TEXAS LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP

An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

Senator Office

LSG Floor Report For POSTPONNED BUSINESS CALENDAR Monday May 10, 2021				
Author	**Caption**	**Committee**	**Analysis & Evaluation**	**Recommendation**
HB 3276 By: Parker | Cain | Schofield | Lozano | Canales	Relating to the security of voted ballots.	Elections Votes: 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	HB 3276 would require the county elections clerk to implement a live feed video stream posted on the county election website to retain a record of all areas containing ballots voted from the time the last voter has cast their ballot until the canvass of precinct election returns. The live stream will continue while ballots are transferred from one location to another. HB 3276 also mandates that a licensed peace officer guard the ballot boxes containing voted ballots. The Secretary of State would adopt rules to implement the video recording provisions. This bill could create a false sense of security and put a burden on smaller counties who may have limited staffing capacities and resources for elections or licensed peace officers. This bill could divert law enforcement from other duties that may arise over a 24 hour multi-day process.	**Will of the House** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org
HB 1556 By: Murphy | Burrows | Moody | Meyer | Shine	Relating to the Texas Economic Development Act; requiring the imposition of an authorized fee and changing the amounts of certain fees.	Ways & Means Vote: 9 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Though Texas is often considered a low-tax state due to the absence of income taxation, our complex property tax system creates a high-tax environment for businesses looking to establish manufacturing-heavy facilities. Chapter 313 agreements were created by the Economic Development Act with the goal of bringing business to Texas through offering property tax abatements, and funds for these purposes are instead provided directly to a local school district in which a corporation seeks to establish facilities. HB 1556 extends the expiration of Chapter 313 provisions under the Texas Economic Development Act for another ten years until December 31, 2032 and implements a series of reforms intended to protect corporate interests and increase state oversight. Economic development agreements are important to keeping Texas competitive in attracting businesses that will contribute to our state economy and create jobs for Texans. However, there is little equity in which districts are sought out by businesses to receive additional funding, which can sometimes amount to a large differential in per-student allotments. Many lucrative agreements can only be offered to districts with certain geographic characteristics, highlighting that little can be done to ensure all school districts receive the same opportunities for additional funding because inequity is inherent in the process. The bill removes the ability for school districts to set an application fee based on the subjective cost of an economic impact evaluation and imposes a uniform application fee of $60,000, from which the school	**Favorable with Concerns** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org

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			district will be required to remit $10,000 to the Comptroller. If the district decides to turn down a contract, the Comptroller will refund the $10,000 fee to the applicant. Many school districts currently impose supplemental or revenue protection payments to offset potential expenses caused to the district as a result of an agreement. HB 1556 removes these requirements and additional provisions that the business must agree to provide protections for schools if financial strain is caused by an increase in students, such as a need for portable buildings. Instead, property owners must provide school districts with a supplemental payment each year for a limited period of time. The annual payment amount will not exceed 38% of calculated revenue the school district would have received in the form of M&O property taxes from the business if abatements were not granted. The bill changes the method of determining a cap on penalties for failing to comply with applicable job-creation requirements, which would be calculated based on the difference between tax benefits received in the preceding year and the amount of any stabilization payments made in the same year. Former penalty cap calculations were made using supplemental payment amounts, which are eliminated by this bill. HB 1556 seeks to streamline the application and reporting process under the Comptroller. The Comptroller must create a single annual reporting form for property tax abatement recipients, who will simultaneously submit the form to both the Comptroller and their contracting school districts. Job-creation requirement compliance is not to be included in this form. The bill also changes the information required in the Comptroller's biennial report related to 313 agreements. The requirement to provide information regarding the total effect of agreements on personal income and total effect on state and local governments is removed, which could be problematic, but the bill also requires additional more detailed information assessing the difference between tax-specific revenue creation. Chapter 313 agreements are ultimately a tool for local governments to incentives business that would likely otherwise choose to locate elsewhere to locate in their community. Lost revenue through tax incentives in Chapter 313 agreements should not be compared to what taxes the business would have paid without the incentives but compared to the tax generated on the land if the business never chose to come to the community.	
HB 1241 By: Shine | Price | Smithee | Thompson, Ed	Relating to municipal annexation of certain rights-of-way.	Land & Resource Management Vote: 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Current law in Texas allows a property owner to request annexation, formally known as voluntary annexation. Property owners typically want to be annexed because they would prefer access to city water and sewer, as well as reasons that promote economic development and public safety. In order for a property to be annexed, it must be in a municipality's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) and generally be touching existing city limits. However, it is a common occurrence that the property seeking annexation is across a road or railway easement, or not far from the existing city limits. In the 86th Legislative session, unilateral annexation by municipalities was eliminated, which resulted in an unintended consequence removing the ability to annex a property not immediately adjacent to a city, even at the landowner's request.	**<u>Favorable with Concerns</u>** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org

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			HB 1241 addresses this issue by reinstating the authority for a municipality to annex the right-of-way of a road or railway easement that is contiguous and runs parallel to the municipality's boundaries. The bill also allows for annexation by the most direct route for land that is not immediately adjacent to the city limits, this is known as "lollipping". Annexation boundaries are limited based on the extent of the city's ETJ and population. Before property can be annexed, it must be approved by the Texas Department of Transpiration (TxDOT) and the resident county. The bill states that a municipality may annex a right-of-way if the municipality provided written notice to the landowner through the landowner's registered agent. This bill emphasizes that no land would be annexed without the request of a property owner and reinstates previous legislation empowering landowners to seek annexation on their own terms. There is a concern that if voluntarily annexed properties are not immediately adjacent to city limits, then the most direct route would interfere with other properties that did not consent to annexation. In these situations, fragmented annexation practices could result in a city providing subpar services to that area.	
HB 1418 By: Leach Gervin-Hawkins | Lucio III | Holland	Relating to civil liability and responsibility for the consequences of defects in the plans, specifications, or related documents for the construction or repair of an improved real property.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Currently in Texas, if a contractor follows the plans and specifications given to them by the owner, architect, or engineer, and the plans contain a defect in the design, the contractor can be held liable, regardless of if they had a hand in the design or not. This statute dates back to a 1907 Texas Supreme Court Case Lonergan v. San Antonio Loan & Trust, which was affirmed in 2012. HB 1418 seeks to amend the Business and Commerce Code by making it so that a contractor is not responsible for the consequences of defects in a contract, and it may not warrant the accuracy, or suitability of plans, specifications, or other design or bid documents provided to the contractor. If the contractor finds a defect in the plans, then the contractor must provide written disclosure about known defects in the plans, specifications, or other design or bid documents, to whom they entered the contract with, within a reasonable amount of time. If a contractor fails to disclose a defect in the plans once they become aware, then they may be held liable for the consequence of the deficit. HB 1418 also amends the Civil Practice and Remedies Code by stating that a construction contract for architectural or engineering services be performed with the professional skill and care ordinarily provided by competent architects or engineers practicing under the same or similar circumstances. The design services provided under a design-build contract are subject to these same standards of care. If a contract contains different standards of care, then the contract would be void and unenforceable. The bill would not apply to a contract entered into by a person for the construction or repair of a critical infrastructure facility. For purposes of this bill, the definition of critical infrastructure includes pipelines, related appurtenances or facilities, utility-scale equipment, or facilities to transmit or distribute electricity, and utility-scale water storage facilities, and that the absence of fencing or signage would not disqualify an item from being classified or treated as a critical infrastructure facility for the purpose of the bill.	**<u>Will of the House</u>** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org

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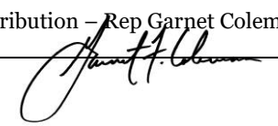

			Many stakeholders would still not be exempt under the definition of the bill of critical infrastructure and the bill could also increase construction costs, and limit freedom to contract for large, specialized construction projects such as aerospace, semiconductors, automotive, pharmaceuticals, etc., that we are trying to attract to the state of Texas. These projects would provide high-wage jobs with the ability for the jobs to multiply. The bill has the ability to make Texas less competitive with neighboring states.	
HB 2579 By: Leach	Relating to shorthand reporting and depositions.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	In response to the pandemic, court reporters were authorized by the Texas Supreme Court (TSC) and the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to work remotely on an emergency basis. Due to the efficiency of court reporters, they have been able to work virtually, there have been calls for changes to the current law in ways that would continue to create effective technology changes even after the TSC emergency authorization expires. HB 2579 adds a court reporter to the list of individuals that can take testimony for a deposition. The court reporter must complete and sign the deposition certificate and may electronically file the deposition with the trial court clerk. Included in this bill is the list of items that must be included when completing a deposition certificate. HB 2579 will allow a shorthand reporter to administer oaths to a witness. The bill also includes methods for identifying witnesses who are testifying remotely, to ensure that the person is who they say they are. This bill could result in court reporters being more accessible by allowing them to report depositions without having to be face-to-face. Additionally, this bill expands virtual options for the courts making it easier for an expert witness to testify from a different city or state.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 818 By: Cole | Thompson, Senfronia | Bell, Keith | Holland | Leman	Relating to the prosecution and punishment of the criminal offense of harassment; creating a criminal offense.	Criminal Jurisprudence Vote: 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 818 is a bipartisan refile from the 86th Legislature that addresses language requests from the Governor. There is a loophole in the current statute regarding online sexual harassment that creates a prosecution and judicial barrier if an actor does not directly send the material to the victim and instead publishes it online or tells others how and where to view such content. HB 818: • Amends the Penal Code to include specifics related to online sexual harassment Amends the Civil Practice and Remedies Code to • Adopt a "matter of public concern" to prevent public officials from silencing critics who may engage in this or similar behavior • Adds online sexual harassment of students as a reason to allow principals of public schools could contact the school district or municipal peace officers. The bill provides a necessary update of current statutes that address the disconnect between technology and applicable regulatory laws for online sexual harassment. HB 818 provides the legal recourse necessary to pursue harassment of any kind.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson 512-661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org
HB 1776	Relating to the inclusion of an	Public Education	Concerns have been raised that high school students are graduating without the essential knowledge of citizenship to participate in democracy. HB 1776 requires public school districts and open-enrollment charter	**Will of the House** Evaluated by:

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By: Bell, Keith | Allison | Harris | Toth	elective course on the foundation principle of the United States in the curriculum for public high school students and the posting of the founding documents of the United States in public school buildings.	Votes: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	schools to offer an elective course on the founding principles of the United States that meets the requirements for one-half elective credit under the Foundation High School Program. The course is required to focus on the United States government, including topics such as the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and the writing of the founding fathers of the United States. HB 1776 would require open-enrollment charters schools and the board of trustees of school districts to permit and encourage the posting of United States founding documents in classrooms and school buildings. The provisions of this bill are presently required by the FSP and the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test in eighth grade and eleventh grade. Creating a new elective course requires additional resources such as new curriculum, curriculum supplies, and teachers designated to teach the course.	Phuong Nguyen 832-302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org
HB 3175 By: Morrison | Ashby | Pacheco | Wilson | Coleman	Relating to financial support and incentives for comprehensive regional universities.	Higher Education Vote: 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Financial support is a significant factor of keeping students in higher education. Many students leave or postpone their education because they are unable to afford tuition and other associated costs. Bolstering available financial support would help keep students in school and bring more educated professionals to the workforce. HB 3175 allocates funding to universities for enhanced financial support of students in need. The funding will be allocated to universities designated as a doctoral, comprehensive, or master's university by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Each eligible university will receive: • a base sum of $500,000 or greater provided by appropriation. • the product of $1,000 or more provided by appropriation and the average number of at-risk students awarded a degree three fiscal years preceding the biennium. An eligible university is also able to use an alternative allocation method for this funding. The THECB, in consultation with university representatives, must conduct a study of the funding method's effectiveness to allocate funds fairly and equitably, as well as promote student success. Such continued support of students will increase the number of skilled, educated workers. A strong employment pool will increase the quality of work and have a positive impact on the state of Texas.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 3627 By: Paddie | Raymond	Relating to the authority of a governmental body impacted by a catastrophe to temporarily	State Affairs Vote: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,	Currently, government entities are authorized to temporarily suspend their compliance with public information requirements in the event of a catastrophe that interferes with their ability to comply, such as a weather event, power failure, or epidemic. There have been concerns throughout the COVID-19 pandemic that some entities have suspended responding to public information requests despite staff being available to work, if remotely, and have done so for unnecessarily extended periods.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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	suspend the requirements of the public information law.	0 Absent	HB 3627 clarifies the current catastrophe protocols to ensure that all available measures are taken to provide the public with prompt access to requested information. It revises the definition of a catastrophe to exclude periods during which a physical building is closed but staff are working remotely and can electronically access requested information, while maintaining the right to suspend compliance during a genuine catastrophe that directly prevents an entity from complying. It also includes the provision that, during periods when staff is working remotely, good faith efforts must be taken to promptly respond to public information requests to the extent that staff can access information. HB 3627 further explicates rules for the suspension period that an entity may issue during a catastrophe. Currently, a suspension period may last seven consecutive days, with the option of extending it for another seven days if circumstances require, so long as the Office of the Attorney General and the public are notified. The bill clarifies that a suspension period and any extension may only be issued once per catastrophe, for a total permissible suspension of fourteen consecutive days per catastrophe. The entity must immediately resume addressing public information requests after the suspension period. These provisions will maintain the flexibility that government entities require during catastrophic periods while ensuring that transparency measures are not unduly curtailed.	
LSG Floor Report For MAJOR STATE CALENDAR Monday May 10, 2021				
HB 3 By: Burrows	Relating to state and local government responses to a pandemic disaster, including the establishment of the Pandemic Disaster Legislative Oversight Committee.	State Affairs Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 PNV, 1 Absent	The COVID-19 pandemic disaster has differed in many ways from typical disasters experienced in Texas in regard to duration, geography, and scope. For this reason, there have been calls to enact emergency management legislation specific to pandemics. Thus, HB 3 establishes the Texas Pandemic Emergency Response Act, applicable only to pandemic disasters that impact at least one quarter of Texas counties. **Pandemic Disaster Legislative Oversight Committee** HB 3 would create an oversight committee made up of the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the House, the chairs of the Senate Finance, State Affairs, Health and Human Services, and Education Committees, and the chairs of the House Appropriations, State Affairs, Public Health, and Public Education committees. Members shall meet as soon as possible following the governor's renewal of a pandemic disaster declaration as is required after 30 days. The committee would only meet if the legislature was not convened in a regular or special session. It would have the authority to review and terminate a pandemic disaster declaration after the governor's initial renewal and any related proclamations or executive orders issued by the governor or a political subdivision. Its meetings must be open to the public. **Powers & Duties of the Governor** HB 3 maintains the governor's authority to issue pandemic disaster declarations and related executive orders that have the force of law. It stipulates that an order that limits business operations, mandates mask-wearing, or limits healthcare procedures may not continue past the initial 30 days without consideration from the legislature, which may require the governor to call a special session. Further, the governor may not issue a	**Will of the House with Concerns** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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			terminated executive order or disaster declaration that would circumvent oversight from the legislature of the Legislative Oversight Committee. These two bodies may terminate a pandemic disaster declaration at any time, though the governor maintains the authority to accept and spend pandemic relief dollars. HB 3 specifies that an order issued by the governor in response to a pandemic may not limit the sale or transportation of firearms or interfere with religious freedoms. Orders must be posted online, disseminated to the public, and filed with the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), the Secretary of State, and impacted local officials. **Local Pandemic Emergency Powers & Restrictions** HB 3 clarifies that the presiding officer of a city or county shall be its pandemic emergency management director. This person alone has the authority to "seize" state and federal resources for disaster response without prior authorization from TDEM or the issuing state or federal agency. Orders issued by a local authority is superseded by orders issued by the governor and the Department of State Health Services, should they conflict, and, similarly, county orders supersede those of city officials. City and county authorities are prohibited from ordering the closure of specific businesses or from placing different operational limits on businesses based on the type of business. If a local presiding officer orders business closures in response to pandemic conditions, their authority to raise property taxes will be limited until the governor determines otherwise. This bill explicitly does not allow government officials at any level to modify election procedures in response to pandemic conditions, restrict the operations of firearm-related businesses or shooting ranges, or mandate vaccinations. **Civil Liability Protections** HB 3 states that, as during typical disasters, government employees and volunteers shall not be held civilly liable for actions taken carrying out authorized pandemic response duties. Persons providing goods or services in support of disaster response efforts as requested by the governor are also exempt from liability for harm caused by those goods or services, barring gross negligence or recklessness. Additionally, a business that is authorized to be open during a pandemic and has made reasonable efforts to comply with applicable safety laws and ordinances shall not be held civilly liable for exposing employees or customers to disease on the premises, barring gross negligence or recklessness. How to determine whether reasonable efforts were taken is not defined. These protections apply to any action taken after Texas's initial pandemic disaster declaration in March 2020. **Pandemic Response Training & Planning** HB 3 would require public officials whose duties relate to emergency management to undergo pandemic disaster management training in addition to typical disaster response training, which would require TDEM to	

