



Chair, Rep. Garnet Coleman

Treasurer, Rep. Elliott Naishtat

LSG Floor Report For Postponed Business – Thursday, May 21, 2015

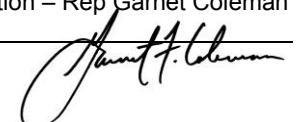
Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
SB 1173 By Sen. Nichols SP: Rep. Phillips	Relating to commercial driver’s licenses and commercial learner’s permit and the operation of commercial motor vehicles; creating a criminal offense; amending provisions subject to a criminal penalty; authorizing fees.	Transportation	<p>In 2008, a commercial bus operating in violation of safety rules made national news by losing treading and crashing in north Texas. 17 people died and 39 were seriously injured. Potentially tragic incidents such as these, along with new federal updates to the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986, necessitate SB 1173. The bill revises state law to comply with tightened federal minimum standards regarding the issuance of commercial driver’s licenses and permits. Major provisions of the bill include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes the definition of Commercial Driver Learner’s Permit and Driver License (CDL) to address the new Commercial Learner’s Permit (CLP) • Requires each applicant to obtain a CLP and hold it for a minimum of 14 days before obtaining a CDL • The CLP must be a separate document from the CDL or non-CDL • CLP’s must contain the same information as a CDL • CLP’s may only have certain endorsements for purposes of training • Strengthens the legal presence requirements and increases documentation for the issuance of a CDL and CLP applicants to demonstrate legal presence in the United States • Limits the renewal period for CDLs and CLPs • Identifies when an applicant must surrender a CDL or CLP • Revises the term “Non-Resident CDL” to “Non-domicile CDL” • Establishes a process to downgrade commercial drivers that do not comply with federal medical requirements <p>With the tightened standards mandated by SB 1173, commercial bus drivers will be more properly trained in both driving and safety rules. Compliance with federal standards will also ensure that valuable federal highway funds will not be lost. Noncompliance would result in an expected loss of \$233,548,495 in federal funds over the 16-17 biennium.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org</p>

LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Thursday, May 21, 2015

OK for Distribution – Rep. Garnet Coleman

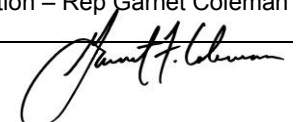
<p>SB 757 By Sen. Perry, et al. SP: Rep. Springer</p>	<p>Relating to the repeal of the production taxes on crude petroleum and sulphur.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>In a vacuum, this bill is fine. But this legislature will also pass huge, permanent tax cuts to the franchise tax and possibly property taxes and sales taxes. This is hardly the first “small” and “unfair tax” to come before us and we just cannot afford to keep doing this. It’s getting old. If all these unfair “double taxation” issues are such a big problem, then let’s address them first before stamping a \$4.5 billion hole in our budget. Future legislators will have water shortages, exploding populations, healthcare deficits, and education shortfalls to manage, and it will be the ones calling for more revenue to solve these needlessly created problems who will be called fiscally irresponsible. Programs will be slashed by the “fiscally responsible” stewards of our budget, revenues will inevitably “rise” in future sessions, and that will lead the way to more tax cuts like this one. Rinse and repeat.</p>	<p>Unfavorable Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 760 By Sen. Schwertner, et al. SP: Rep. Price</p>	<p>Relating to provider access and assignment requirements for a Medicaid managed care organization.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>SB 760 seeks to improve the Medicaid managed care network provider system by ensuring oversight and efficiency. There are two distinguishable parts of this bill. The first part requires HHSC to closely monitor and enforce network adequacy standards by making several statutory provisions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing minimum standards that recipients have sufficient access to care, while taking in to account the different needs between urban and rural areas in developing those standards • establishing penalties for non-compliance with the set standards <p>Additionally managed care organizations will be required to post their provider network established in an online directory that is updated monthly. The second part of the bill requires an expedited credentialing process to take place for applicant providers, under specified circumstances.</p> <p>SB 760 improves oversight of Texas’ Medicaid managed care system and ensures that our managed care organizations are held to high-standards. These standards hold MCOs accountable in providing accurate information and delivering quality health care services to vulnerable populations. Additionally, this bill addresses the long wait-lists of children and families needing Medicaid services by increasing the providers that can offer services through expedited credentialing.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1756 By Sen. Taylor, V., et al. SP: Rep. Phillips</p>	<p>Relating to agreements between the Department of Public Safety and counties for the provision of renewal and duplicate driver's license and other identification certificate services; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p>	<p>Last session, a pilot program was enacted to allow DPS to provide renewal and duplicate driver’s license, election identification certificate, and personal identification certificate services. The pilot program increased expediency and efficiency in the counties that the pilot program was established. SB 1756 seeks to make this a permanent program, striking the pilot provisions, including limits on which counties may be involved. It is now an option for all counties that enter into an agreement with DPS to allow county employees to provide services related to the licenses and certificates described above. This will ease the pressure on DPS to provide services related to the issuance of duplicate and renewal driver’s licenses; election identification certificates; and personal identification certificates (ID cards) by allowing counties to provide manpower and services in that area. This is optional for counties.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1512 By Sen. Hancock SP: Rep. Pickett</p>	<p>Relating to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles fund.</p>	<p>Transportation</p>	<p>SB 1512 recreates the Texas Department of Motor Vehicle Fund (TxDMV Fund), on September 1, 2016 with a transfer of \$23 million from general revenue to the credit of the fund. TxDMV Fund was originally created, and subsequently abolished by prevailing legislation, as an opportunity for the operations of TxDMV to be funded separately from the state highway fund, in order to end diversions. TxDMV Fund is a special fund within the state treasury, which is 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 be allocated these funds as determined in the appropriations process, and any funds remaining within TxDMV Fund would be distributed into the state highway fund for other transportation needs. SB 1512 will facilitate more transparency in funding.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org</p>

