation	<p>HB 2701 is omnibus legislation related to the regulation of motor vehicles by the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV). The bill updates current statute, revises lemon laws, and is peppered throughout with proposed bills, regarding: vehicle titles, registration, fees, and permitting, motor carrier safety enforcement, and creative solutions for continuing to support transportation infrastructure and funding.</p> <p>Cleans up “Two Steps, One Sticker” legislation. Consolidating vehicle registration and inspection into one sticker negatively impacted commercial vehicles who do interstate travel. The bill clarifies language to allow commercial vehicles, which might be located out-of-state, to be registered without traveling back to Texas to comply with our new laws. It exempts vehicles that are a part of the international registration program that pay apportioned registration fees, based upon operational distance covered, from the inspection component of the program. The bill allows commercial fleet buyers to receive a 2 year inspection. The bill authorizes TxDMV to refund any customers who may have accidentally been overcharged for inspection, and reinstates a Class C misdemeanor for failure to comply with inspection.</p> <p>Updates vehicle titling, registration, & fees. The bill adds the definition of “autocycle,” to code to enable the titling and registration of newer three-wheeled motorcycles currently in production, such as the Polaris Slingshot. <i>The bill instates a one-time registration fee for semitrailers of \$105, replacing their \$15 annual fee.</i></p> <p>Explores expansion of overweight corridors and addresses specialized permits. The bill requires TxDOT to establish minimum requirements for determining the feasibility and economic impact of additional overweight corridors within a statewide plan of freight mobility. TxDOT must make recommendations for additional overweight corridors beneficial to the state, include recommendations in the international trade corridor plan, and create a pavement management plan for corridors to address erosion of roadways. HB 2701 allows for 24-hour overweight vehicle permits, splitting revenues between counties and Fund 6. The bill also allows 1) municipal courts to hear oversize/overweight violation cases with penalties in excess of \$500 -- cases currently heard by counties; 2) over-length loads to obtain an annual permit instead of the current available permits lasting 30, 60, or 90 days; and 3) a permit to be issued for ready-mix concrete trucks that meet axle weight restrictions by adding axles to redistribute extra weight.</p> <p>Recreates the Texas Department of Motor Vehicle Fund, which was created and abolished by prevailing legislation. TxDMV Fund was originally created as an opportunity for the operations of TxDMV to be funded separately from the state highway fund in order to end diversions. HB 2701 would recreate this fund which is within the state treasury, technically dedicated funds, but outside of the general revenue fund. It is fueled by revenues collected by TxDMV for titling and registration of vehicles, issuance of license plates and disabled parking placards, and registration and regulation of commercial vehicles. Like other state agencies, TxDMV is still subject to the appropriations process. While outside of GR, TxDMV would receive the allocation as determined in the appropriations process, and any funds remaining within TxDMV Fund would be distributed into the state highway fund.</p> <p>Looking ahead – The bill requires TxDMV to produce an annual report on the number of alternatively fueled vehicles in the state. This</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org

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			data could be used to inform future legislation to tax road use for fuel-efficient and electric vehicles to more fairly fund infrastructure maintenance and expansion.	