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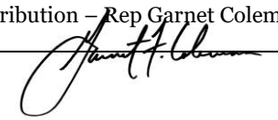

			create or implement additional training materials for this purpose. Additionally, the bill would require that personnel surge capacity plans, which must be developed by local and regional officials and overseen by TDEM to address the need for healthcare or relief workers during a disaster, include the provision of personal protective equipment for healthcare and relief workers during a pandemic disaster. **Positives & Concerns** This bill improves emergency planning for pandemic situations and provides mechanisms for legislative oversight of the executive branch during such a disaster, which effectively provides more voice to the public in emergency management decision-making. It also streamlines the chain of command between state and local authorities, which can prevent further confusion during an already exceptionally confusing time. However, this preemption also has the potential to limit local governments' powers to respond to local needs. HB 3 offers other problematic restrictions on local authorities, particularly in regard to election procedures and limits on business operations. It places responsibility on the state to adapt elections to pandemic conditions, regardless of localized conditions or state officials' interest in promoting or restricting voting in certain areas. This bill also removes a local official's authority to implement the U.S. Centers for Disease Control's "essential business" model, meant to balance the maintenance of commercial operations with public health, or to place limits on businesses' operating capacities based on differing levels of risk. Additionally, the bill's blanket protections for employers who may have put their employees and the public at risk could limit available avenues to ensure accountability. It does not clearly define "reasonable measures" that an employer may or may not have taken to protect employees or what reckless behavior might look like, making it incredibly difficult for those who were harmed by inadequate safety measures or the irresponsible opening of certain businesses to seek justice. There is no guarantee that the next pandemic disaster will transpire as the COVID-19 pandemic has. Locking the state into specific pandemic procedures based on the current situation may hinder future efforts to protect public health and safety under completely different and perhaps more drastic circumstances. Disaster response of any kind requires flexibility, and this bill limits that to a potentially harmful degree.	
LSG Floor Report For CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT CALENDAR Monday May 10, 2021				
HJR 72 By: Leach | Parker | Noble | Slawson	Proposing a constitutional amendment to prohibit this state or a political subdivision of this state from	State Affairs Vote: 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 PNV, 2 Absent	HJR 72 proposes a constitutional amendment that would prohibit state or local officials from issuing an order or adopting a law that would restrict or limit religious services with no exceptions, particularly in-person congregations. This resolution would prohibit government entities from limiting religious gatherings during a pandemic, which occurred in the past year due to the specific activities often undertaken during religious services that put individuals at higher risk for spreading communicable diseases, like singing or gathering closely indoors. Beyond that, however, HJR 72's broad language could prohibit a government entity from intervening in	**<u>Unfavorable</u>** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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	prohibiting or limiting religious services of religious organizations.		harmful practices undertaken in the name of a sincerely held religious belief, such as physical and sexual abuse, or from fully implementing short term stay-at-home orders as might be appropriate during a weather event or an active shooter situation. Our right to religious freedom is sacred and should be protected. However, state policy should balance the need to protect religious freedom with the need to protect public health and safety, not strictly prohibit officials' ability to respond as needed to changing situations.	
LSG Floor Report For GENERAL STATE CALENDAR- Monday, May 10, 2021				
HB 1396 By: White	Relating to law enforcement agencies and policies and procedures affecting peace officers.	Homeland Security & Public Safety Vote: 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV 0 Absent	There is a need to increase citizen trust in peace officers. HB 1396 seeks to increase trust in peace officers in our communities by expanding law enforcement regulation. To help build trust, TCOLE must be properly equipped to hold law enforcement agencies (LEAs) accountable and set expectations that create trustworthy peace officers. **Employment Practices** The re-hiring of dangerous peace officers is a serious public safety threat in Texas. Current policy requires LEAs to fill out a termination report known as a notice of separation form (F-5), and the bill removes the requirement for this report to explain whether resignation, termination, or retirement occurred and state if the officer was honorably, generally, or dishonorably discharged. HB 1396 requires the report be updated to indicate whether the officer was eligible for honorable discharge or suspected of misconduct regardless of if termination occurs. Misconduct is specifically described as criminal behavior, regardless of whether the officer was charged with an offense, and a separation designated as an honorable discharge signifies an officer was in good standing with no suspicion of misconduct. LEA leadership will be required to submit a report every time an agency separation occurs for any reason, and forms must be updated by December 1st, 2021 for separations occurring on or after that date. HB 1396 authorizes TCOLE to require all LEAs submit a report detailing each substantiated instance of police officer misconduct and indicating whether the officer received disciplinary action, was fired, or retired. TCOLE must make this information available to all state LEAs, and following an incident, investigating federal agencies must also be provided access. Outside of this use, information reported to TCOLE is confidential from disclosure under the public information act. TCOLE will also be required to update misconduct incidences with information required by the bill as soon as possible after each regularly scheduled meeting, and the initial report must be published by June 1st, 2022. LEAs and officials will be exempt from civil liability for damages resulting from making an officer's employment records available to hiring agencies, which is an important measure to ensure agencies can hold officers accountable and comply with these requirements without fear of a potential lawsuit. **Developing Model Policy**	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org

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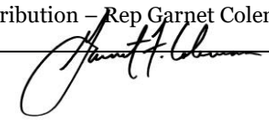

			The bill sets out provisions on mandatory policy changes by amending the Code of Criminal Procedure. LEAs will be required to meet with judiciaries, prosecutors, local government bodies, and residents living within each agency's jurisdiction to workshop written policies that must be approved by a district judge or county court judge. LEAs must adopt policies by the 180th day after model policy information is made publicly available, and rulemaking must promote efficiency, effectiveness, and community safety within the following topics: • citations for fine-only misdemeanors and conforming applicable procedures to confirm an individual's identity and issue a citation or notice to appear. • no-knock entry • duty to intervene in excessive use of force. HB 1396 requires TCOLE to consult with the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas and other key stakeholders to develop a model policy and associated training materials for the following topics: • citations for fine-only misdemeanors. • duty to intervene in excessive use of force. • no-knock entry. • banning chokeholds or neck restraints outside reasonable belief of necessity. • preventing serious bodily injury or death in police interactions; and • the duty to render aid unless there is reasonable belief doing so will cause serious bodily injury or death to the officer. TCOLE must consult with the Health and Human Services Commission and LEAs to develop a model policy implementing peace officer and mental health professional coordinated responses - with associated training materials. TCOLE must survey existing programs and work to create specialized training programs for mental health responders and peace officers to become trained in coordinated responses involving people coping with mental illness and disabilities, houselessness, or other mental health-related incidences. **<u>Enhancing TCOLE's Regulatory Authority</u>** HB 1396 establishes TCOLE's authority to reprimand an officer, place an officer on probation, or revoke or suspend a peace officer license if an officer engages in conduct equating to a felony, Class A, or Class B misdemeanor. A statute is repealed outlining conditions for revoking and reinstating a dishonorably discharged peace officer's license. To be eligible for law enforcement grants from the governor's office, agencies must be in full compliance with the bill's provisions, which include maintaining current credentialing designated by the advisory committee, regularly reporting misconduct, and certifying full compliance with model policy requirements regarding use of force and chokehold prohibitions.	

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			TCOLE is under the sunset review process this session, and HB 1396 relates to sunset recommendations in important ways. TCOLE's primary sunset recommendation creates a blue-ribbon panel that is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of law enforcement policies to identify areas that require reform. The aforementioned panel's membership will include law enforcement leaders, experts, appointed officials, and Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety. If the TCOLE Sunset Act is enacted as currently drafted, the changes made by HB 1396 will codify certain priorities for the commission moving forward. A significant root cause of the damaged relationship between peace officers and the public is a lack of accountability. This bill helps move the ball forward in increasing peace officer accountability.	
HB 4387 By: González, Mary | VanDeaver | Stucky | Raney	Relating to the establishment of the Texas Transfer Grant pilot program.	Higher Education Vote: 9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	TEXAS Grant provides aid to first-time undergraduate students with financial needs throughout their undergraduate program and requires higher education institutions (HEIs) to ensure that all recipients of TEXAS Grant funding receive non-loan financial aid to cover their full tuition and fees. Even though the program has been successful, students transferring from one Texas HEI to another may not be able to receive a grant. The continued funding does not recognize a student transferring as a continuing student due to them attending a new HEI. Additionally, if an eligible student dropped out before attaining their degree, and wishes to return, but more than 5 years has passed since their initial TEXAS grant was awarded, they would no longer qualify. HB 4387 would establish the Texas Transfer Grant Pilot Program to be administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to address this problem. This pilot grant program would allow HECB to provide grants to eligible transfer students enrolled in bachelor's degree programs at eligible institutions and allow for hardship exemptions to adapt to student needs. HB 4387 gives authority to the HECB to determine the maximum grant amount and to adopt rules to increase or decrease grant amounts based on hours students are enrolled. HB 4387 would require eligible institutions to cover any portion of tuition and fees not covered by the grant and prohibits them from denying enrollment based on eligibility. HB 4387 would not change the TEXAS grant program but rather builds on its success by filling in areas where eligible students may fall through the cracks and provide a path to complete a degree program with the help of needed financial aid.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org
HB 1683 By: Landgraf | Guillen | Ellzey Toth	Relating to the enforcement of certain federal laws regulating oil and gas operations	Energy Resources Vote: 6 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV,	HB 1683 prohibits state agencies and their employees from contracting with or assisting federal officials to enforce oil and gas regulations and restrictions not currently in Texas statute. It also directs the attorney general to defend any agency sued by the federal government for complying with this prohibition. Not only might this apply to stricter environmental standards, but also new performance and safety guidelines that could directly benefit employees in this industry and surrounding communities. Legislation that would prohibit state agencies from cooperating with federal enforcement authorities puts the	**<u>Unfavorable</u>** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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| Morales, Eddie	within the State of Texas.	4 Absent	state's receipt of federal dollars at risk, which are direly needed to recover from the pandemic and to support the Railroad Commission and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in their efforts to oversee the oil and gas industry within this state.	
HB 2656 By: Moody	Relating to licensing examinations for certain court interpreters.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	The licensing examination for court reporters is only offered twice a year in Austin and must occur in-person, imposing barriers for those residing outside the city who want to enter the profession. HB 2656 addresses this issue by requiring examinations be offered at least once per year for counties with populations above 800,000. The bill also includes additional times and locations, as designated by the director of the Office of Court Administration, for in-person attendance while new online opportunities must occur at least twice a year at a time specified by the director. HB 2656 will remove barriers to entering the court reporting profession by ensuring equal access and opportunity to take the licensing examination.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 1810 By: Capriglione	Relating to maintenance and production of electronic public information under the public information law.	State Affairs Vote: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	With records being stored digitally increasingly often, government entities have had to navigate responding to public information requests for digital data or documents without standardized guidance. Requestors have expressed frustration with entities being unable or unwilling to supply data in requested or easily searchable formats or to provide data dictionaries, which may be needed to interpret the received data in its digital format. HB 1810 addresses these concerns by clarifying procedures for accessing electronic public information, which is defined to include information produced or maintained in a searchable or sortable electronic database and data dictionaries needed to understand the provided information. The bill requires that a government entity provide requested information in as close to the requested format as possible, in line with the entity's software capabilities. This may include the data in its original searchable or sortable format, a standardized export format, paper printouts, or another format acceptable to the requestor. An entity may not withhold information on the grounds that it would require inputting certain commands or filters if those actions can be easily executed. This bill's provisions to facilitate access also apply to public information being held by a third party, and they allow a government entity to charge a fee to produce requests. This bill clarifies the expectations for compliance with electronic public information laws and will provide the public with easier access to and understanding of digital information.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org
HB 4146 By: King, Tracy O. | Cole | Rodriguez	Relating to a restriction on permits authorizing direct discharges of waste or pollutants into water in certain	Environmental Regulation Votes: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Texas has 81 stream segments in 8 river basins threatened by pollution coming from treated wastewater disposal directly into waterways. While wastewater treatment facilities can clean water to acceptable levels for release on land, this water contains a high phosphorus level. Phosphorus is the main ingredient in many fertilizers but changes the nutrient composition of water and fosters toxic algae blooms. These conditions create irreversible damage that threatens wildlife and ecosystems on which Texans rely on for recreation and economic opportunities.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org

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	stream segments, stream assessment units, and drainage areas.		HB 4146 restricts wastewater discharge permits from being issued on pristine river segments, or those with low phosphorus levels. HB 4146 classifies a "pristine stream" as having total phosphorus levels at or below .06 m/l in 90 percent of water quality samples taken over the last 10 years. This bill limits treated wastewater disposal on watershed areas which drain into these streams. Currently held permits for disposal would need to fully convert to a land application permit or the treated water must be discharged into a different watershed. HB 4146 will protect an estimated 2,000 miles of 44 "pristine water" streams throughout Texas. This bill helps areas of Texas that rely on tourism and recreation driven by our naturally great outdoors. HB 4146 ensures good stewardship of the great state of Texas.	
HB 2926 By: Parker | Krause | Minjarez | Talarico	Relating to the reinstatement of the parent-child relationship with respect to a person whose parental rights have been involuntarily terminated.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Texas' foster care system is overcrowded, and because of this, it is common for children to age out of the system without the necessary life skills to live independently. Additionally, parents who had their rights terminated the restoration of those rights after working to be fitter parents. HB 2926 creates a path for these rights to be restored and for families to be reunited. HB 2926 authorizes certain entities to petition - a request for a court order - the reinstatement of a former parent's parental rights that were involuntarily terminated. The entities able to do this are the Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS), the single source continuum contract (SSCC) for the child, the attorney ad litem for the child, or the former parent. HB 2926 establishes the conditions to file the petition and the required contents of the petition. The bill requires the former parent to notify DFPS of the intent to file the petition at least 45 days before. Once a petition is filed, a hearing occurs to determine the reinstatement of parental rights. If the child is 11 years or older, the court must account for the child's age, maturity, and preference when rendering a decision. For younger children, preference may be considered as a factor in their decision. The court has the authority to grant, deny, or defer the petition. Should the court defer the petition, then the former parent is given a 6-month possessory conservatorship of the child. Following the six months, another hearing will occur to either grant or deny the petition. HB 2926 creates a path for children to return to parents who have made significant progress to be better parents. The restoration of families works towards reducing children in the foster care system.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 1942 By: VanDeaver | Bernal	Relating to the adult high school charter school program.	Public Education Votes: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,	Texas has more than 4.4 million people over age 25 without a high school diploma, and more than 13 percent of the state population lives in poverty. The majority in this demographic group lacks education and job training, and do not earn a living wage. Educational gaps tend to perpetuate poverty, just as creating a pathway out of poverty for an adult often changes the life trajectory for their children and families. The adult high school charter school pilot program was enacted in 2013 by the Texas Legislature as a strategy for meeting industry needs for a sufficiently trained workforce. The program targets adults who did not graduate high school, assisting them in earning a high school diploma or industry certification. HB 1942 would expand	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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		0 Absent	the adult high school charter program to provide for additional charter holders and build a regulatory framework. HB 1942 would rename the adult high school diploma and industry certification charter school program as the adult high school charter school program. The bill expands the program's scope from a sole charter granted to a single nonprofit entity charter holder to a regulatory framework for similar charters that may be given to other nonprofit entities, subject to certain expansion restrictions. The bill revises provisions relating to the program, including charter eligibility, student outcomes and services, accountability frameworks, and state funding. HB 1942 increases access to education by adults and will allow adults to improve their lives through education and workforce training.	
HB 2952 By: Neave	Relating to suits affecting the parent-child relationship and the calculation and enforcement of child support.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	There is a discrepancy in child support calculations between federal and state statutes, which could put Texas at risk of non-compliance. HB 2952 puts in the necessary child support calculations provisions to align state statute and federal requirements to address this. HB 2952 addresses the imputation of income by requiring the court to rely on evidence of the party's resources - assets, residence, employment, earnings history, etc. - to determine child support. When there is no evidence of a party's resources, the bill delineates factors that the court must consider when determining child support. A court cannot consider incarceration as intentional unemployment or underemployment under this bill. However, if someone is incarcerated for longer than 180-days, that would qualify as justification to modify child support. HB 2952 changes the child support guidelines making the maximum number of net resources applicable to state statute be what is established by the attorney general's office in the Texas Register. HB 2952 adapts the federal structure to determine child support for low-income obligors - people that pay child support. If an obligor's monthly net resources are under $1,000, the court will use the chart laid out in the bill to determine the percentage to be used to calculate child support. An additional chart in the bill determines the percentage for situations involving multiple children by different parents. When filing a money judgment, a court order to award money to the plaintiff, the court must confirm the total owed child support. The courts are required to file separate money judgments for mental and dental support and cannot reduce or modify the amounts owed while they are making their decision. Instead, counterclaims and offsets are the methods of reducing or modifying the amounts owed. HB 2952 provides the necessary updates to Texas' child support system to maintain alignment with federal requirements.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org