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<p>SB 46 By Sen. Zaffirini SP: Rep. Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to the confidentiality of certain property tax appraisal photographs.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>Currently, when an individual’s property is appraised and photographs are taken by a chief appraiser or authorized representative, statute mandates that the photograph is subject to the public, some people are concerned that this is an invasion of privacy and that it exposes property owners to security risks. SB 46 requires that photos taken for property tax appraisal by a chief appraiser or authorized representative be confidential and unavailable as public information. The photograph can only be disclosed if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a governmental body who provides the photo to a requestor who had an ownership interest in improving the property • a photo is used as evidence for specified reasons (but still remains confidential) 	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 735 By Sen. Fraser, et al. SP: Rep. King, K.</p>	<p>Relating to discovery of evidence of the net worth of a defendant in connection with a claim for exemplary damages.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>SB 735 will set limitations to the discoverability of a defendant’s net worth in a pleading for exemplary damages. The purpose of exemplary damages is to assess a penalty fee against the wrongdoer that acts as a deterrent for the wrongdoing that was committed. Under SB 735, a claimant would have to submit a notice for discovery, have a hearing on the matter, submit an affidavit, and await the court’s order that the claimant can successfully demonstrate “a substantial likelihood of success on the merits.” Essentially, the claimant would have to prove his case before it went before the jury.</p> <p>The problem here is the weight given to “substantial likelihood” is uncertain; is it less than a preponderance of the evidence or more than clear and convincing? As it stands, Texas already requires that an exemplary pleading must be made with specificity. Additionally, in the 1988 <i>Lunsford</i> decision, the Supreme Court of Texas overruled the 1888 <i>Young</i> decision, stating that net worth is relevant, probative, and informative to the jury. It is the jury’s responsibility to be the trier of fact, and the court’s duty to be the trier of law. Requiring a claimant to justify reason for discoverability of a defendant’s assets on the basis that it could prove embarrassing is a weak reason to deny a plaintiff an opportunity at compensation for the wrong committed against him. This is another attempt to enact legislation that is really an overreaching of the separation of powers. The courts are perfectly capable of determining the scope of discoverability, and attempting to reinstate a court decision that was made over a century ago will not under any circumstances move Texas forward.</p>	<p>Unfavorable Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 239 By Sen. Schwertner, et al. SP: Rep. Zerwas, et al.</p>	<p>Relating to student loan repayment assistance for certain mental health professionals.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>SB 239 provides student loan repayment assistance for qualifying psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed professional counselors, advanced practice registered nurses who are board certified in psychiatric or mental health nursing, and licensed clinical social workers. The loan repayment assistance program will only provide assistance if the legislature appropriates funds to the program, and only to mental health professionals who apply and qualify for assistance. Eligibility requirements include: completing 1-5 years of consecutive practice in a mental health professional shortage area; and providing mental health services to Medicaid recipients, CHIP recipients, or to persons incarcerated in jail or prison. Licensed psychiatrists must meet the above requirements and practice for three consecutive years, as well as be certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology or the American Osteopathic Board of Neurology and Psychiatry.</p> <p>Mental health loan repayment assistance is limited to five years. Loan repayment assistance amounts that a professional is eligible to receive varies based on the number of years repayment assistance has been sought. Total loan repayment assistance for any one mental health professional may not exceed \$160,000 for a psychiatrist; \$80,000 for a psychologist, licensed clinical social worker (if the social worker has a doctorate degree in social work), or a licensed professional counselor (if the LPC has a doctorate in counseling); \$60,000 for advanced practice registered nurses; and \$40,000 for licensed clinical social workers and licensed professional counselors who do not have doctorate degrees. There is a huge mental health shortage in Texas and loan repayment assistance is needed to entice mental health professionals to work in shortage areas, which often do not pay as well as non-shortage areas. Mental health shortage areas often occur in economically depressed regions and loan repayment assistance can be the difference between a professional deciding to work in a shortage area and deciding to work in a more high-paying job. SB 239 is crucial to help Texas address its mental health shortages across the state.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>