HB 2467 By Rep. King, P., et al.	Relating to excluding certain premiums, revenues, and fees from the determination of certain insurers’ taxable gross premiums or revenues; affecting certain taxes.	Insurance	The Affordable Care Act (ACA) stipulates that all healthcare insurance and HMOs are subject to a health insurance provider fee. This fee is often passed down to policyholders. The fee may be collected either through a line item in billing, or an adjusted premium increase. Because premium and maintenance taxes are imposed on gross premium receipts, the provider fee is rolled into the amount subject to tax. In effect, the tax is taxed. HB 2467 excludes the health insurance providers’ fee from the determination of an insurer’s taxable gross premiums or a HMO’s taxable gross revenues.	Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
HB 915 By Rep. Howard	Relating to quarterly financial condition reports on collected and anticipated state revenue.	Appropriations	<p>Texas is currently one of only 12 states that do not conduct periodic state financial condition reports. Given Texas’ size and rapid growth, a mechanism to continuously monitor state finances is critical. HB 915 addresses this need by requiring the comptroller to issue a quarterly report on the state’s financial condition in addition to the biennial revenue estimate. The report must include (1) total net revenue at the end of each quarter, (2) a comparison of total net revenue with projections, (3) indicators of state economic trends and their impacts, and (4) adjustments to current biennium projections.</p> <p>HB 915 will allow the legislature to more knowledgeably strategize appropriations, anticipate shortfalls, and plan accordingly. In this way, there will be more time to identify alternate funding sources so services will not need to be cut.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org
HB 1620 By Rep. Galindo	Relating to the prohibition of certain employment discrimination regarding an employee who is a volunteer emergency responder.	Business & Industry	<p>HB 1620 protects a volunteer emergency responder from being discriminated against or fired for being late or absent from their regular place of employment to uphold their duties as a volunteer emergency responder. An employee cannot be absent from the workplace for more than 14 days due to their volunteer position, unless the absences are approved by the employer. The employee is required to give reasonable notice of tardiness or absence. If the emergency impedes such notice, the employer can request an excuse signed by their emergency response services supervisor, including information about the emergency. An employee fired after the effective date of the bill is entitled to reinstatement of a comparable position, compensation of wages lost due to the suspension or termination, and reinstatement of any benefits.</p> <p>The bill makes explicit in statute that an employer may reduce wages for any work time lost to the volunteer emergency response services. Articulating this in law might actually alert many employers to the fact that they don’t have to pay for this time and encourage them to not compensate them for this time. In lieu of reducing wages, an employer can require the employer to use other accrued leave.</p> <p>Volunteer emergency responders dedicate their time and risk their own safety to serve necessary functions within our communities – public services that we won’t adequately fund through taxes. While HB 1620 attempts to protect our volunteer emergency responders, making it clear that an employer can reduce their wages is maybe not to their benefit.</p>	Will of the House Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org

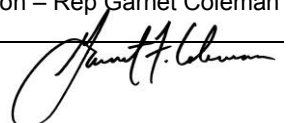
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HB 1503 By Rep. Canales	Relating to the rights of certain defendants who successfully complete a term supervision.	Criminal Jurisprudence	<p>Law regarding a judge's actions following a defendant's discharge from community supervision is currently unclear. HB 1503 clarifies that a judge must withdraw the defendant's plea and dismiss the charges against the defendant by 30 days following the defendant's discharge. Following the dismissal of charges, the defendant will not be considered to have been convicted of the offense, and may not be denied an occupational license or benefits on those grounds. The defendant must still pay any fees or costs required by the court.</p> <p>HB 1503 reduces recidivism by ensuring that defendants are given a chance at successfully reintegrating into society and pursuing gainful employment.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org
HB 1575 By Rep. Guillen	Relating to the requirements for reporting unclaimed mineral proceeds to the comptroller of public accounts.	Energy Resources	Currently, oil or gas producers report unclaimed royalties to the state without reporting the producing well's location. HB 1575 requires that the producing well's location also be disclosed in an attempt to improve the chances of rightful original owners being able to claim their royalties.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org
HB 2071 By Rep. Workman	Relating to payment of covered claims based on assignment.	Insurance	<p>HB 2071 will restore the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI's) ability to transfer customers from an impaired insurance company to a solvent one without a gap in coverage. It also restores the ability of a premium finance company, which finances policies written by an impaired insurance company, to become whole. In 1971, Texas Property and Casualty Insurance Guarantee Association (TPCIGA) was created to this effect, and has carried out its duties sufficiently. Over the last 20 years, 70 companies have become impaired, and TPCIGA honored its purpose by paying out on assignments to clients.</p> <p>However, A 2011 3rd Court of Appeals case broadly determined that no assignment could be made on a covered claim by TPCIGA. Because of the unintended consequences, TDI no longer has the ability to protect the consumers, nor the insurance premium finance industry's, ability to use traditional industry practices of using the assignment of claims as collateral in the very policies they are financing.</p> <p>HB 2071 will restore TPCIGA's ability to pursue its purpose by establishing that a person has a covered claim under the Texas Property and Casualty Insurance Guaranty Act, if the person holds a valid assignment of a covered claim for unearned premiums.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