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HB 1664 By: White | Guillen	Relating to the reinstatement of eligibility for medical assistance of certain children placed in juvenile facilities.	Human Services Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Federal Medicaid regulation usually prohibits incarcerated individuals from qualifying for benefits. However, there is an exception for inmates who undergo inpatient stays at a qualifying medical institution. In Texas, the state Medicaid plan allows for pregnant women and children under the care of the to use TDCJ Medicaid funds to pay for inpatient hospitalization stays. This exception has not yet been extended to juveniles placed in a juvenile facility. HB 1664 requires that if a youth who is in a juvenile facility is hospitalized or becomes eligible for inpatient care in another type of medical facility the Health and Human Services Commission must reinstate the Medicaid eligibility of that youth that they previously held prior to being placed in a juvenile facility. The executive commissioner shall adopt rules necessary to govern the procedure and implement the act. Allowing children to have their previous benefits reinstated for the purpose of inpatient treatment will improve the health and safety of these children and save taxpayers' dollars.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org
HB 692 By: Shine | Bell, K. | Darby | Bell, C.	Relating to retainage requirements for certain public works construction projects.	State Affairs Vote: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Government entities are authorized to withhold retainage from a contractor to ensure the timely completion of a public works project. Retainage refers to the practice of withholding periodic payments, essentially as collateral, until a project is complete. This practice is widely yet inconsistently used across the state, necessitating uniform guidelines to ensure that public works contractors are paid fairly and promptly. HB 692 lays out specific retainage policies that government entities must adhere to for public works contracts. In the contract, a government entity must clearly state when retainage funds shall be released, including portions at the project's substantial completion and total completion. The bill further stipulates that retainage must be paid fully and promptly upon project completion, including any interest earned on retainage funds deposited in an interest-bearing account - the use of which shall be optional or required depending on the type and value of the contract. Additionally, most contracts valued over $1 million shall be prohibited from withholding over 5% of the contract's total value as retainage to ensure that a contractor has adequate cash flow to carry out the large project. The bill also limits the amounts that may be retained from subcontractors and suppliers to equally protect them from unfair withholdings. The government entity may withhold retainage payments if there is a bona fide dispute regarding a contractor's compliance with the contract. While HB 692 specifies that its provisions do not prevent an aggrieved party from pursuing available remedies, concerns remain regarding this bill's potential conflicts with existing statutory protections for laborers who are in dispute with a contractor. Specifically, governmental bodies are currently required to withhold final payment while a laborer's complaint is being considered, which may conflict with the requirement to release all withheld funds following a project's completion. HB 692 will protect contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers from unreasonable or inconsistent retainage withholdings, allowing all parties to be paid in a timely manner. Its provisions could also mitigate lengthy or	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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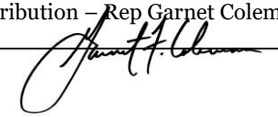

			costly disputes between the government entity and the prime contractor, saving taxpayer dollars and promoting the efficient completion of public works projects.	
HB 854 By: Burns	Relating to the punishment for the offense of unlawfully carrying a handgun by a license holder.	Criminal Jurisprudence Vote: 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	In 2015, the Legislature reduced trespassing penalties associated with a licensed holder's unlawful carrying of a handgun. Trespassing offenses only apply to situations where the licensed handgun owner has received notice that their entry is forbidden and fails to depart. HB 854 decreased the penalty for the unlawful carrying of a handgun by a handgun license holder from a Class A misdemeanor to a Class C misdemeanor (punishable by a maximum $200 fine) if on the premises of a state- licensed hospital or nursing facility without appropriate written permission, in an amusement park, or in the room or rooms where a governmental entity is holding an open meeting. If the person is told to leave and does not leave the penalty is enhanced to a Class A misdemeanor. There are significant concerns that HB 854 requires a verbal notice to depart to the licensed handgun owner that their presence with a handgun is unlawful and considered trespassing. Penalties for unlawful carry should not be reduced, if someone accidently carries on a prohibited premise they can be absolved of their charges through the judicial process.	**<u>Unfavorable</u>** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson (512)661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org
HB 2242 By: Patterson	Relating to illness or injury leave of absence for county and municipal firefighters and police officers	County Affairs Vote: 7 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 2 Absent	HB 2242 requires a municipality or county to provide a police officer or firefighter a medical leave of absence for an injury or illness that was sustained while on the line of duty. This leave of absence would be with full pay for a period commensurate with the nature of the injury or illness sustained and, if necessary, continued for at least one year. A firefighter or police officer who is temporarily disabled by a non-work related injury or illness is authorized to use accumulated sick leave, vacation time, and other accrued benefits before being placed on temporary leave or have another firefighter or police officer volunteer to do the person's work while they are temporarily disabled by the injury or illness.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Spencer Carruth (512)463-0760 Spencer.Carruth_HC@House.Texas.gov
HB 4012 By: Bonnen	Relating to disclosures by certain health benefit plans to enrollees regarding certain preauthorized medical care and health care services.	Insurance Vote: 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Although prior authorizations (PAs) are used to prevent unnecessary medical services, concerns have been raised that PAs are not used in a manner that is beneficial to a policyholder and often results in surprise medical bills from health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and preferred provider benefit plans (PPBPs). HB 4210 adds that HMOs and PPBPs must disclose certain PA services to policy and group contract holders at the time that the HMO or PPBP issues a determination pre-authorizing services that are provided at a licensed medical facility. The disclosure must state if PA services are considered elective or if a PA is a condition of payment required by the HMO or PPBP for services. The bill specifies that the PA statement must include: • the name of the HMO or PPBP network and network status of the licensed medical facility and any facility-based health care provider that the HMO or PPBP reasonably expects will provide the PA service.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson (512)661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org

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			• an itemized estimate of payments that the HMO or PPBP will make to the licensed facility and provider for the PA service and any out-of-pocket financial responsibilities on the policyholder. • notice that the actual charges may vary from the estimate provided by an HMO or PPBP based upon the policyholder's actual medical condition and other factors; including - that the notice may not reflect all the physicians and providers involved in the bill of policyholder's care and despite the HMO's or PPBP's best effort • notice that the policyholder may be personally liable for the amount charged for services depending on their plan coverage and a general statement that some providers may be out-of-network. By requiring an HMO or PPBP plan that is delivered, issued for delivery, or renewed on or after January of 2022 to provide the disclosures mentioned in HB 4210, Texans will be able to make accurate financial decisions and receive the care they need per their insurance coverage	
HB 3081 By: Krause | Bailes | Martinez | Noble	Relating to the issuance of digital tags for the taking of certain animals.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism Votes: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Hunting tags are additional permits allowing licensed hunters to pursue certain animals at one animal per tag. This allows the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to assess the animal population to determine how many tags can be sold in the following season. At this time, TPWD requires the hunter to immediately attach a physical tag to the hunted animals while in the field. Tags being destroyed in the field can cause issues for tracking, and several states have passed laws to allow their wildlife departments to implement electronic tagging. HB 3081 would allow TPWD to develop and implement a program issuing digital tags for animals, including birds, to holders of hunting licenses. The program would allow TPWD to issue digital tags, allow hunters using digital tags to create a digital record with TPWD-required information while in the field, allow for the requirement of this digital record to be created as soon as possible, and for hunters to retain the record of their kill at all times.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org
HB 4018 By: Capriglione | Guillen Frank | Shaheen | Morales, Eddie	Relating to legislative oversight and funding of improvement and modernization projects for state agency information resources.	Appropriations Vote: 23 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	The 84th Legislature passed HB 1890 in response to the Department of Information Resources (DIR) Legacy Systems Study, which outlined the state's technology landscape and how to best approach updating it. Antiquated software and equipment have kept the state behind the private sector, prevented state agencies from interacting and sharing information, caused systems to become easily overwhelmed, and raised the risk of cybersecurity issues. The COVID-19 pandemic further exemplified the need to update these systems with government systems all over the US breaking with the influx of unemployment applications alone. Many of the proposed legacy system products are not a top priority in a budget year with many constraints on spending. HB 4018 seeks to address the modernization of projects that state agencies have requested. HB 4018 would create a Technology Improvement and Modernization Fund (fund) within the State Treasury outside of the general revenue fund. The fund would be used to improve and modernize State agency information resources, including legacy systems and cybersecurity projects. HB 4018 would establish a Joint Oversight Committee on Investment in Information Technology Improvement and Modernization Projects with 3 members from each chamber of the legislature who retain all powers and funding of a joint committee until its abolishment on September 1, 2026.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org

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			HB 4018 outlines the joint committee's responsibilities, including: investment and funding strategies for projects; review of existing and planned projects; determine the amount needed to fund projects; and develop strategies for long-term investment solutions for projects to improve or modernize information resources technologies in state agencies. HB 4018 would address the updates needed to assist in more efficiently running state agencies and would begin to address cybersecurity concerns.	
HB 4210 By: Paul	Relating to the authority of entities regulated by the Texas Department of Insurance to conduct business electronically.	Insurance Vote: 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Currently, industries regulated by TDI often have lengthy forms associated with their work that must be sent to consumers for consent (opt-in) before they can conduct business electronically. Since March of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated complications for entities whose internal operations relied heavily on physical paper and resulted in substantial delays in mail delivery of essential documents from the insurance industry. HB 4210 allows business regulated by TDI to automatically conduct business electronically unless a consumer has explicitly requested the insurer provide a non-electronic method for the transaction. The bill updates and revises the minimum standards for conducting electronic business with consumers to reflect that electronic transaction is now the default for these TDI regulated entities. Regardless of if consent is given for electronic transactions, an insurer must provide a clear statement informing the consumer of the ability to request a paper copy with information on how to do so and a statement about how to access electronic transactions. HB 4210 will improve efficiency for industries regulated by TDI by reducing physical paper transactions, which could result in potential savings and reduce the time involved in clerical duties for entities conducting business with a consumer.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson (512)661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org
HB 3115 By: Shine	Relating to the release of a judgment lien on homestead property.	Business & Industry Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	HB 3115 changes the timeline when a judgement debtor is to send a notifying letter to a judgment creditor. The letter will notify the judgement creditor about a filed affidavit seeking the release of the judgment lien based on the fact that the property is the judgement debtor's homestead. A separate document verifying the mailing of the letter may be filed with the county's real property records. Once the affidavit is filed, the bill conditions the authority of certain people to rely conclusively on the judgment debtor's affidavit and certificate of mailing for a 90-day period of reliance. Following 30 days of the judgement debtor's filing, a judgement creditor is permitted to make a counter claim and file an affidavit asserting the previous affidavit does not release the judgement lien. The creditor is permitted to include justification why the debtor's claims are untrue.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 3485	Relating to information reported	Public Education	Students of color in the United States are subject to disciplinary action at rates much higher than their White counterparts. These corrective actions put students at higher risk for adverse life outcomes, including involvement in the criminal justice system. The need for policy targeting racial disparities in education starts	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen

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By: Goodwin	through the Public Education Information Management System and to parents regarding disciplinary measures used by a school district.	Votes: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	with data collection and evaluation. Concerns have been raised around current data collection and reporting practices relating to school discipline, particularly concerning the lack of data disaggregation by race and gender and the difficulty individuals face in comprehending available data. HB 3485 seeks to address these concerns by requiring each school district to provide disaggregated information regarding disciplinary measures in its Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) report. HB 3485 requires each public school district to include in the district's PEIMS report the total number, disaggregated by the student's race, ethnicity, gender, and status as receiving special education services, of events related to discipline such as but not limited to corporal punishment, reports to local law enforcement, and suspension. HB 3485 requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to aggregate data collected by the state, region, district, and the campus in an understandable yearly report that is emailed to parents and posted on the TEA website with a link provided to the parents. As a result, HB 3485 makes important discipline data more accessible to parents and families, shedding light on data that affects students' safety and well-being and makes it easier for parents and families to engage in school practices.	(832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org
HB 2912 By: Vasut | Jetton | White	Relating to a violation of the Texas Residential Property Owners Protection Act or a dedicatory instrument by a board member of a property owners' association.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	The Texas Residential Property Owners Protection Act was designed to protect members of property owners' associations by permitting an owner to initiate legal action in a Justice of the Peace Court (JP Court) to access association records if they are wrongfully withheld. However, the Act did not provide any remedy for owners against board members who violate any other protection provisions. HB 2912 allows an owner to bring action for violations of the Act by filing a petition against a property owners' association or a board member with a JP Court. If the JP determines that a board member did violate provisions in the Act, the JP may grant one or more of the following: • immediate removal of the board member from the board • a judgment awarding damages to the property owner • a judgment authorizing the owner to deduct the amounts awarded from any future regular or special assessments payable to the association. The bill allows the prevailing party to be awarded court costs and reasonable attorney fees incurred with the action. Additionally, an owner must send written notice on or before the 10th business day to the association of the owner's intent to bring action. HB 2912 gives the ability for homeowners to hold board members of the property owners' association accountable if they violate The Texas Residential Property Owners Protection Act.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 2998 By: Smith	Relating to the requirement that certain business entities	Licensing & Administrative Procedure	Small businesses receive financial benefits from legally incorporating as a limited liability company (LLC) or an "S" corporation, which is a small business corporation with less than 100 shareholders and only one type of stock. Many brokers in the real estate industry outsource certain services to provide better customer service, like contracting with companies specializing in helping consumers with any problems related to	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388

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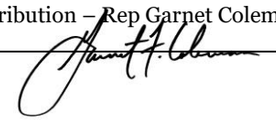

	obtain a license from the Texas Real Estate Commission.	Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	titling. These real estate-adjacent entities do not perform brokerage functions, but if they wish to gain status as an LLC or S corporation, they often face barriers in the form of duplicative licensing required by real estate regulation. HB 2998 allows LLCs and S corporations to be exempted from certain real estate licensure if they are affiliated with real estate brokerage only and meet the following requirements: • incorporated entities are still registered with the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) • 51% of the business is owned by a real estate license holder generating revenue for the business • the incorporated entity receives compensation from brokerage performed by the licensed broker or agent • no other broker duties are performed The bill increases overall efficiency and maintains an important regulatory tool by still registering incorporated businesses with TREC. These changes will allow small businesses to reap the benefits of incorporating without going through an additional burdensome process.	Cassidy@TexasLSG.org
HB 3920 By: Dean| Thierry	Relating to an application to vote early by mail on the grounds of disability or confinement for childbirth.	Elections Votes: 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 3920 codifies that a person does not qualify for early voting-by-mail if they lack transportation, have a sickness that does not prevent them from leaving their residence to vote, or if they have to work that does not allow them to vote on election day. Although the bill does allow for pregnant women to vote-by-mail, to be eligible for an early voting ballot, an applicant must affirmatively indicate that they agree with the statement: "I have a sickness or physical condition that prevents me from appearing at the polling place on election day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or injuring my health." This bill is a response to unverified claims about widespread mail-in ballot fraud that does not exist. Texas voters deserve an election system that provides every citizen the right to vote in our democracy instead of one that adds specific provisions that further restrict the right to vote.,.	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org
HB 3838 By: Dominguez	Relating to the display of emergency and other notices by a governmental entity on the entity's Internet website.	State Affairs Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	HB 3838 directs governmental entities to post in a prominent location on the home page of their website any emergency notification or official notices issued by the entity, including information regarding their ability to provide normal services to the public. The lack of uniform public notice standards has caused significant confusion for Texans over the course of the pandemic and February's winter storm. This bill's provisions would ensure that the public has easy access to important primary information regarding emergencies and service provision.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org
HB 316	Relating to the advertising and	Public Health	HB 316 will place guidelines on how alternative meat products are labeled and advertised. This bill changes the Health and Safety Code to apply Texas Meat and Poultry Inspection Act provisions. The definitions of	**Favorable** Evaluated by:

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By: Buckley | Harris | Smith | Rogers | González, Mary	labeling of certain meat food products.	Vote: 8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	"meat", "pork", and "poultry" are amended explicitly to exclude meat-replacement, plant-based, and lab grown products. The changes made delineate what is to be considered meat and poultry and create a clear distinction of what is to be labeled as "plant-based", "analogue", "meatless", or "made from plants". The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) will determine if an alleged food product's labeling or advertising is misleading, and must consider the following characteristics when making the determination: • representation made or suggestion by a statement, word, design, image, device, sound, or any combination and • the extent the labeling or advertising suggests the food is authentic meat or poultry, a meat, or poultry product, or derived from livestock in any form.	Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 1987 By: Vasut	Relating to eligibility requirements to hold a political party office.	Elections Votes: 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 1987 amends the Election Code so that a person running for a political party officer position may not be an elected official at the local, state, or federal level. This bill changes the existing statute by substituting "party or precinct chair" for "an officer of a political party," maintaining the requirement of being a registered voter. HB 1987 will force third-party candidates to choose between holding elected office and organizing their community. This bill does not make any real widespread difference to Texas elections except to dismantle third party participation.	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org
HB 1476 By: Bell, K. | Leach | Cyrier | Romero, Jr. | Raymond	Relating to a vendor's remedies for nonpayment of a contract with this state or a political subdivision of this state.	State Affairs Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Current rules managing how a governmental entity may handle an invoice dispute can unfairly harm the vendor. Notification of an invoicing error is not required to be specific, allowing the government entity to withhold all payment owed to the vendor until the resolution of what may be a minor mistake or disagreement. HB 1476 clarifies that a governmental entity shall notify a vendor in the event of an error or disputed amount in an invoice and must include in that notice specific details on the amount of the dispute. The bill also prohibits an entity from withholding any more than 110% of the disputed amount. These provisions will promote transparency and fairness in government-vendor relations.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org
HB 1793 By: Johnson, Julie	Relating to prohibiting oral releases for automobile insurance claims.	Insurance Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Concerns have been raised over the predatory tactics of some personal and commercial automobile insurers that convince injured motorists into settling or releasing their legal claims on the assumption that someone else's insurer could be trusted to settle the harm their policyholder induced. Currently, the statute allows oral release of automobile insurance claims, which often causes insufficient compensation for the injured motorists. Although this method of resolving property damage or injury claims is not a best practice within the auto insurance industry, when this tactic is used, the auto insurer manipulates the existing uncertainty of an estimated claim loss to favor the insurer rather than the injured person or medical provider involved in the claim.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson (512)661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org