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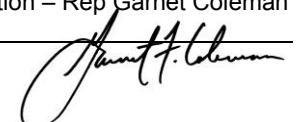
<p>SB 664 By Sen. Taylor, V., et al. SP: Rep. Sheets</p>	<p>Relating to employment termination for falsification of military record in obtaining employment or employment benefits.</p>	<p>Defense & Veterans' Affairs</p>	<p>SB 664 will allow employers to terminate employees, contracted or otherwise, if it is discovered that the employee falsified or created false military records for the purpose of gaining employment. While it is illegal to falsify military records for personal gain, the law does not take into account employees who have an employment contract, and there have been instances where some who have been found guilty of stealing valor have managed to keep their job.</p> <p>Returning veterans have a very difficult time finding employment as is. Allowing a person who has failed to serve cowardly claim heroism should not benefit from, nor take the employment opportunity from, a veteran.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 849 By Sen. Bettencourt SP: Rep. Elkins</p>	<p>Relating to access to and fees associated with binding arbitration of appraisal review board orders.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>It's hard to give rich Texans a tax break because our taxes are extremely regressive, i.e. they disproportionately affect poor people (and disproportionately do not affect rich people). It therefore takes a bit of work to find a way to target tax relief toward wealthy Texans, and this bill is a result of that work.</p> <p>Currently, only homeowners with properties valued at \$1 million or less may appeal an appraisal review board ruling for purposes of disputing their property appraisal in relation to taxation. SB 849 expands the eligibility of binding arbitration as a remedy for disputing a property appraisal to property owners with property valued at \$3 million or less. Once again, while the merits of this bill might make more sense in a vacuum, this is all part of a larger pattern to chip away at revenue – whether it is state or local – and put us in a bind in the future.</p>	<p>Will of the House Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1139 By Sen. Huffman, et al. SP: Rep. Smithee</p>	<p>Relating to the operation and administration of and practice in courts in the judicial branch of state government, the composition of certain juvenile boards, and the increase of certain filing fees.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>SB 1139 is an omnibus bill that will establish necessary court and court officers in multiple jurisdictions that have experienced such significant population growth; the current courts are simply flooded.</p> <p>Article I addresses the appointment, hiring, evaluation, and re-appointment procedures for associate judges to oversee child support and child protection cases. The appointed associate judge will serve under the direct supervision of a presiding judge.</p> <p>Article II addresses the establishment of county courts, jurisdictional authority, and the election of district attorneys to adjudicate civil and criminal matters. Requirements are indicated in the bill regarding the selection criteria of a county DA and assistant DAs. Counties impacted include: Collin, Fort Bend, Aransas, Guadalupe, Kendall, Gillespie, Kerr, Coryell, Ector, and Harris.</p> <p>Article III establishes jurisdictional provisions regarding statutory county courts, county attorneys, and certain county judges; provisions are also given to the establishment of a multicounty statutory county court. Counties impacted include: Cameron, Collin, Harris, Fort Bend, Tarrant, Fisher, Nolan, Aransas, and Guadalupe.</p> <p>Article IV changes the electronic court filing fee from \$20 to \$30. Article V addresses the appointment, duties, compensation, and hiring qualifications for bailiffs within Tarrant County.</p> <p>Article VI grants concurrent criminal jurisdiction to the El Paso Criminal Law Magistrate Court with justice courts located within El Paso County. Magistrate judges are granted the same authority of justices of the peace when presiding over Class A, B, or C misdemeanor cases, and that of a district judge when presiding over felony cases. The magistrate judge has authority to issue indigency and capias pro fine hearings and is empowered as finder of fact and law. Also addressed here are retired judges are add to authorized judicial assignees to certain pending cases; forfeiture provisions; authority granted to the El Paso Council of Judges to preside over certain magistrate cases; two-way electronic transmission of court proceedings between the defendant and the court; and extradition proceedings under the Uniform Criminal Extradition Act. Counties impacted under these provisions include: El Paso, Atacosa, and</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org</p>