HB 1250 By Rep. Murphy, et al.	Relating to the requirements regarding creation of qualifying jobs for the purpose of eligibility for a limitation on appraised value of property for ad valorem tax purposes under the Texas Economic Development Act.	Ways & Means	HB 1250 lowers the salary qualifications of the jobs from 110% of the county's average manufacturing wage to the lesser of: the state median annual wage for manufacturing jobs in the state, or the average weekly wage in a county for manufacturing jobs or for all jobs multiplied by 52. This means that if the average for the state is \$45,000, and the project is in Dallas with a higher than usual county annual average of \$50,000, then the salary calculation will be based on the lower wage of \$45,000. Conversely, if the project is in Cameron County, with a county annual average of \$32,641, then the company can use \$32,641 to calculate the rate of pay. This means that the counties with the higher average rates of pay would lose out on higher paying jobs, and the counties with lower rates of pay would not be receiving a bump up. The tax breaks that these companies are receiving are not insubstantial. In exchange, the people of Texas are supposed to be receiving adequately paying jobs. This legislation allows the companies to keep their benefits but apply the old switcheroo to the Texas people.	<u>Unfavorable</u> Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org

HB 1205 By Rep. Dutton, et al.	Relating to the age of criminal responsibility and to certain substantive and procedural matters related to that age.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues	<p>Under current law, a juvenile is classified as 10 years old to 17 years old. In 2013, over twenty-five thousand seventeen year-olds were arrested and placed in the Texas adult criminal justice system. The majority of the crimes were non-violent offenses worthy of a fine or rehabilitative services. HB 1205 increases the maximum age of a juvenile offender of criminal offenses from 17 years to 18 years. Any child that commits a criminal offense and is in a juvenile detention facility cannot be moved to an adult facility until their 20th birthday.</p> <p>The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) mandates that detention facilities must separate certain populations based on age as follows: 16 years old as a single population; 17 and 18 year olds are housed together; 19 and 20 year olds are housed together, and 21 years old and up are housed together. County municipalities report that placing minors in their facilities places a tremendous burden on the adult facilities. The problem with housing minors that are under 18 years old and younger in adult facilities is many beds go unused because the minors have to be housed separately. Additionally, these minors do not receive rehabilitative services that would be available to them in the juvenile facilities.</p> <p>HB 1205 also requires the Texas Juvenile Justice Board (TJJB) to establish an advisory board to monitor and evaluate the provisions adopted under this bill. The board will Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) in the implementation, fiscal needs, and problems concerning counties undertaking the adoption of the provisions laid out in this bill.</p> <p>There is substantial research that concludes that charging minors as adults and placing minors in adult jails may cause them significant risk of harm, abuse, rape, and injury and have long-term implications on their ability to fully reintegrate into society. The reality is that many minors who are charged or placed in adult facilities have been so due to non-violent crimes (i.e. alcohol possession, theft, or marijuana possession). Nevertheless, their age predicates that they must be charged as adults and placed among the adult population, despite law which suggests they are not old enough to vote, rent a vehicle, or buy alcohol. Further, previously nonviolent minor offenders become exposed to, and begin to demonstrate, violent and illicit behavior after time in adult facilities as a means of coping and fighting for survival among adults.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org
HB 1872 By Rep. Murphy, et al.	Relating to the authority of general-law municipalities to restrict sex offenders from child safety zones in the municipality.	Urban Affairs	<p>HB 1872 allows a general-law municipality to create a restricting ordinance preventing a registered sex offender from going in, on, or within a specified distance, but not more than 1,000 feet, of a child safety zone in the municipality, excluding a church. Under the bill, offenders are allowed to enter child safety zones for legitimate purposes only, such as transporting a child that the registered sex offender is legally permitted to be with, or work-related travel, and other work-related purposes. Procedures are stipulated within the bill allowing for a registered sex offender to apply for and receive an exemption from the ordinance.</p> <p>HB 1872 will severely affect not only ex-offenders but their families as well, especially in smaller towns. Many families will be uprooted from their homes in order to comply with this law, and may be subjected to unfair scrutiny and contempt by neighbors and townsfolk. While this bill seeks to protect future victims, it in no way does so. Statistically, nearly 90% of victims know their attacker, which is most likely a trusted friend or family member, rather than a stranger. This bill may have the unintended consequence of further isolating families that have sexual abuse occurring under their roof, and making such abuse less likely to be noticed by friends and neighbors.</p>	Will of the House with Concerns Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org