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			HB 1793 adds stipulations that when any insurer writes personal or commercial auto insurance or policy plan in Texas, if the insurer is found to be liable for their policyholder, oral release of property damage or injury claims is prohibited. The bill also requires written exchange of any release made in exchange for financial compensation or other considerations occurring in auto-related property damage or injury claims. For those who enter auto-insurance contracts into, on, or after January of 2022, the prohibition of oral contracts will provide the necessary protections for Texans who end up having property damage or that suffer injury due to an auto collision.	
HB 4403 By: Turner, John	Relating to an agreement between a school district and public institution of higher education to provide a dual credit program to high school students enrolled in the district.	Higher Education Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Dual credit courses are designed to help high school students meet high school course requirements while earning college course credits prior to graduation, which helps reduce the cost and time required to earn a degree or certificate at a higher education institution. While there are roughly 200,000 Texas high school students enrolled in dual credit courses each year, this does not necessarily translate to increased post-secondary degrees, accelerated graduation, or reduced student debt. Research has identified that this is due to students lacking guidance and support when planning to enroll in dual credit courses to align with their higher education plans. HB 4403 would address this by requiring public school districts and public higher education institutions to designate at least one employee to provide academic advising to students who enroll in dual credit courses before the student beginning programs. Better preparation, planning, and an understanding of the dual credit program can help increase the number of successful students that take advantage of the dual credit program benefits.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org
HB 2822 By: Hull | Oliverson | Guillen	Relating to the availability of antipsychotic prescription drugs under the vendor drug program and Medicaid managed care.	Human Services Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Prior authorization (PA) requirements in Medicaid currently create barriers to essential medications for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. Access barriers can create consequential outcomes for these individuals, such as hospitalization and incarceration. HB 2822 prohibits the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) from requiring PA for a non-preferred antipsychotic drug included on the vendor drug formulary prescribed to an adult patient if certain requirements are met. The prohibition does not affect the authority of a pharmacist to dispense the generic equivalent or interchangeable biological product of a prescription drug, any review requirements for the use of a drug, or clinical prior authorization edits to preferred and non-preferred antipsychotic drug prescriptions. HB 2822 requires that the executive Commissioner: • require automation of clinical PA for each drug in the antipsychotic drug class • when a denial is given for a non-preferred or clinical PA, a pharmacist is immediately provided a point-of-sale return message that: ○ specifies the contact and other information for the pharmacist to submit a PA for the prescription.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org

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			○ instructs the pharmacist to dispense a 72 hr. supply of the prescription if appropriate. Generic medications do not always result in the desired outcome and often can result in serious side effects that render the drug unusable for that individual. Creating a streamlined and automated prior authorization process in Medicaid for non-preferred antipsychotics would improve health outcomes and quality of life for adults living with persistent mental illness.	
HB 4661 By: Thompson, S. | Howard | Neave | Goldman	Relating to sexual harassment by lobbyists.	State Affairs Vote: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	HB 4661 would require registered lobbyists to regularly undergo sexual harassment training approved by the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC), which oversees professional lobbying in the state. Additionally, registered lobbyists shall be prohibited from sexually harassing members, officers, or employees of the legislature - behavior that is already prohibited for legislators and employees. HB 4661 grants TEC the authority to deny, suspend, or revoke a lobbyist's registration if they violate these sexual harassment rules, and directs the TEC to temporarily suspend or restrict lobbyists who are charged with sexual assault or related offenses. This suspension may last for a period of up to 90 days, during which TEC must conduct a hearing to determine whether to extend the suspension. The bill also provides an expedited process for TEC to review sexual harassment complaints made against lobbyists. Lobbyists work closely with legislators and staff but are not subject to the same employment policies. Ensuring that there are enforceable measures in place to prevent sexual harassment by these individuals will further the legislature's efforts to create a safe working environment.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org
HB 4545 By: Dutton	Relating to the assessment of public school students and the purchase of certain instruction-related materials, the establishment of a strong foundations grant program, providing accelerated instruction for students who fail to achieve	Public Education Votes: 7 Ayes, 5 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Currently, students who do not pass the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessment must be provided accelerated instruction. If the student does not pass the fifth and eighth-grade reading and math STAAR exam, accelerated instruction must be provided along with another test on the same subject in the same year. Students who repeatedly fail are held back in that grade unless a grade placement committee determines they should advance. There is a plethora of data suggesting the STAAR exam is a poor measurement of a child's readiness for advancement. STAAR testing accountability puts an immense amount of pressure on school districts to ensure students pass, and the effects are felt by students and faculty alike. Instead of acknowledging the problems inherent within the standardized testing system, concerns have been directed at the effectiveness of accelerated instruction and grade placement committees, claiming these measures are not doing enough to assess student readiness. HB 4545 provides several reform measures based on the assumption that STAAR testing is the best measurement of a child's readiness for advancement: the grade placement committee is redesignated as an accelerated learning committee, standards for accelerated instruction are revised, an outcome bonus is provided for accelerated and sustained learning, and the strong foundation grant program is created.	**<u>Unfavorable</u>** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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	satisfactory performance on certain assessment instruments, and an accelerated learning and sustainment outcomes bonus allotment under the foundation school program.		**Accelerated Learning Committee**
			The bill replaces grade placement committees with accelerated learning committees for each student who does not perform satisfactorily on third-grade mathematics or reading STAAR tests. This committee must develop an accelerated instruction educational plan for the student to ensure they are performing at the appropriate grade level by the end of the school year, which must also be provided to parents. Each district board must adopt policies for addressing parent grievances related to these plans, and the bill authorizes parents of students who fail STAAR reading and mathematics tests in certain grade levels to choose their students' teacher in the following school year. If the student also fails to perform satisfactorily in the subsequent year, the district superintendent must meet with the accelerated learning committee to determine whether the educational plan must be modified and if additional resources are required.
			
			For high school students, HB 4545 removes a specification that accelerated instruction is funded through appropriations for that purpose and instruction must comply with the requirement for accelerated instruction in the third through eighth grades. The bill also repeals provisions relating to the adoption and administration of optional STAAR tests for algebra II and English III.
			
			Accelerated Learning and Sustainment Outcomes Bonus
			HB 4545 establishes an annual outcomes bonus under the foundation school program for a district or open-enrollment charter school to receive a bonus amount for each successfully accelerated student above a threshold number of qualifying students and for each sustained accelerated student. The bill establishes qualifications for considering a student successfully accelerated based on STAAR test performance. The commissioner must establish a threshold percentage of successfully accelerated students who are and are not educationally disadvantaged based on median district and charter school performance percentiles on applicable tests during the 2017-2018 school year. HB 4545 sets the following bonus amounts:
			• For each successfully accelerated student in excess of the threshold:
			  ○ $500 per student who is not educationally disadvantaged
			  ○ $1,000 per student who is educationally disadvantaged
			• For each sustained accelerated student
			  ○ $250 per student who is not educationally disadvantaged
			  ○ $500 per student who is educationally disadvantaged.
			
			Strong Foundations Grant Program
			HB 4545 requires the commissioner to establish and administer a strong foundations grant program to implement a rigorous school approach combining high-quality instruction, materials, and support structures for campuses serving students enrolled in prekindergarten through grade five. The grant program may utilize any available funds and gifts, other grants, or donations from any source. Districts or charter schools are authorized to use grant funds for preparing educational staff or paying for agreements with other entities providing pre-kindergarten services.	

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			As an intervention under the public school accountability system, the commissioner is authorized to require school compliance with all strong foundations grants program requirements at a campus under the following conditions: • students are included at any grade level from prekindergarten through fifth grade, • an overall performance rating of D or F is assigned • campuses must be in the bottom five percent of the state based on third-grade reading standardized test performance during the previous school year • a campus assigned an overall performance rating of D that is ordered to implement a targeted improvement plan is permitted to delay certain interventions Data has shown that proactive input-driven investments make the most difference in children's lives, not outcomes based on tests. HB 4545 assumes the STAAR test assessment is the only accurate measure of a student's readiness for the next grade and that educators are promoting students without adequately preparing them. Research suggests that providing outcome bonuses is an ineffective strategy with little to no measured benefit for encouraging student success, and additional funding is often provided to affluent schools who are not struggling. Reducing the high stakes for grades five and eight to pass STAAR testing is good on the surface level but adding outcome bonuses just redirects those high stakes on more students. Incentivizing STAAR test results as the ultimate indicator of student success will increase pressure for educators and lower the overall quality of education in Texas.	
HB 225 By: Thompson, Senfronia | Collier | Hernandez | Krause	Relating to the procedure for an application for a writ of habeas corpus based on certain new evidence.	Criminal Jurisprudence Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Incarcerated Texans currently have one opportunity to file an application for a writ of habeas corpus, which challenges wrongful conviction and current sentencing. As it stands, a person who is incarcerated can petition for a writ of habeas corpus if new scientific and admissible evidence were unavailable at the time of trial. Current law provides an avenue through the Court of Criminal Appeals to discover and present new non-scientific evidence of writ applications. However, it holds high evidentiary, burden of proof, standards. HB 225 adds procedures related to new non-scientific evidence specifying that evidence must not have been available during the original trial and the evidence must be material. After a writ application is filed, containing specific facts, HB 225 allows courts to grant relief on writ application: if evidence was not reasonably ascertainable before the date of the original trial; as long as the court finds that if the evidence had been presented during the original trial, the defendant would not have been convicted of the current offense; and that the evidence is admissible for the writ applications trial. Also, HB 225 stipulates that a writ application's claim may not have been presented or considered previously in the original trial or application of writ.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson 512-661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org

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			HB 225 provides an avenue, similar to changes issued for scientific evidence, for overturning convictions of new non-scientific evidence to prove innocence. Although the bill only applies to writ applications filed on or after passage, authorizing a court to grant a justice-involved person relief based on new non-scientific evidence will allow the state to act within its due diligence to exonerate Texans with wrongful convictions in the future.	
HB 1252 By: Moody | Thompson, Senfronia | Thompson, Ed	Relating to the limitation period for filing a complaint and requesting a special education impartial due process hearing.	Public Education Votes: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Texas statute currently has a limitation period of one year for filing special education due process complaints and for requesting special education impartial due process hearing while federal law, and 43 other states, have a limitation period of two years. There have been requests to extend the Texas limitation period from one year to two years to make the process more even-handed for families navigating the already confusing special education system. HB 1252 seeks to align Texas' limitation period with federal law. HB 1252 prohibits the commissioner of education or the Texas Education Agency (TEA) from adopting or enforcing a rule that establishes a shorter period for filing a due process complaint alleging a violation of state or federal special education laws and requesting a special education impartial due hearing. HB 1252 would allow families more time to file a complaint and request a hearing relating to the violation of state or federal special education laws. This allows the family a more equitable opportunity to acquire the services entitled to their student.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org
HB 1504 By: Morales, Christina | Wu | Allen	Relating to ethnic studies instruction in public schools.	Public Education Votes: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	History is often taught from an ethnocentric lens, meaning one culture or story is the only correct view of history. However, one view of historical events may not always be accurate, and some history may be excluded. Texas Education Agency (TEA) has implemented African-American and Mexican-American studies as elective courses for some high schools, but currently, they would not provide credits for graduation. HB 1504 requires public school districts that offer K- 12th grade to offer ethnic studies, including African-American and Mexican-American studies, as components of the social studies curriculum. The bill would permit one credit of ethnic studies to be an alternative to world geography or world history to satisfy graduation requirements. The provisions of this bill would be applicable for students starting the 2022-2023 school year. Texas has a rich, multicultural history and our students of color deserve to learn about their cultural history in the classroom.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 3979 By: Toth | Leach | Metcalf | Bonnen | Parker	Relating to the social studies curriculum in public schools.	Public Education Votes: 8 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV,	HB 3979 wishes to direct the social studies curriculum in public schools and open-enrollment charter schools to provide for the development of students' civics knowledge by prohibiting certain actions by teachers, students, school districts, and charter schools. HB 3979 requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to adopt state social studies curriculum standards to incorporate Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) that develop each student's civic knowledge, setting out required content that:	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen 832-302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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		1 Absent	• prohibits a state agency, public school district, or open-enrollment charter school from accepting private funding for the purpose of developing a curriculum, purchasing, or selecting curriculum materials, or providing teacher training or professional development • prohibits a teacher from being compelled to discuss current events or widely debated and currently controversial issues of public policy or social affairs • requires a teacher who chooses to discuss such events or issues to strive to explore those topics from diverse and contending perspectives without giving deference to anyone's perspective. HB 3979 prohibits a district, charter school, or teacher from requiring, making part of a course, or awarding a grade or course credit for the following: • a student's work for, affiliation with, or service learning in association with certain organizations. • a student's political activism, lobbying, or efforts to persuade members of the legislative or executive branch to take specific actions by direct communication at the federal, state, or local level • a student's participation in any practicum or similar activity involving social or public policy advocacy. HB 3979 also prohibits an employee of a state agency, district, or charter school from being required to engage in training, orientation, or therapy that presents any form of race or sex-stereotyping or blame on the basis of race or sex and prohibits an employee of a state agency, district, or charter school from requiring or making part of a course certain concepts relating to race and sex. American's participation in civic life is essential to sustaining our democratic form of government. Without civic engagement, our government cannot and will not last. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of the culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. This bill does nothing to accomplish this and will further hamper teachers and school district's ability to accomplish it. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in social studies must weave together history and civic education, reflect scholarship rather than ideology, include an overarching and relevant narrative that integrates the American perspective from all backgrounds and historical periods, and acknowledge that principled disagreements should be expected and welcomed. HB 3979 fails to provide civic education for informed, authentic, and meaningful citizenship. HB 3979 would leave current events or widely debated controversial issues of public policy would be left out of the conversation in its social studies curriculum. HB 3979 could dissuade teachers from teaching about relevant and historical topics to their students, especially students of color, LGBTQIA+ students, and students that are girls, erasing the ability to reflect on our country's failures to live up to the ideals of the founding documents.	
HB 547	Relating to authorizing equal	Public Education	University Interscholastic League (UIL) exists to provide educational, extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests. It represents quality educational competition administered by the school on an equitable basis. The contest rules for UIL activities and standards of eligibility to be met by students who earn the	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen

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By: Frank | Dutton | Huberty | González, Mary | Burrows	opportunity for access by home-schooled students to University Interscholastic League-sponsored activities; authorizing a fee.	Votes: 7 Ayes, 6 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	privilege of representing their school in interschool contests prohibit home-schooled students from participating. Some homeschooling families across Texas have requested the ability to participate in UIL activities. HB 547 would honor that request by requiring: • a public school that participates in an activity sponsored by UIL to provide a home-schooled student with an opportunity to participate in the activity on behalf of the school similar to a student enrolled in the school. • a home-school student who wishes to participate in a league activity on behalf of the school to be subjected to the following relevant policies that apply to the student enrolled in the school (registration, age eligibility, fees, insurance, transportation, physical condition, qualifications, responsibilities, event schedules, standards of behavior, and performance). • home-schooled parents are responsible for oversight of academic standards related to the student's participation in league activity. • UIL league may not prohibit a home-schooled student from participating. While the bill's intent would provide access to UIL activities for home-schooled students, HB 547 may lead to inequitable accountability practices such as passing grades and attendance between a private home-school and a public school entity. HB 547 does not specify provisions that would ensure that the home-schooler would be subjected to the exact requirement as a public school student, ensuring they participate on a level playing field. The bill also gives the homeschooling parent the responsibility for their children's academic eligibility, which would be problematic and unfair to other students. HB 547 would not be equitable to all students.	(832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org
HB 3333 By: Smithee	Relating to limitations periods in arbitration proceedings.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Arbitration is a private process, distinct from mediation, in which disputing parties allow for one or more individuals to make a ruling following the presentation of arguments and evidence. There is ambiguity within current state statute and case law regarding the application of the statute of limitations to arbitration proceedings. HB 3333 prohibits a party from asserting a claim in an arbitration proceeding if the party could not file the suit in court due to being outside the statute of limitations. A claim can be asserted outside the statute of limitations in an arbitration proceeding if the claim was filed in a court within the statute of limitations and both parties agreed, or were court ordered, to arbitrate the claim. This clarification allows for consistent arbitration practice regarding claims that are outside the statute of limitations.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 3789 By: Guillen	Relating to the statute of limitations for tampering with certain physical evidence.	Criminal Jurisprudence Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,	Possible destruction or tampering of evidence has made resolving many cold case murders in Texas difficult. Arguments have arisen around removing the statute of limitations for the destruction of or tampering with evidence in capital murder cases. In Texas, tampering with or fabricating any form of physical evidence before or during an investigation is a third-degree felony. HB 3789 adds that there is no statute of limitation for a defendant who tampers with physical evidence of a human corpse. Additionally, the bill states there is no limitation if an investigation shows that the defendant	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson 512-661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org

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		0 Absent	was tampering with evidence knowingly to alter, destroy, conceal evidence to avoid prosecution or conviction of criminal homicide. Although HB 3789's provisions do not pertain to the prosecution of an offense before passage, removing the statute of limitations could provide law enforcement another tool to prosecute defendants involved in capital murder cases and reduce the number of unsolved cold cases statewide.	
HB 805 By: Huberty | Munoz, Jr | Guillen | Raymond | Martinez	Relating to certain increases in benefits under the firefighters' relief and retirement fund in certain municipalities	Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services Votes: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	In 2017, adjustments to the Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund (HFRRF) were made which impacted a small number of the retired firefighters in the state from being able to receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). These retirees were eligible for COLA benefits at the time they retired but the revision did not account for these situations when it was enacted. HB 805 would address the unintentional oversight that did not grandfather these firefighters into the terms of their retirement prior to these changes being made. HB 805 would ensure these retirees are not unfairly penalized by restoring COLA benefits to these members alone and upholding the 2017 revision changes for future retirees.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org
HB 2014 By: Lucio III | Shine	Relating to the system for appraising property for ad valorem tax purposes.	Ways & Means Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	The Texas property tax system seeks to maintain fairness, but systemic changes are needed to ensure the process is fair and efficient for taxpayers. HB 2014 is a series of ad valorem property tax reform measures designed to enhance taxpayer accessibility and improve efficiency and transparency. These provisions will streamline the property tax appraisal system to promote efficiency, improve property tax exemptions to work better for the taxpayers they are designed to serve, and move taxpayers through the appeals process at a much quicker rate. **Tax Exemptions** The goods-in-transit exemption allows businesses to exempt certain materials if they are in transit for a certain period of time in Texas. HB 2014 extends this period of time for a taxing unit located in a disaster area to no later than the 270th day after the item was first acquired, and it only applies to that specific taxing unit for the tax year it is adopted. This change will ensure businesses storing goods in transit will not be inappropriately penalized due to circumstances outside their control. Open-space designations provide a tax exemption to properties used for agriculture or scenic destinations. Properties sometimes change ownership and lose their open-land tax status, then are subject to roll back taxes equal to the difference between the cheaper appraised value and market value. HB 2014 authorizes a property owner with open-space designated land to request the chief appraiser determine whether a change of property use has occurred, and the chief appraiser must provide a written determination verifying changes in the land's use. This bill would prohibit a chief appraiser from going back and changing a designation for open-land space, and people who received a written determination once would not be subject to roll back	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org