			<p>Cameron</p> <p>Article VII brackets specific counties that are eligible for temporary justice of the peace appointments. Article VIII authorizes the use of a telephone interpreter in criminal proceedings if an in-person interpreter is unavailable. Article IX grants adjudication locations in place of jail for capias pro fine hearings in which the issuing judge is unavailable. Article X established the effective date of this act to take effect September 1, 2015.</p>	
<p>SB 1356 By Sen. Hinojosa</p> <p>SP: Rep. Darby</p>	<p>Relating to exemption from the sales tax for certain water-efficient products for a limited period.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>Conservation is the least expensive way to help ensure an adequate water supply. Texas has an annual sales tax holiday each Memorial Day weekend for energy-efficient products, and House Bill 2492 will add EPA-designated water-conserving and WaterSense products to the list of items eligible for that holiday. This will make items such as faucets, showerheads, and irrigation controllers tax free for that period of time. Since 2006, the EPA's WaterSense certification program has helped consumers save a cumulative 757 billion gallons of water, and more than \$14.2 billion in water and energy bills. This bill will allow businesses to receive a bump in sales, and incentivize good behavior by allowing customers to get a break for doing the right thing.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 917 By Sen. Seliger</p> <p>SP: King, K.</p>	<p>Relating to the applicability of the Texas Mass Gathering Act to certain horse and greyhound races.</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures</p>	<p>SB 917 amends current statute pertaining to the Texas Mass Gatherings Act to allow for horse and greyhound races that attracts or expects to attract at least 100 attendees; but, does not apply to pari-mutuel tracks authorized under the Texas Racing Act. Currently, these events are unregulated and attract anywhere from 30 to 2000 people, depending on the size of the track. The intent of SB 917 is to allow local law enforcement and health officials to determine, through a permit process, if certain standards for public health and safety are sufficiently being met at these events. This will not override any current legislation that is prohibited under the state law or the Penal Code.</p>	<p>Will of the House Evaluated by: Shaina Pomerantz 512-763-0031 shaina@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 582 By Sen. Kolkhorst</p> <p>SP: Rep. Harless</p>	<p>Relating to training courses for certain food handlers.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>SB 582 establishes that a food handler training course required for food handlers, which is accredited by the American National Standards Institute, meets the local requirements for training, testing, and permitting. Currently, food handler training courses vary from county to county, which leads to otherwise qualified individuals to be retrained when they move. SB 582 will make it easier for people to all be trained in the same way and ease their mobility from locality to locality.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1301 By Sen. Perry</p> <p>SP: Rep. Lucio III</p>	<p>Relating to the governance and administration of the Texas Water Resources Finance Authority.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>SB 1301 is a clean-up bill for a bill filed last session that moved the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) from having 6 part time directors to 3 full time directors. This bill makes this clear in contiguous statute. Previously, TWDB could hold special meetings at the call of the chairman or on request of three or more of the six directors. Now it would take a majority of the 3 directors to fulfill the requirement.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1189 By Sen. Seliger</p> <p>SP: Rep. Zerwas</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of a multidisciplinary studies associate degree program at each public junior college.</p>	<p>Higher Education</p>	<p>SB 1189 requires all public junior colleges to offer a multidisciplinary studies associate degree program. The multidisciplinary studies associate degree program shall be designed to help ease students' transitions into a four-year university or college. Students pursuing the multidisciplinary associate degree must meet with their advisor after accruing 30 credits to help plan the rest of the credits in accordance to the degree program, and in preparation to transition into a major or field of study at a four-year school of the student's choosing. The multidisciplinary associate degree shall include credits tailored to an individual student's degree aspirations. SB 1189 will help students graduate successfully and with less debt by helping them graduate without extra, often extraneous, credits.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>