HB 1897 Bu Rep. Villalba	Relating to the punishment for certain offenses involving family violence; changing the eligibility for parole and mandatory supervision	Corrections	<p>HB1897 increases the penalty for those convicted of a domestic violence offence to include payment for the cost of confinement or supervision. The payment will be remitted to the supervising or confining agency. The intent of this bill is to more strongly criminalize domestic violence in the hopes of curbing the increase in domestic violence incidences. In 2011, 102 women were killed by their intimate partner. Additionally, 26 of the victims' family, friends and co-workers were also killed during the same incidents.</p> <p>HB1897 provides payment exceptions for indigent offenders, and will consider employment status, financial resources, and other</p>	Favorable Evaluated By: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org

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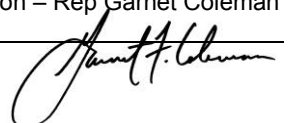
	for those offenses.		<p>obligatory pecuniary obligations, (like child support), when deciding whether to reduce the fee amount.</p> <p>HB1897 also mandates that a defendant granted community supervision or deferred adjudication community supervision on their second offense submit to a period of confinement equal to two years. Since it is a second offence, jail time must be served.</p>	
HB 1795 By Rep. Turner, S.	Relating to the eligibility for indigent status for purposes of the driver responsibility program.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	<p>HB 1795 allows that any person found indigent for purposes of qualifying for appointed counsel also be found indigent for the surcharge related to the Driver Responsibility Program. Currently, the judge has to find the individual indigent to qualify for counsel and again to be found not responsible for the surcharge connected to the Driver Responsibility Program. HB 1795 reduces the redundancy in the judicial system by allowing the judge to find the individual indigent just once. It will also prevent instances in which a person is found indigent in one area but not indigent in another. If a person in poverty is ordered to pay a fee they cannot afford, this starts a cycle of continual legal troubles because unpaid fines often result in additional charges and fines. HB 1795 both reduces the burden of the legal system of having to find a person indigent in two instances for the same charge and increases the chance that an indigent person be able to successfully complete a court-ordered Driver Responsibility Program.</p>	<p>Favorable</p> <p>Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
HB 2770 By Rep. Martinez, "M".	Relating to emergency response employees or volunteers and others exposed or potentially exposed to certain diseases or parasites.	Urban Affairs	<p>Emergency personnel routinely become exposed to blood and bodily fluids as a part of their duty. While exposure to infectious diseases or parasites is commonplace, there is no system in place for EMS personnel to receive notification or confirmation of their exposure. Rapid notification is essential for rapid treatment and possible containment of any communicable disease.</p> <p>HB 2770 requires various emergency responders to designate a qualified infection control officer and an alternate officer, who will receive notification of a potential exposure to a reportable disease from a health care facility. They must then notify the appropriate healthcare providers of this potential exposure and act as a liaison between the provider and the entity's emergency response employees or volunteers who may have been exposed to the disease. The officer will also provide the emergency responder with information regarding the destination hospital of the infectious patient. They must also investigate and evaluate the exposure incident using current evidence-based information, and monitor follow up treatment provided to the emergency responder.</p> <p>Medical information regarding cases, or suspected cases, of diseases will be made available, along with the testing orders or requests to DSHS. Using this information, DSHS may then order testing of another person who may have exposed the employee or volunteer to a reportable disease. The bill requires that a patient be tested for certain conditions after an emergency response employee or volunteer is accidentally exposed to the patient's blood or bodily fluids. Should a patient die at the scene or during transport, reportable diseases shall be tested for. A justice of the peace or medical examiner will be required to take steps to ensure testing and report findings to the control officer. Should emergency responders be accidentally exposed during an arrest, the same requirements for testing will apply.</p> <p>This bill removes the stipulation that next of kin be notified of any testing results by the control officer, and instead requires DSHS or local health authority be the notifying agency. In addition, this bill authorizes the release of test results for AIDS and other related disorders to the control officer of an affected emergency responder.</p>	<p>Favorable</p> <p>Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
HB 2198 By Rep. Smithee	Relating to the investigation by the commissioner of insurance of acts of insurance fraud and other offenses.	Insurance	<p>As technology increases, so does the ability to commit insurance fraud. Currently, the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) is working with an updated Penal Code which reflects the increasingly sophisticated and complex insurance fraud schemes. However, an outdated reference with regard to the investigation of insurance fraud still exists. HB 2198 will update this reference in order to maintain consistency across statute.</p> <p>Specifically, HB 2198 will broaden the commissioner of insurance's authority to investigate insurance fraud to include the investigation</p>	<p>Favorable</p> <p>Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>

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			of any offense under the Penal Code. The commissioner will aid in the enforcement and investigation of fraud by providing technical or litigation assistance to other governmental agencies	