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			taxes in the future, as long as the land maintained its general characteristics. Thus, a rollback for change of use will only occur when physical characteristics of land are changed to non-agricultural use. **Appraisal Process** HB 2014 requires each appraisal to be assigned an account number, and also allows property owners to have multiple parcels of land sharing a border to have their properties bundled in one appraisal roll or one parcel of land separated into parts, before January 1st each year. If appraisers refuse to parcel land, taxpayers can order them to do so through a motion filed by the property owner or filing a protest with the Appraisal Review Board (ARB). The bill prohibits a chief appraiser from delivering an amended notice of appraised value after June 1st if a person filed a rendition statement or property report, unless the notice is meant to include omitted property or correct a clerical error. The chief appraiser must post the notice as part of the property's appraisal record on the appraisal district's website as soon as possible after delivering a notice of appraised value to a property owner. **Appraisal Protests** HB 2014 allows taxpayers to request a protest hearing in front of a single-member panel instead of a three member panel before 10 days of the hearing date. If all members of the ARB do not accept the request, they can recommend the hearing to another ARB member who is not familiar with the original protest. The bill also allows taxpayers to submit a written request for delivering a copy of a notice regarding protest determinations automatically as emails. This change will reduce expenditures resulting from requiring notifications to be sent by certified mail. HB 2014 prohibits a property owner from separately appealing parts of an ARB order determining the appraised value of land or an improvement to the land if the original order determined the appraised value of both. A person leasing property who is contractually obligated to reimburse the property owner for taxes imposed on the property is entitled to appeal a protest order determination if the property owner does not appeal. There is currently an exemption from provisions regarding overpayment refunds or erroneous property tax overpayments caused by changing an exemption status or correcting a tax roll. HB 2014 clarifies that this exemption also applies to overpayments received from appeals lawsuits and judicial reviews. The bill also prohibits courts from entering a protective order that conflicts with established conditions under which parties to protest appeals are considered seeking affirmative relief for the purposes of discovery regarding expert witnesses.	

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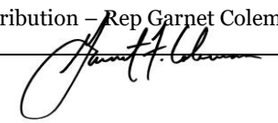

HB 1346 By: Paddie	Relating to a sales tax refund for sales tax overpayments by certain oil or gas severance taxpayers.	Ways & Means Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Currently, non-permitted purchasers must obtain a refund assignment from vendors before they can seek a refund from the comptroller. This requirement was intended to prevent an excess amount of low-dollar refund claims from being filed with the comptroller for everyday purchases by individuals. HB 1346 simplifies the refund process for oil and gas producers who do not typically hold sales and use tax permits because their sales are not applicable to these taxes. The bill authorizes oil and gas production taxpayers who do not have limited sales, excise, and use tax permits to obtain a refund for erroneously paid sales and use taxes. Applicable individuals can file a refund claim with the comptroller within a specified period by provisions establishing a statute of limitations for tax collection. The comptroller is required to provide additional rules and procedures for claiming the refund. This change would help expedite the refund process for oil or gas severance taxpayers.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org
HB 525 By: Shaheen | Dean	Relating to the protection of religious organizations.	State Affairs Vote: 12 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 525 orders that religious organizations be deemed “essential businesses” at all times, meaning that they would be authorized to operate without alteration of activities during shutdown orders in the event of a declared disaster. It allows individuals to sue, or the Attorney General to bring action against, a government entity or employee for violating this proposed rule. In this case, sovereign or governmental immunity would be waived. While religious freedoms must be protected even during a disaster, government authorities should not be prevented from taking scientifically-supported actions, like ordering the closure of certain facilities, to protect public health. This bill’s broad language could even be construed to limit an authority’s ability to impose guidelines such as limiting capacity or requiring masks be worn during religious activities, even if these minimal alterations would help prevent the spread of communicable disease while maintaining the ability to conduct religious activities. Setting statewide policy based on current circumstances, which may differ entirely from future disasters, could severely hinder officials’ ability to respond to the next emergency.	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org
HB 4343 By: Rose	Relating to the content of an application for Medicaid.	Human Services Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) was required by the legislature to amend the Medicaid application to allow applications to indicate their preferred method of contact. HHSC determined that the prescribed application language did not adequately inform applicants of the risks of electronic communication. The commission concluded that it would be required of managed care organizations (MCOs) to educate recipients. This negated the purpose of the original legislation to capture a preferred method of communication. HB 4343 revises required preferred contact method content of the Medicaid application form and a renewal form. A question must be given to all applicants, on both the application form and renewal form, that asks how they would like to be contacted. HB 4343 requires that the forms must include language to notify applicants that their listed preferred method of contact will be shared with their MCO or health plan provider and allows the applicant to consent to being contacted that way. The form will also explain the risks of	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org

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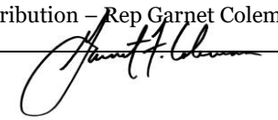

			electronic communication and allow them to change their contact preferences in the future and that they may opt out of electronic communication It is often difficult to reach an individual by phone, creating communication barriers to gain informed consent from Medicaid recipients. Providing alternative options, such as email or text message, mitigates that chance of a recipient missing the opportunity to give their consent to their contact information being shared.	
HB 3629 By: Bonnen | Button	Relating to the date a deferral or abatement of the collection of ad valorem taxes on the residence homestead of an elderly or disabled person or disabled veteran expires.	Ways & Means Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	People over 55 years of age, people with disabilities, or veterans with disabilities are able to seek deferrals or abatements on paying property taxes. However, these taxes accrue interest each year they remain unpaid, which can result in a significant sum of money to pay back. Families of these populations may not even know about the debt until a suit seeking collection is filed. HB 3629 provides a longer timeline for families to address the delinquent debt. HB 3629 changes the expiration date of a deferral or an abatement to collect the property taxes of properties owned by applicable individuals to 181 days after the applicable tax collector delivers a notice of delinquency when the owner or their spouse no longer owns or occupies the property. Originally, the expiration date was 181 days after the owner, or their spouse no longer owned or occupied the property. HB 3629 provides a better grace period for families to address the accrued debt as well as not be surprised by a sudden suit.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 144 By: González, Mary	Relating to supplemental information required for inclusion with a written statement of an individualized education program developed for certain public school students who received special education services during the 2019-2020	Public Education Votes: 10 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Among all students who were and still are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, students with disabilities experience greater disruption in needed special services resulting in impeding progress and even regression of learning. The pandemic left parents of special education students at a loss as to how best to serve their students. HB 144 seeks to address the needs of special education students during the COVID-19 pandemic. HB 144 requires a public school district to prepare a supplement for all students enrolled in the district's special education program during the 2019-20 or 2020-21 to be included with the written statement of the individual education program (IEP) developed for the student. The supplement must include information indicating: • if applicable, whether a written report of the child's full individual and initial evaluation for special education services was completed during the 2019-2020 or the 2020-2021 school year and if the report was completed by the required date. • if applicable, whether the child's initial IEP was developed during the 2019-2020 or the 2020-2021 school year and if it was developed by the date required under federal regulations. • whether the provision of special services to the child under an IEP during the 2019-2020 or the 2020-2021 school year was interrupted, reduced, delayed, suspended, or discontinued. • whether compensatory educational services are appropriate for the child based on the information included in the supplement or any other factors.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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	or 2020-2021 school year.		The bill exempts a district from the supplement requirement during the 2020-21 school year if the child's IEP document includes the information required by the supplement. The bill requires the districts to complete the supplement requirement by May 1, 2022, and the provision expires September 1, 2023. HB 144 ensures our vulnerable population of students do not get left behind during times of great challenges and we prepare appropriately for in-person education in the near future.	
HB 3916 By: Goldman	Relating to the interconnection and operation of certain distributed electric generation facilities.	State Affairs Vote: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Distributed energy generation refers to customer-side generation equipment or facilities that can provide back-up or supplementary electricity on the customer's premises. This includes resources such as rooftop solar panels, small- and community-scale wind turbines, fuel cells that run on hydrogen, and natural gas, gasoline, or diesel generators. There is currently no framework concerning the sale of distributed energy onto the broader electric grid, which can provide generation capacity and grid stability during periods of high demand. HB 3916 addresses this by authorizing the owner or operator of a large-scale distributed generation facility within the ERCOT power market to sell generated power back to customers or to the wholesale market. Depending on whether the service area has customer choice for retail providers, the operator may only sell back to the retail electric customer during periods of emergency, service interruption, or other select circumstances that merit additional generation capacity. The operator may sell distributed energy as an ancillary service to supplement shortages from licensed power generators. Whatever entity sells power to customers in a region may purchase distributed generation from the operator based wholly or partly on the wholesale price of the market at the time. The bill also requires that an electric utility facilitate interconnection between a distributed energy facility and the electric grid through distribution and transmission service or additional infrastructure, paid for by the distributed energy operator. Distributed generation facilities must comply with emission standards for standard electric generation facilities. This bill outlines the framework to allow distributed energy generators to support individual customers and the entire ERCOT grid across both customer choice and non-customer choice markets. Should another crisis such as Winter Storm Uri occur, this increased generation capacity could mitigate widespread extended outages.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org
HB 170 By: Ortega | Morrison	Relating to the hours for public consumption of alcoholic beverages.	Licensing & Administrative Procedure Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	Due to a lack of conforming statute, businesses operating as "bring-your-own" alcohol establishments are currently able to get around the prohibition on consuming alcohol after 2:15am. This has created regulatory difficulties for the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, who do not have regulatory authority in these circumstances, and other law enforcement agencies investigating crimes at establishments operating after-hours. HB 170 simply codifies the requirement that all establishments must stop serving alcohol by 2:15am. This change will allow for better TABC regulation of bring-your-own alcohol establishments and prevent negative situations from occurring with impunity after-hours.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org

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HB 2168 By: Krause	Relating to ticket sales for charitable raffles conducted by the charitable foundations of certain professional sports teams.	Licensing & Administrative Procedure Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	Professional sports teams often have philanthropic organizations dedicated to fundraising for important causes. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a substantial decrease in charitable raffles at sporting events due to forced closure of venues. The provisions in HB 2168 will help charitable foundations for professional sports teams recover some of their lost funds used to help important causes benefitting Texans in need. HB 2168 allows charitable raffle tickets to be sold at the home venue of a professional sports team with the foundation conducting the raffle and virtually on a website or mobile application provided by the team for the associated foundation. Online sales are restricted to people physically within Texas. The bill removes the Class C misdemeanor offense for accepting any payment other than US currency or debit card for purchasing charitable raffle tickets	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org
HB 2204 By: Thompson, Senfronia	Relating to the conduct of charitable bingo.	Licensing & Administrative Procedure Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	Charitable bingo games allow nonprofit organizations across Texas the opportunity to raise money for important causes. HB 2204 seeks to streamline the Occupational Code to make the operations of charitable bingo games more efficient and keep regulatory costs down. HB 2204 increases the maximum number of temporary licenses for a nonprofit's charitable bingo events from 24 to 48 licenses for each twelve month period and directs the Texas Lottery Commission to provide electronic issuance of temporary licenses to existing license holders as soon as practical. After over 20 years of the non-inflation adjusted amount, the bill raises the cap for the prize amount players can be awarded in a single bingo session from $2500 to $3500. Currently, counties have the option to collect a percentage of a 5% prize collection fee on charitable bingo games if they hold an election to do so, and up to 50% of the fee can be remitted to the county. There is debate on what is to be done with the 50% should the county not claim the fee. HB 2204 changes the language to mandate that 25% of the fee must be remitted to the county and 25% goes to the charitable organization if an election results in favor of remitting the fee to the municipality and clarifies in statute that the full 50% will default to the charity otherwise. These changes allow charitable bingo games to be conducted more effectively to raise money for important causes in Texas.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org
HB 1838 By: Gonzalez, Mary | Schaefer	Relating to intelligence databases for combinations and criminal street gangs.	Homeland Security & Public Safety Vote: 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Serious issues have resulted from a lack of transparency regarding how people are entered in the law enforcement database documenting criminal gang members. Members of motorcycle clubs have been arrested without committing a crime because their symbols have been mistakenly identified as belonging to a criminal gang, and people have even reported being denied entry to other countries. Once somebody is in this database, there is no procedure to facilitate their removal under current law. HB 1838 affirms people are legally entitled to request to view their information or their child's information submitted into a criminal street gang intelligence database and TxGANG by establishing the following rights:	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org

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			• information collected in violation of federal criminal intelligence systems operating policies, the Texas Constitution, or the U.S. Constitution is grounds for database removal • the evidence standard for reviewing the accuracy of information used to justify inclusion in the database is changed from reasonable suspicion to probable cause • the destruction of all recordings containing information found to not meet that standard must be prompt • the agency must provide notice of a determination to destroy records within 10 business days and another notification must be provided within 10 business days of the first notice confirming records in TxGANG were destroyed. HB 1838 requires DPS to notify people of their entry in the intelligence database regarding criminal street gangs, known as TxGANG, and creates a system for people mistakenly entered to be removed. Within 60 days of information regarding a specific person being entered, DPS must provide: • notification of the person's information that was entered • description of how to dispute information entered in TxGANG • a description of the process for removing information after someone leaves a gang. Once someone renounces their gang membership, DPS must remove their information from TxGANG within 2 years, and the bill requires DPS to create rules, procedures, forms, and evidentiary requirements for this process. HB 1838 requires an annual audit of TxGANG database and that information that has been in the database for over 10 years be removed unless DPS can provide evidence the information should stay in the system. DPS must provide audit result summaries and removal process information on their website. The bill prohibits a person's information in the TxGANG database from being made available to potential employers, limiting the person's legal rights, or preventing someone from getting any type of licensure, permits, or benefits. These changes ensure upstanding citizens with no criminal record or people who were formerly in gangs are not mistakenly penalized or unjustly harassed by law enforcement.	

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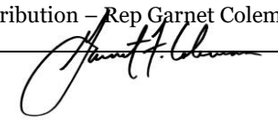

HB 1885 By: Harris	Relating to restrictions on municipal regulation in certain areas.	Land & Resource Management Vote: 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJ) are unincorporated areas that are contiguous to the boundaries of a municipality and located within a specific distance of those boundaries in accordance with the city population. ETJs were established to promote and protect the general health, safety, and welfare of persons residing in and adjacent to cities. HB 1885 would strip a city of its ability to fulfill that legislative purpose. HB 1885 restricts a municipality from regulating any activity or structure in an area in which the residents are ineligible or have only limited eligibility to vote in municipal elections, or ETJs. The bill does include an extensive number of exceptions to this restriction such as solid waste disposal services, slaughterhouses, traffic safety, nuisance abatement, infrastructure development, water, and city utilities. Restricting a municipality from setting regulations for what is best for their community impedes local control and have negative effects on individuals residing close to cities. Additionally, there are concerns that this bill would have negative impacts on the further development of military bases.	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 2405 By: Rodriguez	Relating to the municipal regulation of housing for homeless individuals provided by a religious organization.	Urban Affairs Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Many religious organizations have provided resources and services to individuals experiencing homelessness and often work with municipalities as partners to address homeless issues. In other states municipalities have tried to bar religious organizations from using their land to provide housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. HB 2405 prohibits municipalities from using zoning or land ordinances to bar religious organizations from using their facilities or land to house homeless individuals. HB 2405 maintains that municipalities may adopt or enforce an ordinance that imposes reasonable health and safety regulations on housing for homeless individuals on a religious organization's property. A municipality may require that the housing have electricity and heat for each housing unit and at least one kitchen and bathroom on the property that the individuals may use. HB 2405 states that for this section, "housing" does not include temporary housing that is provided during a life-threatening emergency or for natural disaster relief. As legislation passes that would ban municipalities from allowing open camping ordinances, it is important that the legislature provide alternative options to municipalities to serve their homeless population. Allowing religious organizations to utilize their own land as a means to provide housing offers these individuals an alternative to moving to another city or facing civil penalties for simply existing in their experience.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org
HB 1764 By: Guillen	Relating to authorizing certain counties to impose a hotel occupancy tax and the use	Ways & Means Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	The city of Poteet which is referred to as the "Strawberry Capital of Texas." and has hosted the annual Poteet Strawberry Festival for over 70 years. This festival along with other attractions have increased tourism in the Atascosa county. In recommendations to continue this growth, it was suggested that a civic center with an arena should be built to encourage other forms of entertainment available. HB 1764 authorizes the Atascosa county commissioners court to impose a county-specific hotel occupancy tax at a capped rate of 2% of the hotel room's price. The revenue from this tax is to be used to build, operate, and	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org