<p>SB 761 By Sen. Creighton SP: Rep. Murphy</p>	<p>Relating to the taxation of fireworks.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>The comptroller’s office has reviewed its procedures and identified 5 areas where the cost of processing the taxes is more than the revenue received from the tax collection. SB 761 repeals the tax for fireworks, but substitutes an equal amount of money from GR to maintain the funding for the fire departments that the tax was set up to support. These simplifications would allow the fire departments to receive payments quarterly, instead of annually which would be advantageous to their budget planning.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u> Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1750 By Sen. West, et al. SP: Rep. Murphy</p>	<p>Relating to the requirements for employment positions provided through the Texas college work-study program.</p>	<p>Higher Education</p>	<p>SB 1750 requires that up to 50% of work-study positions offered at college campuses shall be off-campus opportunities. The wording suggests that off-campus opportunities shall vary from campus to campus, but shall not exceed 50% of work-study opportunities. This provides students ample options to work on-campus if they wish to, or if transportation is an issue. It also allows colleges in smaller localities to offer fewer off-campus positions if they cannot provide the same collaboration as bigger cities can offer. SB 1750 is a flexible bill that will help students get the work experience they need to be successful, while also recognizing different colleges will be able to provide different opportunities.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1589 By Sen. Zaffirini SP: Rep. Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to requirements for reporting unclaimed mineral proceeds to the comptroller of public accounts.</p>	<p>Energy Resources</p>	<p>Currently, oil or gas producers report unclaimed royalties to the state without reporting the producing well’s location. SB 1589 requires that the producing well or property’s name, identification number, and county also be disclosed. This information would remain confidential and not subject to disclosure under state public information law.</p> <p>Further, SB 1589 mandates the comptroller compile and revise an alphabetical list by county of the number of reports filed for mineral proceeds attributable to all wells located in each respective county, and the aggregate amount of mineral proceeds attributable to all wells, if any, located in each respective county. This bill would take steps to improve the chances of rightful original owners being able to claim their royalties.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u> Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 2065 By Sen. Estes, et al. SP: Rep. Sanford</p>	<p>Relating to the rights of certain religious organizations and individuals relating to a marriage that violates a sincerely held religious belief.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>There is no purpose for SB 2065. The authors state that it protects the religious freedom of the clergy; however, these protections are entirely unnecessary. Freedom of religion is a constitutional right, which is additionally protected by the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Current law already guarantees that clergy can decline to perform a marriage that they disagree with.</p> <p>However, SB 2065 does more than just redundantly enforce an existing law. Its imprecise language opens the door to confusion over implementation and costly litigation. The bill states that “a religious organization, an organization supervised or controlled by or in connection with a religious organization, an individual employed by a religious organization while acting in the scope of that employment, or a clergy or minister may not be required to solemnize any marriage or provide services, accommodations, facilities, goods, or privileges for a purpose related to the solemnization, formation, or celebration of any marriage if the action would cause the organization or individual to violate a sincerely held religious belief.” It is unclear what “celebration” or “solemnization” means under the law. In addition the bill’s broad language includes organizations like religious hospitals, adoption agencies, universities, and social services agencies. It is unclear why we would need to protect adoption agencies or hospitals from performing a marriage. Further, if the Supreme Court decides that same sex marriage is a constitutional right, and these universities and hospitals receive state funds, are they able to deny same sex couples their constitutional rights? Finally, the bill does not limit blanket protection from litigation to only when clergy are acting as clergy, so if a clergyperson undertakes a civic position and denies a same sex couple rights that their marriage guarantees under the law, are they still protected?</p> <p>This bill brings up more questions than it answers, while providing the beginnings of a foundation for broad discrimination of the LGBT community. We have already seen how singling out LGBT people for discrimination has backfired in Indiana, Arizona, and Arkansas, making these states seem hostile and unwelcoming. Texas must not make the same mistake.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u> Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>