HB 2298 By Rep. Pickett	Relating to prohibiting certain public places from excluding peace officers or special investigators from carrying weapons on the premises.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	HB 2298 allows peace officers and special investigators to carry their licensed weapons with them off-duty, even in or at private businesses, including amusement parks and sports venues, that restrict the carrying of weapons in their establishment. HB 2298 seeks to give special privileges to officers when they are off-duty and tramples on the rights of private businesses to restrict weaponry in their establishment by displaying “30.06” signage. While we trust our peace officers and are comfortable that they carry their weapons responsibly on and off duty, we are also sensitive to the fact that private business owners should have the final say as to whether weapons are allowed inside or not.	<u>Will of the House</u> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 226 By Rep. Guillen	Relating to certain offenses relating to carrying concealed handguns on property owned or leased by a governmental entity; providing a civil penalty.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	HB 226 creates a civil penalty for verbally communicating that guns are not allowed or posting a “30.06” sign on government property where it is not permitted to ban concealed handguns. Before penalties may be assessed, it must be investigated by the Office of the Attorney General and determined that a penalty is warranted. Proponents argue that this will protect CHL-holders’ rights to carry. Opponents argue that there are sometimes events held on government property where guns may be disallowed, and that this puts organizers of those events at risk of penalty for posting a sign for the event only.	<u>Will of the House</u> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HB 2220 By Rep. Coleman	Relating to mental health first aid training for school district employees and school resource officers.	Public Education	We expect the adults who work closely with our children to know what to do during a crisis. Whether it's deescalating a classroom fight or holding a fire drill, Texas educators work every day to prevent bad situations from becoming worse, and healthcare—including mental healthcare—is no different. It is important that teachers and staff know how to identify and respond to the signs of an asthma attack, just as they should be able to identify and respond to the signs of an emotional crisis. Mental health first aid training is currently available for teachers, giving them the tools they need to respond effectively to signs of mental illness and potentially find help for students who may be at risk of suicide. HB 2220 expands the mental health first aid training program to make it available for all school district employees who see our kids daily, in addition to the teachers currently eligible. It also gives school districts more flexibility to find grant funding for the program, allowing access to districts that may not otherwise be able to afford it.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Eric Schroeder 512-763-0031 info@texaslsg.org
HB 2323 By Rep. Blanco	Relating to mandatory spinal screenings for children in certain grades attending public or private schools.	Public Education	HB 2323 changes the grades for mandatory spinal screening for students. Females will be screened during the 5th and 7th grade and males during the 8th grade. Currently, all children attending public or private school are required to be screened in the 6th and 9th grade. Revising the grades in which students are assessed for spinal deficiencies closely aligns with the new prescribed grades with medical research.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org
HB 2556 By Rep. White, M.	Relating to the prosecution and punishment of certain outdoor burning violations.	County Affairs	HB 2556 revises the criminal penalties for the certain burning of waste and combustible material to be prosecuted under the municipal ordinance providing which violations constitutes Class A, B, and C misdemeanors based on the individuals number of prior offenses. Currently, offenders are going unpunished due to insufficient penalty options available to authorities as well as contribute to the overpopulation of Texas jails. HB 2556 will continue to safeguard the states air resources from pollution as well as relive tax dollars for the over population of Texas jails by creating these additional misdemeanor offenses.	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Mya Strauss 512-763-0031 info@texaslsg.org

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HB 891 By Rep. Klick, et al.	Relating to establishing an interstate voter registration crosscheck program.	Elections	<p>HB 891 establishes an interstate voter registration crosscheck system to determine whether registered voters in the state of Texas are also registered in another jurisdiction or out-of-state to vote in an attempt to prevent duplicate votes. Once our voter roll is compared with those around the country, those who have caused “a hit” are asked to confirm their residence and voter state.</p> <p>There are two types of crosscheck system. 1) The Kansas system is free but uses a “soft match” and can produce inaccurate data. The bill implies use of this program. Often common names like John Smith and Maria Gonzalez inadvertently cause a hit in programs that use “soft matches” due to the sheer volume of residents with those names. The SOS office estimates that it will cost \$208,000 per biennium to hire two employees to clean this data before they are able to turn it over to counties. 2) There is a “hard match” program available through Pew Charitable Foundation that checks 4 data points for more accurate results. The Pew program requires that all voters found, who have not registered, be mailed a registration card, which drives up the cost of such a program. While costly, this is the better option if forced to implement such a system.