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	of revenue from that tax.		maintain a civic center with an arena used for rodeos, livestock shows, and agricultural expositions. HB 1764 will allow for Atascosa County to further develop tourism attractions and increase revenue to be used for the county.	
HB 1686 By: Cortez | Wilson | Toth | Rodriguez	Relating to the regulation of food production on single-family residential lots by a municipality or property owners' association.	Agriculture & Livestock Vote: 8 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	There is an increased interest in Texans raising their own food, through gardening and animal husbandry. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food distribution has emphasized the importance of implementing a way for residents who wish to produce their own food. However, there are some restrictions on what municipalities and property owners' associations allow residents to grow and what animals to raise. HB 1686 would prevent a municipality or a property owners association from adopting an ordinance prohibiting a single-family residential lot from growing fruits and vegetables or raising 6 or fewer domestic fowls or adult rabbits on their property. The bill does allow for a municipality or property owners association to adopt reasonable regulations relating to the maintenance of growing fruits and vegetables and the order, noise, safety, and sanitary conditions of keeping animals on their property. The allowed regulations that can be imposed on the raising or keeping of the fowls or rabbit in the bill include: • a limit on the number of fowls or rabbits as laid out above or a total combined number of eight • prohibiting raising or keeping of a rooster • minimum distance requirements between an animal shelter and a residential structure • requirement for fencing or shelter sufficient to contain the animals on the owner's property • minimum requirements for combined housing and outdoor space of at least 20 square feet per fowl and 9 square feet per rabbit • requirements to address sanitary conditions preventing an accumulation of animal waste that could create an offensive order. HB 1686 would not apply to a condominium apartment. HB 1686 clarifies that any ordinance adopted by the municipality that violates this stature would be considered void. These provisions limit local authority which would limit their ability to self-regulate on this issue. However, community gardens and personal animal husbandry has allowed Texans who live in food deserts to have access to quality healthy food, that they otherwise would not be able to easily access.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 3016 By: Moody	Relating to the prohibited suspension of a provision of the Code of Criminal Procedure or Penal Code during a	State Affairs Vote: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 3016 clarifies that, while the governor may issue executive orders during a declared state of disaster to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute, such an order may not suspend a provision of the Code of Criminal Procedure or Penal Code. This follows concerns from criminal justice advocates and professionals in Texas and across the country regarding the use of executive orders to curtail certain rights and procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Texas, the governor suspended certain statutes that would have facilitated the release of more incarcerated people from jails either on no-cost personal bonds or through a commuted sentence, disproportionately impacting individuals who would otherwise be released if they could afford bail. These facilities were especially susceptible to COVID-19 outbreaks due to overcrowding and potentially unsanitary conditions.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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	declared state of disaster.		Even during disaster situations, due process and the rights of individuals impacted by the criminal justice system should not be suspended on one executive's whim.	
HB 1861 By: Cortez	Relating to the requirements for interlocal contracts.	Urban Affairs Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	An interlocal agreement is a written contract between local government agencies such as a city, a county, a school board, or a constitutional office. By law, certain local government contracts are required to be authorized by the governing bodies of each party to the contract. There is a more streamlined process for interlocal contracts that do not exceed $100,000 entered into by municipally owned electric utilities by allowing exempting them from requiring authorization by both governing parties in interlocal contracts. HB 1861 would extend this streamlined process to the San Antonio Water System. This would allow the San Antonio Water System to use a streamlined process for entering into a contract and minimize the amount of time staff and members of the governing body spend on administrative matters such as this.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org
HB 1886 By: Noble | Frank | Swanson | Shaheen	Relating to a study on streamlining public safety net programs to reduce costs and improve outcomes for recipients under the programs.	Human Services Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	More than 4 million Texas children receive food and health care assistance from a number of state and federal assistance programs. Every session, little substantive legislation is passed to address disparities in health care and food security for the most vulnerable Texans, and focus is instead placed on whether Texas is spending too much money on providing "handouts" to people. Instead of dedicating resources to addressing the root problems causing the need for government assistance programs, HB 1886 proposes a five year study identifying methods for streamlining eligibility requirements, improving recipient outcomes, and reducing taxpayer cost. A cost-benefit analysis comparing program cost with overall effectiveness and a statistical analysis of the data collected will also be included. HB 1886 requires the Legislative Budget Board (LBB), in coordination with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to analyze the following state and federal public assistance programs: • Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) • Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) • Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) • Medicaid • Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) • Child Care and Early Learning Services Program • Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) A large portion of this study is focused on gathering demographic and socioeconomic information for program recipients, as well as the amount of state appropriated funds for each program. There is no appropriated funds allocated for this study and it is assumed costs associated with the study would be covered using existing resources. Forcing already underfunded agencies to conduct yet another study analyzing the effectiveness of programs for the most vulnerable people in Texas is a frivolous waste of government resources. The legislature would better spend its time focusing on enacting improvements	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org

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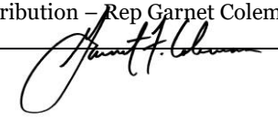

			already recommended in past audits and studies, such as addressing the serious issue of Texas having the highest rate of uninsured children in the nation.	
HB 1929 By: Wilson	Relating to the breach of development agreement contracts governing land in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of certain municipalities	Land & Resource Management Vote: 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Development agreements are voluntary contracts between a local jurisdiction and a landowner that detail the obligations of both parties and specify the standards that govern the development of the property. Development agreements often result in positive outcomes between the two parties. However, HB 1929 will make entering these agreements significantly riskier for cities, making cities less willing to agree to them. HB 1929 lays out a definition of adjudication of a claim and changes language to redefine a development agreement as a contract. HB 1929 states that annexation of land by a municipality is not a reason for the municipality to breach the contract. Additionally, HB 1929 contains a broad waiver of immunity from suit for the purposes of adjudicating breach of contract claims. The bill states that actual damages or injunctive relief may be granted for breach of contract. The amount of money awarded is limited to: • the balance, as amended, that is due and owed by the municipality under the contract • any amount owed by the landowner as a result of the municipality's failure to perform under the contract, including compensation for the increased cost as a result of delays caused by the municipality • reasonable attorney's fees and interest as allowed by law HB 1929 makes it so that any development agreement, or contract, that was entered into prior to the effective date of the bill would be valid, enforceable, and may be adjudicated based on what is laid out in the bill. HB 1929 introduces new liability for municipal functions that cities have been immune to in the past, which would likely result in cities no longer entering into these contracts to avoid the new risks. Development agreements are used to guarantee landowners access to in-city advantages without having to be annexed into the city as a prerequisite negotiation, and without these agreements it would cause significant development risks to the taxpayer without any benefit.	**<u>Unfavorable</u>** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 3583 By: Paddie	Relating to energy savings performance contracts.	Energy Resources Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	Local governments, school districts, institutions of higher education, and state agencies are permitted to use Energy Savings Performance Contracts (ESPCs) to procure services that would increase energy and water conservation in new or existing public facilities. These contracts include projects such as insulation, energy efficient lighting and air conditioning systems, water metering, and other improvements or equipment that would result in utility cost-savings. Instead of being paid upfront, ESPCs are "self-funding," meaning they are paid for through guaranteed annual cost-savings. There have been concerns that local governments are using ESPCs to fund projects that do not comply with statutory requirements, having the effect of circumventing the established contracting process for what should be defined as a public works project and stifling competition and transparency. HB 3583 addresses this by clarifying the appropriate projects and standards for change orders that local government ESPCs must abide by. The bill excludes from local government ESPCs the design or new construction of certain	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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			water, wastewater, and drainage projects. It also clarifies that a change order to an ESPC may not be used to add work that significantly strays from the original scope of the project or that increases the contract's price by more than 25%. These provisions may be enforced through an action of declaratory or injunctive relief filed within ten days of the contract being awarded, and contracts that are in violation are voidable.	
HB 2569 By: Cortez | Toth	Relating to the dates a retail fireworks permit holder may sell fireworks to the public.	County Affairs Vote: 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 2569 extends the deadline for selling fireworks by 24 hours—specifically from midnight on July 4th to midnight on July 5th. While there are always some safety concerns around fireworks, this bill only minorly amends the allowable window for purchase and would bring significant revenue to the private companies and nonprofits that are licensed firework vendors.	**Favorable with Concerns** Evaluated by: Jenny Catchings (925) 628-0628 Jenny.Catchings_HC@house.texas.gov
HB 2641 By: Rodriguez | Ortega	Relating to annually adjusting for inflation the maximum amount of a motor vehicle excluded in determining eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program.	Human Services Vote: 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Working Texans rely on their vehicles to get to work or even utilize them for working purposes. Since 2001 Texas has allowed a resource limit for applicants of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to maintain eligibility that includes a first vehicle worth up to $15,000 and any additional vehicles can be worth up to $4,650. Any excess vehicle value is counted towards the cash resource limit that may disqualify an individual from being eligible for SNAP benefits. Since the limit was set it has not accounted for inflation rates, even as the fair market value (FMV) of a vehicle has nearly doubled in that time. HB 2641 requires the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission by rule to adjust for inflation the maximum amount of the FMV for a vehicle that may be excluded from the resources of a SNAP applicant's household. This means the current vehicle caps would be adjusted to account for the inflation over the last two decades since the caps were instated. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, many working Texans lost their jobs and income, forcing them to rely on food banks and apply for SNAP benefits to put food on the table. However, many applicants did not meet eligibility requirements because their vehicle exceeded the limit allowed for vehicles. Denying Texans in need of temporary assistance because their vehicle is worth too much based on a limit instated decades ago is unjust in a state where reliable transportation is necessary.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org
HB 2664 By: Martinez | Reynolds	Relating to the authority of an independent school district to change the date of the general election and terms for offices.	Public Education Votes: 10 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Texas school districts are overseen by school boards elected by their communities. Under current statute, a board trustee can serve a term of three or four years. ISDs that have board members serving a three-year term shall have elections annually. While some school districts have shifted to annual elections in compliance with state statute, there are some districts that have not complied because the municipality in which they reside cannot practically hold annual elections, placing those ISDs under additional burden leaving them in violation of the law. HB 2664 solves this issue by authorizing ISDs to revise the terms and date of the general election of their board of trustees.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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			HB 2664 authorizes the board of trustees of an ISD to change the date on which it holds its general elections for officers to the November uniform election date if the district does not already do so. The board of trustees has until December 31, 2026, to make this change. HB 2664 also authorizes the board of trustees to adopt a resolution changing the length of the term of its trustees, providing for staggering terms of three or four years and for the transition from the previous term to the new term.	
HB 3656 By: Turner, Chris	Relating to the classification of certain construction workers and the eligibility of those workers for unemployment benefits; providing penalties.	Business & Industry Vote: 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Employee misclassification - when an employee is classified as an independent contractor and not as an employee - has been a method of committing payroll fraud. This has been an especially significant concern in the construction industry. This misclassification denies workers access to employee rights and benefits, health insurance benefits, workers' compensation, overtime, and unemployment benefits. Misclassification also makes it harder for responsible contractors who follow the law to competitively bid on construction contracts, because they are undercut by unscrupulous employers who fail to pay their share in payroll taxes. Payroll fraud also costs Texas $54.5 million in lost unemployment tax revenue. HB 3656 provides the solution to this practice and ensures construction workers are treated properly. HB 3656 requires contractors to properly classify individuals providing construction services as either employees or independent contractors as established by Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) rules. HB 3656 also establishes that construction services provided by an independent contractor are to be excluded from the definition of "employment" in the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. An individual will not be considered an employee solely based on if the employer requires a background check, a pre-employment drug screening, or possesses the required credentials to perform the work. Furthermore, the bill establishes which certain people are not required to report to TWC under this bill's provisions, and establishes which certain individuals are exempted from its provisions. Under this bill, TWC is required to make information about the reporting procedure for employment classification violations publicly accessible on their website. TWC is authorized to impose administrative penalties for each initial and subsequent violation for each employee and is required to notify any governmental entity that TWC reasonably believes received construction services from the violating contractor. TWC will also complete an annual report regarding the compliance and enforcement of the bill's provisions. HB 3656 promotes the fair treatment of construction workers, levels the playing field for construction employers, and returns lost state revenue from lost unemployment tax revenue.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 2742 By: Reynolds | Guillen	Relating to the reentry and reintegration programs provided by the Texas	Corrections Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,	Suggestions have been made around improvements in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's (TDCJs) reentry and reintegration (R&R) programs. The implementation of transition programs is often started late and extends release dates due to failure of program completion before release. In addition to existing requirements, HB 2742 requires the TDCJ reentry and reintegration plan to begin an individual's required programming as soon as practicable upon intake. The programs must provide a	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson 512-661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org

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	Department of Criminal Justice.	3 Absent	comprehensive network of transition programs that address an offender's needs following the completion of parole or mandatory supervision. HB 2742 will no longer require providing information about employment training, treatment programs, and parenting or relationship-building classes as a part of their life skills programming. The bill adds that the programs must provide justice-involved persons with information about their development of prosocial behavior and positive relationships and upon request spiritual guidance. Expanding access to TDCJ's R&R programs for a greater period of time could reduce recidivism and will allow opportunities for justice-involved persons to invest in themselves and prepare for life challenges upon release.	
HB 3221 By: Leach	Relating to the accrual of a cause of action for purposes of certain laws governing certain construction liability claims.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	In 2019, legislation passed that favored contractors and design professionals by allowing them to repair construction defects on public facilities before the government entity could file suit for construction or design defects. The provisions laid out in HB 3221 would give contractors and design professionals more advantages. HB 3221 prevents a government entity from asserting a construction liability claim before the cause of action report is postmarked detailing the basis of the claim causing damage or loss of property due to an alleged construction defect to a government building or interested public work. HB 3221 has the ability to, in some circumstances, limit the time frame of which a governmental entity could bring forth a construction liability claim by making this change in statute. These new provisions would make it even more difficult for a governmental entity to hold contractors and design professionals responsible for fault construction of public facilities.	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 2793 By: Johnson, Jarvis | Sherman, Sr. | Wu	Relating to parole determinations and individual treatment plans for inmates.	Corrections Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Currently, a justice-involved person may become eligible for release years before the Parole Board Panel (PBP) reviews their case and sets an expected date for release. Concerns have been raised around the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's (TDCJs) inability to properly enroll justice-involved persons into programming and treatment required for release. Frequently, these persons are unaware of requirements and cannot begin programming until after they have been approved for release by the PBP, forcing them to remain in custody for months or years past their intended date of release. HB 2793 requires the PBP to provide a copy of statements regarding the granting or denial of release on parole or mandatory supervision to the justice-involved person and the rehabilitation programs division. If the decision results in a denial, the panel is required to specify actions that the justice-involved person must take to address factors that contributed to the denial. On an annual basis, the Board submits a report of their application of the parole guidelines to the Criminal Justice Legislative Oversight Committee and other legislative officials. Based on the PBP's review, HB 2793 encourages the Board to update and adjust how guidelines account for progress and risk-levels on a justice-involved person's individual treatment plan (ITP). The bill adds that the report must include accounts for an individual's progress on their ITP and uses the guidelines to make an individualized determination. Guidelines	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson 512-661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org

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			to approve or deny release must contain an analysis of parole denials and include reasons for denial and information regarding additional rehabilitative programming recommended for those who are denied. HB 2793 significantly reduces current date-related provisions that require all information relating to the individual to be captured by TDCJ no later than the 45th day after an individual has been admitted. Also, the bill requires the Board to conduct their initial review by no later than the 90th day after admission. HB 2793 adds that the information gathered must include an evaluation of the educational, rehabilitative, and vocational needs of the individual and the results of an assessment made using a risk and need assessment or another validated instrument adopted by TDCJ. Also, the bill specifies that TDCJ shall identify any classes or programs that the Board intends to require, make the classes or programs available, and provide this information to the individual before their eligibility date. • TDCJ must establish an ITP within 60-days after obtaining the individual's information and provide the plan directly to the justice-involved person. • The bill adds that 1-year before their parole eligibility date, TDCJ shall assess the individual based on the validated instrument and revise their score as necessary to reflect the completion of programming as required by the ITP. • Annually, TDCJ shall review each ITP and, as necessary, revise the ITP and the individual's risk and needs assessment score to reflect completion of required programming. HB 2793 will reduce overcrowding by providing earlier opportunities for critical programming and create opportunities for successful reentry into the community to improve public safety. Provisions laid out in the bill will provide accountability within TDCJ, and integration of an individual's progress will create more informed and accurate PBP release decisions in the future.	
HB 4212 By: Moody	Relating to procedures regarding defendants who are or may be persons with a mental illness or intellectual disability.	Corrections Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	In 2019, the Texas Supreme Court's Commission on Mental Health established a task force composed of judicial stakeholders and mental health providers involved in court cases. The task force studied and made recommendations to improve or refine laws relating to defendants with mental health and intellectual and developmental disabilities. HB 4212 implements these recommendations, including the specification that in the early identification of a defendant's mental illness or intellectual disability, magistrates are not required to order the interview or collect information if the defendant is no longer in custody. **Requisites of a Personal Bond** HB 4212 adds that a personal bond is not required to contain the oath if the magistrate determines that the defendant has a mental illness or is a person with an intellectual disability or found incompetent to stand trial. **Plea Procedures for Justice and Municipal Courts** HB 4212 adds that these defendants or persons who are related, provide care, or have a fiduciary relationship with the defendant shall determine whether probable cause exists to believe that these defendants cannot understand the proceedings, require assistance in their defense, or are unfit to proceed. If the court	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson 512-661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org