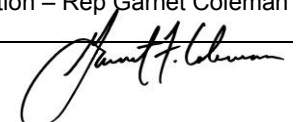
<p>SB 1105 By Sen. Eltife SP: Rep. Cook</p>	<p>Relating to fire inspections by the state fire marshal for state-owned and state-leased buildings.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>Current law requires facilities owned and leased by Texas Facilities Commission (TFC), to undergo fire safety inspections conducted by the State Fire Marshal’s Office (SFMO). Additionally, SFMO is required to conduct fire inspections for other state-owned facilities that have documented safety violations and concerns. However, statute is ambiguous on the jurisdiction and authority of SFMO for all state-owned buildings. SB 1105 seeks to clarify this issue.</p> <p>The bill authorizes the SFMO chief fire marshal to be in charge of fire protection and fire safety of state agencies, and removes all TFC authority in this regard. SMFO would have the authority to conduct inspections, and communication about inspections for all state-owned buildings, not just TFC owned buildings.</p> <p>It’s important that law regarding public safety, specifically fire hazards, clearly indicates that SFMO is the entity that is in charge of all fire-related issues for state agencies.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Brittany Reyes 512-763-0031 brittany@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 752 By Sen. Bettencourt, et al. SP: Rep. Murphy</p>	<p>Relating to the repeal of the inheritance tax.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p>	<p>The comptroller’s office has reviewed its procedures and identified 5 areas where the cost of processing the taxes is more than the revenue received from the tax collection. SB 752 addresses one of those areas by repealing the inheritance tax. This tax generated just \$12,000 in 2014. While it is probably fair to say that the harm to certain Texans probably outweighs the good we could ever do with \$12,000, the LSG continues to be concerned by the continued justifications to reduce state tax revenue while we so blatantly ignore items like Medicaid Expansion. Is this good policy? It’s probably a wash. There’s little reason to vote against the bill, but it still sets a bad precedent.</p>	<p>Will of the House Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1308 By Sen. Menéndez SP: Rep. King, S.</p>	<p>Relating to veterans services information provided to veterans who receive driver's licenses and personal identification certificates.</p>	<p>Defense & Veterans’ Affairs</p>	<p>While Texas has responded to the needs of our returning veterans by creating a number of useful programs and employment opportunities, many of our veterans are unaware of these new services. With the high rate of unemployment and service-related mental illnesses, the need to inform and aid our veterans is greater than ever.</p> <p>SB 1308 will require the Texas Veterans Commission and DPS to develop a one-page paper about veterans’ services provided by the state. This information will be distributed to each veteran when they receive their veteran’s designation on a driver’s license or personal identification certificate.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 1115 By Sen. Campbell SP: Rep. White, J.</p>	<p>Relating to a program allowing certain military voters on active duty overseas to cast a ballot electronically.</p>	<p>Elections</p>	<p>Bexar County implemented a pilot program allowing active U.S. military members stationed overseas to vote by email. SB 1115 expands this pilot program to include other counties, which choose to participate in the program and which the secretary of state’s office determines have the technological capacity to do so. The secretary of state’s office will administer the pilot program through 2017 and report back to the legislature.</p> <p>Our service members should be able to conveniently participate in elections. However, it might behoove us to make similar accommodations for all citizens temporarily residing overseas. Further, there was much pushback to online voter registration bills brought forth this session, based upon the rationale that electronic means ushers in voter fraud. We should thoughtfully encourage civic participation of our full electorate.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Maia McCoy 512-763-0031 maia@texaslsg.org</p>
<p>SB 654 By Sen. Eltife SP: Rep. Workman</p>	<p>Relating to regulation of rates and policy forms for certain commercial lines of insurance.</p>	<p>Insurance</p>	<p>SB 654 will allow the commissioner of insurance to adopt rules that exempt or limit the review of forms for commercial lines of property and casualty. Commercial property insurance includes any combination of fire, allied lines, or other lines of first party property insurance; inland marine insurance; crime coverage; boiler and machinery insurance other than explosion; glass insurance provided as part of other coverage; and insurance covering other perils or providing other coverages as authorized by the commissioner.</p> <p>Current commercial lines insurance policy forms contain some standardized provisions. SB 654’s methods of form regulation, such as</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>