</p> <p>Many states do not have a process by which to take yourself off their voter roll when moving. As long as an individual is not voting in two states, being registered in both should not prompt concern. Given that our society is increasingly mobile, and with the vast immigration to Texas, HB 891 proposes a cumbersome process that creates problems where none may exist. We need all of those who move (from California) to Texas to vote.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u> Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 2725 By Rep. Goldman	Relating to the operation of a movable temporary branch polling place during early voting.	Elections	<p>HB 2725 requires a mobile polling place to be open for no fewer than 2 days before changing location, and it requires that early voting at such a location be conducted for at least 8 hours each day it is open. The bill addresses the practice of “rolling polling,” or voter targeting. Some school districts have abused this practice in order to pass school bond issuances. They will keep a mobile polling place open on an inconsistent basis, such as for the duration of a PTO meeting, to gain votes from some segments of the electorate at the exclusion of others in order to pass the issuance.</p> <p>Mobile voting when implemented properly, however, can help to serve those in underpopulated communities in rural counties and makes voting more convenient in primary and general elections in many areas. Two days is not reasonable for such a location to remain open in an under-populated area. There simply isn’t the demand. This bill should be amended to one day so that we are not placing an undue burden on counties, which might cause them to discontinue use of this helpful practice altogether.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u> Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 2754 By Rep. Capriglione, et al.	Relating to filing requirements for candidates for certain judicial offices.	Elections	<p>HB 2754 repeals the law requiring that those running for judicial offices or for justice of the peace in urban counties must submit a petition with 250 registered voter signatures and pay a filing fee, or submit a petition with 500 registered voter signatures in lieu of the fee. This additional step in the application process is not required of other elected offices and imposes a barrier to fresh candidacy.</p> <p>This bill duplicates the provisions of engrossed bill, HB 3880, but this bill if enacted would take effect on September 1, 2015, instead of January 1, 2016.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 2774 By Rep. Smithee, et al.	Relating to the annual state salary supplement for certain county judges.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	<p>HB 2774 increases county judges’ salaries from \$15,000 per year to 25% of the district court judge salary, so long as 40% of their duties are judicial in function. This aligns county and district court judge salaries more evenly.</p>	<u>Will of the House</u> Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org

HB 2937 By Rep. Schofield, et al.	Relating to the cancellation of a person's voter registration on notice that the person has acknowledged that the person is not a citizen.	Elections	<p>HB 2937 authorizes a voter registrar to cancel a voter’s registration immediately, upon receiving a list of persons excused or disqualified from jury service due to citizenship status. Under the bill, either self-disclosure or a designation made by a governmental entity acknowledging that the voter is not a citizen of the US is grounds for termination of voter registration. Current law allows that if an actual non-citizen unwittingly registers, the voter registrar sends them notification that their registration will be terminated and gives them a chance to take corrective action. So there is already a process in place for non-citizen removal.</p> <p>People sometimes make excuses to evade jury duty when they receive a jury summons. The bill targets this population. They might not be able to make ends meet without proper compensation for their time served, or it makes it more difficult to balance a precarious schedule or to take care of a dependent family member, and so forth, so they tick the field for “non-citizen.” They could also be lying because they just don’t want to do their duty as a citizen. While lying to shirk jury duty is unethical and should be penalized, nothing should trump a citizen’s right to vote.</p> <p>HB 2937 should not be the consequence of evading jury duty, and people should at least be warned that making a non-citizen designation on a jury summons will cause them to lose voting rights. The bill fails to allow citizens to take corrective action before automatically stripping them of a basic civil right. It is overly harsh and seeks to suppress votes.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u> Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org
HB 2624 By Rep. Turner, C.	Relating to the effects of default on a student loan administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board on renewal of certain licenses.	Higher Education	<p>HB 2624 requires licensing agencies to submit annually all names of licensees to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). THECB must then provide notification to each professional, state-issued licensing agency with a list of individuals licensed by that agency who have defaulted on their loans. HB 2624 prohibits the licensing agency from renewing the licenses of individuals with defaulted loans. It allows the Coordinating Board to enter into a loan repayment agreement with the defaulter, at which point the license may be renewed. When a repayment agreement is entered, the Board shall issue a certificate to the person who is repaying the loan, verifying that the loan is no longer in default and that repayment is in progress so that the license may be renewed. Most professional licenses are multi-year and this would give individuals time to enter a repayment agreement before their license expires; thus, they would not be restricted from practicing as long as they re-entered a payment agreement before the renewal date.</p>	<u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org

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