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			determines that probable cause exists, the court may dismiss the complaint or appeal to a complaint after providing the State notice. HB 4212 prohibits the judiciary from accepting guilty or no contest pleas unless the defendant is mentally competent, and that the plea is free and voluntary. **Time Credits** HB 4212 adds that a court shall issue a time credit to the term of these individual's sentences if at any period the person participated in an outpatient competency restoration program. **Competency Restoration Period** Currently, if questions arose around the defendant's ability to stand trial and findings suggest that they are indeed competent, a trial for the restoration of the defendant's competency must occur before further action takes place. HB 4212 adds that the competency restoration period begins, including extensions of the period, on the later date that a defendant is ordered to participate in an outpatient program or is committed to mental health, residential care, or jail-based program, or the date that services actually begin. **Jail-based Restoration of Competency Pilot Programs and County Implementation** To contract with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), the bill adds that a local behavioral health authority is eligible to develop and implement program services on their own. Also, the bill removes provisions that required providers to have one or more years of previous program experience. HB 4212 removes existing language specifying "clinical" competency restoration treatment currently offered within inpatient mental health facilities and expands to similar programs. The bill also removes provisions that required providers to be certified by a national nonprofit organization and have demonstrated a history of successful outcomes. However, the bill stipulates that the program must use a multidisciplinary treatment team to provide services, including mental health treatment and substance use disorder treatment as necessary, to restore competency through licensed or qualified mental health professionals within the jail. The bill adds that a provider may use a qualified psychologist to evaluate the defendant's competency and report to the court. Suppose competency is not restored by the 60th day. In that case, the program services shall continue, unless the program has been notified that space at a facility or outpatient program is available and appropriate. Transfer only applies to defendants charged with a felony that has 45-days remaining in their restoration period or a misdemeanor where an extension has been ordered with no less than 45-days remaining. The bill adds that the defendant may be transferred to an outpatient program, including any extensions, for the remainder of their restoration period. **Incompetency to Stand Trial** HB 4212 adds order modifications following inpatient civil commitment placement for defendants who have been transferred from a maximum-security unit to any other facility. Defendants, or those who represent them, must request the court modify current orders for the defendant to participate in outpatient treatment. If the	

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			program facility makes this request by the 14th day, the court shall hold a hearing to accept or deny the modification. The bill stipulates that the court is not required to hold a hearing unless the request is accompanied by supporting materials proving the appropriate basis of the requested modification. Upon receipt of a request, the court requires the local authorities to submit a statement of need and the head of the program facility to submit a medical examination for mental illness for outpatient care before a hearing is held. **Insanity Defense** HB 4212 removes provisions that experts have at least 5-years of experience in performing criminal forensic evaluations for courts and more than 8-hours of continuing education and that documentation be provided to the court. **Commission on Jail Standards** HB 4212 adds that individuals with a mental illness must be provided with each prescription medication that a qualified medical professional or mental health professional determines is necessary for the prisoner's care, treatment, or stabilization.	
HB 2802 By: Dean | Guillen | Lozano	Relating to the administration of public school assessment instruments and the temporary suspension of certain accountability determination for public schools in a school year in which public school operations are disrupted as a result of a declared disaster and the requirement to use those assessment instruments as a	Public Education Votes: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted schools and negatively impacted students throughout the country. These impacts question the validity of statewide standardized testing requirements and the cost of administering them in the current academic environment characterized by significant learning loss. HB 2802 seeks to address standardized testing requirements when a state of disaster is declared. HB 2802 requires the commissioner of education to apply for a U.S. Department of Education waiver from administering standardized testing under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act if a statewide disaster is declared that significantly disrupts public school operations in a majority of Texas districts during the school year. If the U.S. Department of Education fails to grant such waiver, the statewide standardized test results *may not* be used by the commissioner to: • evaluate school district or campus performance for the applicable school year to impose any interventions or sanctions in regard to statutory provisions; and • determine a student's qualification for promotion or graduation. HB 2802 takes into consideration the impact and challenges experienced by school districts and their students during declared states of emergency outside their control and avoids penalizing schools by releasing them from testing requirements during such emergencies.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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	criterion for promotion or graduation of a public school student.			
HB 3984 By: Davis	Relating to service of expert reports for health care liability claims.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Expert reports serve to justify a claimant's pursuit of a healthcare liability claim aid in distinguishing legitimate claims versus frivolous claims from bad actors. However, there are imprecise timeframes in which these claims should be presented. This often results in confusion for both parties of the claim and can elongate court proceedings. HB 3984 provides necessary clarifications and establishes clear deadlines for these expert reports. These clarifications will allow for expedient trials, and these provisions will remove any confusion about expert report expectations. HB 3984 authorizes a court to make a preliminary determination regarding a health care liability claim. The preliminary determination would be a designation if the claim requires an expert report. If a court determines that an expert report is required, then the claimant must present the report within the following timeline: • 120 days after the defendant's original answer - first plea - in the case. • 60 days after the court's preliminary determination under this bill. • a date that was mutually agreed on by all parties. If a preliminary determination is not issued within 90 days of the claim's filing, then the court is required to issue a preliminary determination that an expert report is required for the case. The claimant or defendant is able to appeal a preliminary determination. If an appellate court reverses a district court's preliminary determination that a claim is not a health care liability claim, then the claimant is required to submit an expert report within 120 days of that ruling.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 3388 By: Thompson, E.	Relating to information regarding state agency vehicle fleets.	State Affairs Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Currently, all state agencies are required to submit quarterly reports on their respective fleets to the Comptroller's Office of Vehicle Fleet Management, which reviews fleet operations and makes recommendations to agencies. Agencies are required to submit a fee of $5.25 per vehicle to assist in the maintenance of the Office's reporting system. Responding to concerns that this external reporting process is costly and unreasonably time-consuming for agencies with large fleets, HB 3388 requires that agencies with a fleet of over 2,500 vehicles establish an internal vehicle reporting system to assist in fleet management. These agencies - currently including the Department of Transportation, the Department of Criminal Justice, the Department of Public Safety, and the Parks and Wildlife Department - must only report requested information to the Office once per year. Any such agency shall be exempt from paying a fee to the office for maintaining the statewide reporting system. These measures will improve agency efficiency and allow them to focus on their core mission, rather than excessive reporting requirements.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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HB 2950 By: Smith	Relating to the composition of and actions transferred by the judicial panel on multidistrict litigation.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Multidistrict litigation (MDL) refers to a legal process where one can consolidate common questions of fact by putting them into one court, which ultimately speeds up the process of handling such cases. Texas' Judicial Panel on MDL consists of judges that are appointed by the Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court. HB 2950 expands on who is able to serve on the panel by including a former or retired court of appeals justices or active administrative justices. Additionally, the bill states that the MDL panel would now be decided by the whole Texas Supreme Court, and not just the Chief Justice. HB 2950 also includes a provision that adds that facts of law could now be eligible for MDL. This broadens the category of what can be transferred, which creates opportunities for a defendant to possibly choose where their case is heard and ultimately decided. Federal law on MDL does not include facts of law, which would create inconsistencies in statute.	**Favorable with Concerns** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 2711 By: Hinojosa | Murphy | Guillen	Relating to the continuation of a residence homestead exemption from ad valorem taxation while the owner is temporarily absent because of service outside of the United States as a foreign service officer employed by the United States Department of State.	Ways & Means Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	There are several current exemptions that allow property owners to temporarily freeze their property taxes, which are commonly used by property owners who deploy abroad in the military or are hospitalized for extended periods of time. HB 2711 extends the property tax freeze exemption to foreign officers, such as diplomats or security officials, who are serving abroad representing the United States. This change will allow people serving the U.S. and Texas abroad to save on property taxes for residential homesteads they are not physically occupying.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org
HB 2344 By: Zwiener | Bernal | VanDeaver | Buckley | Lozano	Relating to authorizing the use of a writer portfolio assessment to assess writing performance for	Public Education Votes: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Texas assesses students' writing proficiency through the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exam. Concerns have been raised by educators that the current system is insufficient in assessing a child's writing proficiency and hinders a student's writing growth. The exam is graded on a metric system and encourages writing to be taught in a formulaic fashion that hampers creativity and independent thought. HB 2344 seeks to improve the current students' writing assessment model by authorizing districts to adopt a writing portfolio assessment as a component of the required reading exam. A school district may opt in to	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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	public school students.		elect the use of a writing portfolio assessment for students in place of administering a portion of the reading STAAR exam for grades three through eight and an English I or II end-of-course exam that is not presented as in a multiple-choice format. The bill requires a district that chooses to assess with a portfolio assessment component to design the assessment in conjunction with public and private institutions of higher education and submit it to TEA for approval. HB 2344 requires a district to adopt a policy allowing the assessment to be scored by a classroom teacher assigned to the same campus as the student to whom the assessment is administered. Teaching students to write to a prescribed formula hinders their writing development and would cause many young talented writers to lose confidence and interest in writing. HB 2344 would benefit students by allowing this portion of their assessment to be completed throughout the school year and receive immediate teacher feedback rather than adhering to a rigid and formulaic essay task on a given test day. These teachers are better positioned to understand student performance at their campus and appropriately adjust instruction to meet their needs.	
HB 2821 By: White	Relating to the diversion of certain foster youth from the juvenile justice system, including through emergency behavior intervention by certain persons providing foster care services.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Children in the foster care system often face trauma which results in maladaptive behavior outputs e.g., extreme emotional outbursts, poor self-regulation, depression, or anxiety symptoms, etc. Stakeholders that provide juvenile services have jointly voiced concerns about children being referred to the juvenile justice system via general residential operations (GRO) - a 24 hr. child-care facility that cares for 7 or more children. Often, trauma-related behaviors are mistakenly identified as criminal behaviors by GROs and result in children entering the juvenile justice system. HB 2821 addresses this issue via several paths to ensure a holistic solution. HB 2821 requires a person conducting a child's preliminary investigation to refer the case to certain local or community based juvenile service entities. These entities will then make the determination if the child will reside in a GRO. HB 2821 requires residential childcare facility employees to be trained in crisis response training for emergency behavior intervention. Under HB 2821, a juvenile board is required to adopt policies, specifically targeting children that live in a GRO, that prioritize diversion and utilizing juvenile detention as a last resort. Criminalizing children, especially for mental health conditions, does not align with Texas' vision for juvenile justice. Ensuring that children are able to grow up to be successful, empowered, and healthy aligns with this vision. HB 2821 will help keep children out of the system and to connect them with essential services.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 3121 By: Turner, John |	Relating to a voluntary quality standards certification	Public Health Vote: 10 Ayes, 0 Nays,	HB 3121 specifically addresses the lack of mental health care options available for youth during post-hospitalization. The bill will allow for existing residential facilities to voluntarily meet heightened standards as well as incentivize new programs to expand to Texas.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org

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Price | Coleman	process for certain private residential psychiatric treatment facilities that provide treatments and services to youth; imposing fees; authorizing civil and administrative penalties.	0 PNV, 1 Absent	HB 3121 creates the framework for the development and implementation of a voluntary quality standards certification process for eligible psychiatric residential youth treatment facilities. The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) will be responsible for the creation of the certification process as well as conducting the annual compliance inspections. The bill establishes admission criteria for facilities certified under this act. The bill requires the HHSC executive commissioner to establish all necessary fees to cover the costs of administering the certification process. The executive commissioner will also establish the minimum eligibility standards, and their criteria, for residential youth treatment facilities to become certified. Certified facilities are subject to civil and administrative penalties for violations of this bill's provisions. The bill also clarifies that its provisions are not applicable to mental hospitals, private mental hospitals, or other mental health facilities. Additionally, the bill's provisions will not impact other existing licensing or requirements of psychiatric residential youth treatment facilities. Adolescents and their families need support that is not available currently, but HB 3121 will ensure this support becomes readily available for Texans.	
HB 4355 By: Krause	Relating to providing children committed to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department and prisoners serving a sentence in a county jail with certain documents on discharge or release.	Juvenile Justice & Family Issues Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB4355 will ensure that children or individuals have access to necessary identification and removes another roadblock to successful reintegration. Often, those that go through incarceration or secured supervision lose identification needed to apply for s social services and need to have them replaced. This process is difficult and keeps people from successfully reintegrating back into their community. HB 4355 addresses this issue by having the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) or the county sheriff confirm or provide access to identification documentation prior to release or discharge. HB 4355 requires that the TJJD and a county sheriff must do the following before releasing a child under supervision or discharging an individual serving a county jail sentence: • determine if the child or individual has a valid driver's license or personal identification certificate, a certified copy of their birth certificate, and a copy of their social security card. • if the child or individual does not have a driver's license or personal identification certificate, then a request for this document must be submitted to the appropriate entity when practicable to ensure it can be provided at the time of release or discharge. The issuing fee of a personal identification certificate under this bill's provisions is $5. HB 4355 requires that TJJD or the Commission of Jail Standards enter into a memorandum of understanding with the vital statistics unit of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). The memorandum must establish the responsibilities of the TJJD or Commission of Jail Standards and HHSC to carry out the bill's provisions and require that the identity related information gathered is verified by and reported to the appropriate entities. TJJD, the county sheriff, or the county's commissioners court is required to reimburse DPS or DSHS for costs accrued to carry out the responsibilities from this bill. These entities are	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org

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			also given the authority to charge the parents of the child or the discharged individual to cover these costs. The bill excludes non-residents.	
HB 3141 By: Dominguez | Cain | Harris | Price	Relating to requiring the disclosure of fees charged for the sale of concert and other event tickets.	Business & Industry Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	There is a lack of transparency regarding all ticket sale fees charged by ticket vendors, in person and online. These hidden fees often raise prices to be significantly higher and are not noticed until the transaction is completed. HB 3141 addresses this issue by increasing the transparency required for fully informed decisions when purchasing tickets. HB 3141 requires a person that sells or resells tickets, including operators of a ticket website, to disclose fees in connection to the transaction. For ticket websites, operators must post these fees in an easily accessible location on their website for purchasers or potential purchasers. HB 3141 increases the information available for consumers to make fully informed decisions when purchasing tickets and to not be caught off guard by hidden fees.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org
HB 1984 By: Vasut	Relating to the duration of a special open hunting season for game animals and certain game birds restricted to persons under 17 years old.	Culture, Recreations, & Tourism Votes: 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	The Texas Youth Hunting Program (TYHP) was established in 1996 to provide youth, under 17 years old, with opportunities to learn about hunting safely, legally, and ethically and the roles landowners and hunters play in wildlife conservation. The Parks and Wildlife Commission oversees TYHP and offers more than 200 hunts a year, but many of the youth hunting seasons are limited to only two weekend days. HB 1984 would ensure TYHP's special open season, excluding the special open season for migratory game birds or waterfowl, is a minimum of seven consecutive days.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org
HB 3286 By: Schofield	Relating to the overnight parking of a commercial motor vehicle near certain apartment complexes.	Transportation Votes: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Counties have expressed concerns on behalf of apartment complexes about commercial trucks and trailers parking overnight and creating street congestion and safety issues. Currently, municipalities may adopt restrictions to public street parking, but counties do not enjoy the same clear regulatory authority to adjust regulations for residential subdivisions that are apartment complexes. Residential subdivisions may petition a county to post parking restriction signs, but Texas Transportation Code does not account for apartment complex petitions. HB 3286 permits a county with a population over 220,000 to restrict commercial vehicle parking between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. on rights-of-way adjacent to apartment complexes if the request is made by the owner or manager of that apartment complex. This bill will allow counties the regulatory mechanism to ensure safe rights-of-way near apartment complexes through posted signage restricting the use of roads as overnight commercial parking.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org

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HB 3294 By: Bell, Cecil | Walle | Capriglione | Thompson, Ed | Bonnen	Relating to funding for the Texas emissions reduction plan.	Appropriations Votes: 23 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	The Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) is a program offering grants to incentivize the purchase of equipment or vehicles with a smaller carbon footprint in an effort to improve air quality in metropolitan areas of the state that are struggling to meet federal clean air requirements. The TERP fund is housed outside of the state treasury, as intended, but concerns have brought to light regarding some of the fees collected from the motor vehicle titles not being deposited in the fund because of complex chains of distribution. HB 3294 would have all motor vehicle title fees deposited directly into the TERP fund as recommended by the comptroller. Currently, motor vehicle fees are deposited to the Texas Mobility Fund (TMF) with $5 from each fee dedicated to the TERP fund. The bill would require the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to report the amount deposited to TERP each month and for TxDOT to request the comptroller match that amount in the form of a transfer from the State Highway Fund (SHF) to the TMF. Any fees collected on or after the last day of the fiscal biennium are to be deposited to the TMF, during this time the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality will publish the National Ambient Air Quality Standards from the EPA for ozone and air quality in the Texas Register. Streamlining transferring into TERP can help to ensure the stability of the fund, continuation of the popular incentive program, and improvement of air quality for Texans.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org
HB 3162 By: Martinez	Relating to a certificate of merit in certain actions against certain licensed or registered professionals.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Certificates of merit are sworn statements made by a third party who practices within the same profession providing confirmation that a claim is legitimate. In 2019, legislation passed extending certificate of merit requirements for plaintiffs who sue certain licensed or registered engineers, architects, landscape architects, or land surveyors to all claims for these lawsuits. This change in statute resulted in unintended consequences for design-build projects, which HB 3162 seeks to address. HB 3162 states that a third-party plaintiff that is a design-builder or design-build firm would no longer be required to file a certificate of merit for some third-party claims. In instances where issues have not arisen from the previous legislation, the certificate of merit requirements remain. HB 3162 would resolve the problematic dilemma that currently exists in statute.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org
HB 782 By: Swanson	Relating to requirements for certain petitions requesting an election and ballot propositions.	Elections Votes: 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Currently, 376 home-rule chartered municipalities oversee the ballot language of propositions. City attorneys and city councils work together to draft proposition language that adheres to municipal and state requirements. Recently, there have been court cases targeting ballot propositions in Austin and Houston stating that the language was misleading to voters. The Texas election code currently limits ballot propositions to a single statement on the ballot and city charters contain requirements that must be adhered to in the drafting of ballot proposition language for their cities. HB 782 seeks to unify petition forms throughout Texas and change oversight procedures for ballot propositions and acceptable processes of petitioning a proposition. HB 782 requires the Secretary of State to create a uniform process for petitions including the form, content, and procedures. Giving the SOS this power takes away local control. A home-rule city may not dismiss a petition if they use a form different from the	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org