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			file and use, use and file, or exemption from filing, may be more appropriate for lines for which the forms have limited use or are standardized. By creating such standardized provisions, TDI will better be able to focus on lines of insurance that have the greatest impact on consumers, such as homeowners and personal automobile insurance.	
SB 790 By Sen. Kolkhorst SP: Rep. Fletcher	Relating to the procedures applicable to the revocation of a person's release on parole or to mandatory supervision.	Corrections	<p>To prevent rampant overcrowding of jails, SB 790 allows a county magistrate to release a person on bond pending their hearing if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the person is arrested or held in custody only on an administrative violation of release charge and • the division included notice on the warrant for the person's arrest that they are eligible for release on bond and • the magistrate determines that the person is not a threat to public safety <p>The division will include notice of eligibility for release if the person meets the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has not been previously convicted of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ robbery ○ a felony offense ○ an offense involving family violence • is not on intensive supervision or super-intensive supervision • is not a fugitive • is not a threat to public safety <p>Not only does this prevent the cost of overcrowding in jails, the person in question can still be a part of their community, caring for their family, and being a hard working taxpayer.</p>	Favorable Evaluated by: Nakia Winfield 512-763-0031 nakia@texaslsg.org
<u>LSG Floor Report For House Resolutions Calendar – Thursday, May 21, 2015</u>				
HR 1215 By Rep. Capriglione	Petitioning Congress to instruct the Transportation Security Administration to accept concealed handgun licenses as valid forms of identification.	Homeland Security & Public Safety	HR 1215 urges the U.S. Congress to instruct the TSA to accept CHLs as a valid form of identification when going through security at airports and train stations. There is no actual policy reason to do this; it's just another "gun bill" for some who cannot seem to be satisfied with the fact that they have already "won" on every actual policy issue of actual concern.	Unfavorable Evaluated by: Paige Reitz 512-763-0031 paige@texaslsg.org
HR 1605 By Rep. Faircloth	Expressing a commitment to the elimination of illegal fishing and urging Congress to take action to end illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in our sovereign waters.	State & Federal Power & Responsibility	HR 1605 addresses the growth of illegal and unregulated fishing off Texas' Gulf Coast by urging US Congress to take substantial action to enforce penalties against it. Often, foreign fleets fish off Texas' coast with disregard for federal and state catch limits. This depletes the Gulf Coast seafood supply, causing significant economic losses to not only the Texas fishing industry, but also to the tourism-related businesses and the recreational fishing industry. Further, over-fishing devastates the Gulf Coast ecosystem. Foreign fleets also often use banned longline netting that endangers marine mammals and sea turtles. Ships involved with illegal fishing have also been known to be involved with other illegal crimes, such as drug and human trafficking.	Favorable Evaluated by: Tara Blagg 512-763-0031 tara@texaslsg.org

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<p>HCR 75 By Rep. Thompson, S.</p>	<p>Encouraging the State Preservation Board and the director of the Bullock Texas State History Museum to establish a museum of Texas music history as a permanent and integral program within the Bullock Museum.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation & Tourism</p>	<p>Texans have a long and vibrant musical history, contributing to, and creating, many musical genres. HCR 75 seeks to recognize the artistry and talent of Texas musicians by encouraging the State Preservation Board and the director of the Bullock Texas State History Museum to create a museum of Texas music history within their system. The state that is home to the "Live Music Capital of the World," should have a dedicated space to acknowledge both the artists whose songs have touched our lives, and the support staff and people behind the scenes who have made our music legacy possible.</p>	<p>Favorable Evaluated by: Cathryn Taub 512-763-0031 cathryn@texaslsg.org</p>
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