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			SOS that contains additional information that is not provided. A city would verify signatures for a petition within 30 days and may not limit who is allowed to collect signatures. A petition signature cannot be invalidated on the basis of illegibility as long as the signer is eligible to sign and did so in the required timeframe. HB 782 would allow voters to directly submit propositions they feel are misleading to be reviewed by the office of the Secretary of State (SOS). The SOS would be responsible for ensuring that ballot language is stated with "definiteness and certainty that the voters are not misled" within 7 days of receiving the submitted proposition. If the SOS determines that a rewrite of a ballot proposition is needed, then a county must work to rectify the language. If, on notice of the revised proposition language, a voter still finds a proposition misleading the SOS will draft the new language. This bill gives an exemption to religious organizations to circulate or submit a petition and ballot language in connection with an election and could negatively impact cities and counties with inclusive LGBTQIA policies amongst other issues. Currently, corporations, which are broadly defined to include any corporations as for-profit or non-profit businesses and labor organizations, are prohibited from taking such actions. Providing an exemption would give religious organizations that benefit from tax exemptions preferred treatment over other entities. Additionally, if a city is brought to court by a petition complaint and ballot language has been found to be misleading, then the city is responsible for the petition plaintiff's court and attorney's fees. The city is then required to seek approval on all proposition language from the SOS for 4 years after the court's finding. The city cannot accept pro-bono services for court proceedings and must pay fair-market value. HB 782 requires a municipality to use court issued language without regard to home-city charter regulations and waives governmental immunity liability.	
HB 3298 By: Allison | Guillen	Relating to the establishment of a computer science strategic advisory committee and the essential knowledge and skills of the technology applications curriculum.	Public Education Votes: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	There is a large demand for computer science skills in all job markets, and Computer Science is one of the fastest-growing academic disciplines. The 86th legislature required the State Board of Education (SBOE) to review and revise Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) inventory to include coding, computer programming, computational thinking, and cybersecurity. Despite this, computer science course enrollment remains low for Texas students. HB 3298 addresses this disparity by establishing a new deadline for SBOE to update TEKS with technology applications curriculum. The bill also requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to permanently establish the computer science strategic advisory committee to develop recommendations for increasing computer science instruction and participation in public schools. Provisions outline the composition, appointment, operation, and compensation of the advisory committee, which must include a TEA-appointed employee. The committee is required to submit a report with recommended changes to state law, including funding proposals and timelines for implementing recommended changes, to the governor and legislature each odd-numbered year.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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			HB 3298 seeks to ensure Texas students develop the necessary computer science knowledge and skills to help them be competitive in the future workforce.	
HB 3959 By: Buckley | Guillen | Bailes | Cyrier	Relating to the establishment of the Texas youth livestock show grant program.	Agriculture & Livestock Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Agriculture education for Texas youth is an experience that provides job skills, scholarship funding, and community engagement. Students compete in livestock shows that are supported by the community throughout the year and participate in livestock auctions that provide prize earnings. Due to COVID- 19 most of these livestock shows were canceled in 2020 and students were unable to participate affecting a critical source of scholarship funds in many rural districts. To address the absence of financial security in economic downturns for the production of these livestock shows, HB 3959 creates the Texas Youth Livestock Show Program and Texas Youth Livestock Show Fund that will grant funding to youth livestock shows from the Texas Department of Agriculture. The grants would be made to fund youth livestock shows that are regional or under 10 years in existence. The fund would utilize a portion of state sales tax from items related to the raising or selling of livestock shows as well as grants, including federal grants, donations, gifts, interest from the fund, and other state-appropriated funding.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org
HB 1156 By: Thierry | Leach | Bell, Keith | Crockett	Relating to creating the criminal offense of financial abuse of an elderly individual.	Criminal Jurisprudence Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	National reports indicate that older Americans collectively lose nearly $37 billion each year to financial scams and abuse. Since Texas has one of the largest and fastest-growing populations of senior citizens, the influx of financial abuse reports has created concerns around the need to protect vulnerable older Texans from scams. HB 11156 will create an offense for the financial abuse of older Texans to protect them from financial scams and abuse. The bill adds definitions for elderly individuals, financial abuse, and financial exploitation. Financial exploitation is defined as a breach of a relationship that results in the unauthorized appropriation, sale, or transfer of property, taking of assets, and the misappropriation or misuse of an individual's money. A breach of this relationship is done when the actor knowingly or intentionally fails to effectively use the victim's resources for their support and maintenance. HB 1156 specifies that the actor is in breach if they have a relationship of confidence or trust with the victim as well. Specifically, if they are a parent, spouse, adult child, or another relative by blood or marriage; joint tenant or tenant; have a legal or fiduciary relationship, act as a financial planner or investment professional, and act as a paid or unpaid caregiver of the victim. The offense depends upon the value of the victim's resources in question and results in a Class B or A misdemeanor if the value is less than $750 or state jail, third-degree, second-degree, or first-degree felony if the value is more than $750 to $150,000. HB 1156 also allows the court to prosecute the actor under provisions laid out by the bill, another section of the Penal Code, or both Sections.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson 512-661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org
HB 2558 By: Capriglione	Relating to prohibited state contracts with companies that	State Affairs Vote: 8 Ayes,	HB 2558 prohibits state agencies and political subdivisions from entering into a contract valued at $100,000 or more with companies that have over 10 full-time employees if that company does not verify that it does not and will not discriminate against the firearm or ammunition industries. This] includes sales, manufacturing, distribution, and related commercial entities, as well as sport shooting ranges and firearm	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224

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| Bell, C. | Schaefer | Slawson | Oliverson	discriminate against the firearm or ammunition industries.	3 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	trade associations. Discrimination could include refusal to engage in trade, refusal to continue doing business with, or other expressions of prejudice against these industries. This would not apply to a governmental entity that determines the requirement is inconsistent with its fiduciary duties or to contracts entered into prior to the bill's passage. This bill addresses certain practices undertaken by financial institutions, some of whom have been cautious about doing business with industries that are believed to be at high risk for fraud, such as the firearm and payday lending industries. The bill's overly broad language does not outline specific rules under which a company's actions may be seen as discriminatory, leaving open the possibility that closing a firearm seller's account or refusing to extend a loan to a sport shooting range due to financially or administratively sound reasons could be construed as discrimination. Further, this bill does not outline any sort of enforcement mechanism to ensure a company's compliance. This bill would likely have little direct impact. However, it would set a precedent that the state is comfortable with providing certain industries with special financial protections not available to others that are equally if not more important to the Texas economy. The bill could further cause government entities to pass on the most high-quality, cost-effective goods and services due to a company's refusal to sign a legally-binding contract that prohibits certain broadly defined behaviors that may well fit within its current, sensible business practices.	Hannah@TexasLSG.org
HB 3673 By: Johnson, Jarvis	Relating to the establishment of a sickle cell disease registry.	Public Health Vote: 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	The CDC estimates that over 100,000 people in the US suffer from sickle cell disease (SCD), this diagnosis disproportionately present in Black Americans. It is estimated that SCD occurs in 1 of 365 Black American births. However, this estimate is based on newborn screenings and life expectancy data. A registry would allow for a more accurate accounting of those with SCD in this country as well as Texans with SCD. Additionally, a registry would provide a central location to promote the further development of treatment and cures for SCD. HB 3673 will provide such a registry for individuals with SCD. HB 3673 requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to create and maintain an SCD registry. The registry will serve as a single central location for records of individuals diagnosed with SCD which will include information deemed necessary by the Health and Human Services Commission's (HHSC) executive commissioner. Health care facilities are required to submit data about SCD patients to DSHS, and the HHSC executive commissioner is responsible to ensure these records remain confidential when the information is ultimately added to the registry. DSHS is required to submit an annual report to the Texas legislature regarding the information gathered for the registry. DSHS also has the authority to release supplemental reports, in collaboration with other reporting or research entities, to carry out the registry's purpose. SCD disproportionately impacts Black Americans and requires action from state leaders. This registry aligns with Texas' vision of equitable healthcare and to eradicate health disparities and disproportionality.	**<u>Favorable</u>** Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org

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HB 3546 By: Cortez	Relating to the authority of a municipality to add property to a common characteristic public improvement district.	Urban Affairs Vote: 7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Public Improvement Districts are legal mechanisms for property owners in a defined geographical area to jointly plan and put in place a sustainable funding source that can pay for a set of services to improve their area. These districts are solely made up of hotels with district proceeds used for marketing and sales initiatives to grow local hotel activity and tourism. There has been confusion regarding a municipality's authority to add new hotels to an existing district. HB 3546 allows municipalities to add a property to a Public Improvement District if a sufficient number, more than 60% of appraised value owners, of the record owners of the real property currently included in the district and proposed to be included in the district have consented. Consent is given by signing the original petition to establish the district or by signing a petition or written consent to include the property in the district. Public Improvement Districts have been created have been widely successful and are vital in the recovery of the Texas tourism industry in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org
HB 100 By: Gervin-Harkins	Relating to a notarized affidavit requesting a municipal animal control authority to manage dangerous dogs and aggressive dogs in the municipality's extraterritorial jurisdiction.	Urban Affairs Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	There have been concerns regarding the number of dog attacks on domestic animals and livestock in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of cities and counties across Texas. Many of these areas do not have an internal operating animal control authority. HB 100 allows municipal animal control authorities to impound and manage dangerous and aggressive dogs in the municipality's unincorporated area that is contiguous to the corporate boundary if: • the authority receives a notarized affidavit requesting assistance from residents of an unincorporated area without an animal control authority that can manage dangerous dogs. • there is no animal control authority in the area authorized to operate or the operating authority does not provide impoundment or management of those types of dogs. An aggressive dog is defined as a dog that makes an unprovoked attack on a domestic animal or livestock that causes bodily injury to the animal and occurs outside of the dog's secure enclosure. Granting authority to municipalities to allow their animal control agencies to operate in those areas would help address the issue of dog attacks.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org
HB 2095 By: Wilson	Relating to water research conducted by The University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology.	Natural Resources Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	There have been concerns that water availability models, which help local and state water management authorities plan for water needs based on available resources, population growth, drought conditions, and other factors, are not adequately disseminated to all relevant parties. Since water resources across Texas are interconnected, a statewide entity that can aggregate and analyze data from all available sources is needed to produce more accurate models. This bill directs the University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology, which conducts geoscience research, to collaborate with the Texas Water Development Board to improve available data and modeling of the state's water resources, including groundwater, surface water, and soil or atmospheric moisture. The bureau must advance modern and integrated modeling techniques that consider the interconnections of various water	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org

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			sources that are managed separately by law. The bureau shall collaborate with other research, regulatory, and water management entities to carry out these duties, and data shall be made available through current statewide data collection and dissemination networks. These provisions will promote better understanding of interrelated water resources through more efficient and modern data collection and modeling procedures. This will allow local and statewide authorities to better manage the state's water to ensure adequate supply for current and future use.	
HB 156 By: Ortega | Moody | González, Mary | Fierro | Ordaz Perez	Relating to the authorization by referendum of an optional county fee on vehicle registration in certain counties.	Transportation Votes: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	The El Paso area's roads are critical to national security and safety, encompassing some of the busiest ports of entry along the U.S.-Mexico border and a large military base, Fort Bliss. Additionally, the region's aging roads are supporting increased trade activity and a rapidly growing population. HB 156 would allow El Paso County residents to vote on a referendum that would create an additional $10 fee on vehicle registration for priority projects that are managed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization. This bill creates new funding capacity for long term projects in the El Paso region and could relieve Texas Department of Transportation funds for other uses.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org
HB 3598 By: Leach | Rodriguez	Relating to increasing the minimum term of imprisonment and changing the eligibility for community supervision, mandatory supervision, and parole for persons convicted of intoxication manslaughter.	Corrections Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Currently, intoxication manslaughter is a second-degree felony that carries 2- to 20-years of prison time and/or a fine up to $10,000. If an individual is convicted, judicial officials hold the discretion to sentence the individual to minimal confinement. For this offense, HB 3598 requires a 5-year minimum term of imprisonment. Given that minimal terms of confinement limit judicial discretion, HB 3598 adds that judges granting community supervision to a convicted defendant may reduce the minimum term of imprisonment to as low as 2-years. Judges may only reduce minimum terms if it is in the community's best interest, that no one will further be harmed, and enters the finding on the record. HB 3598 establishes that these individuals are not eligible for parole until completing the 5-year minimum, regardless of good conduct time. The bill also prohibits a parole board panel from releasing these justice-involved persons until provisions are met. By requiring minimal jail time, HB 3598 will ensure public safety from individuals convicted for intoxication manslaughter offenses.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson 512-661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org
HB 1884 By: Dominguez | White | Raymond |	Relating to the award of grants by the Texas Workforce Commission to facilitate the participation of	Defense & Veteran Affairs Vote: 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV,	Community and technical colleges collaborate with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to train veterans for in demand occupations. Many active duty military members also struggle transitioning from service to a civilian occupation. There have been requests to provide incentives to non-profit organizations who may be interested in assisting veterans participate in apprenticeship training programs. HB 1884 requires TWC to develop and administer a program that would allow TWC to award grants to non-profit organizations who facilitate veterans' and active duty military members' participation in	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org

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Guillen | Middleton	certain veterans and military personnel in apprenticeship training programs.	1 Absent	apprenticeship training programs, based in Texas, during their transition into civilian employment. TWC shall adopt rules for verifying that state funds awarded are being appropriately used.	
HB 1781 By: Krause | Martinez	Relating to the propagation of breeder deer by cloning.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism Votes: 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 1 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 1781 would allow deer breeders to use cloning as a form of breeding through in vitro fertilization. In November of 2020, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) updated its rules for deer breeding permit holders by ruling cloning as a form of deer propagation, after the public input period, for white-tailed or mule deer, with the exception of the scientific need for credible research. This is prohibited to prevent unintended negative consequences on the deer population from using technology not fully understood or definitively free from negative outcomes. HB 1781 will overrule this decision and make deer cloning an allowed method of deer breeding. There is an assertion that the intent of the cloning is to preserve preferred genetic traits in deer, but the Texas Foundation for Conservation and the Texas Wildlife Association caution against this outside of authorized research settings. The Texas Wildlife Association stated issues could arise where deer cloning makes tracking where an animal came from for epidemiological purposes more difficult. Research on cloning mammals has not produced overwhelmingly positive or negative results to conclusively determine how expansively it should be used. The FDA is doing ongoing research of the technology including assessing the need for updates to the risk assessment as new information becomes available. Cloning wild animals should only be done in a research setting where guidelines exist to ensure the best outcomes for the animals.	**Unfavorable** Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org
HB 4293 By: Hinojosa | Krause | Moody | Leach | González, Jessica	Relating to the creation of a court reminder program for criminal defendants.	Judiciary & civil Jurisprudence Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	There are well reported concerns of an inflated number of Texans in jail due to a failure to appear to a court date they were unaware existed, had changed time, or simply forgot about. Failure to appear at court is costly for the court system, the individual, and the county. HB 4293 creates a text alert program from the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System (OCA) free of charge for counties to notify people who are criminal defendants of scheduled court proceedings. The program aims to reduce costs, improve the efficiency of TX courts, remind people of court dates, and decrease the number of people in county jail due solely to their absence from a scheduled court appearance.	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org
HB 1568 By: Middleton | Buckley |	Relating to the school district property value study conducted by the	Public Education Votes: 11 Ayes,	The Property Value Study (PVS) helps to ensure the equitable distribution of state funding for public education. Government Code requires the comptroller's office to conduct a study to determine the total taxable value of all property in each school district at least once every biennium. The comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division (PTAD) conducts the PVS to estimate a school district's taxable property value. The results affect a school district's state funding. The Commissioner of Education uses the PVS to ensure	**Favorable** Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org

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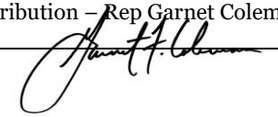

Bell, Keith | Krause	comptroller of public accounts.	1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	equitable distribution of education funds, so school districts have roughly the same amount of money to spend per student regardless of the school district's property wealth. The secondary purpose of the PVS is to collect data to provide taxpayers, school districts, appraisal districts, and the legislature with measures of appraisal district performance. PTAD measures the level and uniformity of property tax appraisals using data collected in the school district PVS. Each county appraisal district (CAD) determines local property values and set school district tax rates that determine the number of local tax revenues. The comptroller's office tests the values the CAD assigns by constructing a statistical margin of error around the comptroller's estimate. Currently, the margin of error is five percent. HB 1568 would amend the Government Code to modify the eligibility for a school district to receive a grace period when they are found to be appraising below market value by lowering the required level of appraisal for all categories of property sampled from 90 percent to 85 percent. The bill would increase the maximum margin of error to be used in determining the validity of school district taxable values from five percent to 7.5 percent. The bill would apply beginning with the tax year 2022 property values. In the short term, this would mean fewer districts would fail the property value study, thus lowering the property value used in state aid calculations for some school districts, which would increase state aid and/or reduce recapture in those districts. In the long term, this change could reduce pressure on appraisal districts to keep appraisals at fair market value. This would likely mean lower property tax collections as compared to current law for school districts as well as cities, counties, and other taxing jurisdictions. For school districts, increased state aid and reduced recapture would partially offset the lower tax collections. For other taxing jurisdictions, there is no mechanism to make up for the lost revenue. Additionally, lower appraised values could result in higher tax rates because property tax rate compression is triggered by property value growth.	

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