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LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 9 AM - Saturday, May 8, 2021				
Author	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
<b>HB 3276</b>  By: Parker   Cain   Schofield   Fierro	Relating to the security of voted ballots.	Elections  Votes: 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<b>Will of the House</b> Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org
LSG Floor Report For GENERAL STATE CALENDAR- Saturday, May 8, 2021				
<b>HB 1396</b>  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	<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Employment Practices</b></p> <p>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</p>	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org

OK for Distribution - Rep Garnet Coleman

			<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Developing Model Policy</u></b></p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• citations for fine-only misdemeanors and conforming applicable procedures to confirm an individual's identity and issue a citation or notice to appear.</li> <li>• no-knock entry</li> <li>• duty to intervene in excessive use of force.</li> </ul> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• citations for fine-only misdemeanors.</li> <li>• duty to intervene in excessive use of force.</li> <li>• no-knock entry.</li> <li>• banning chokeholds or neck restraints outside reasonable belief of necessity.</li> <li>• preventing serious bodily injury or death in police interactions; and</li> </ul>	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the duty to render aid unless there is reasonable belief doing so will cause serious bodily injury or death to the officer.</li> </ul> <p>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, homelessness, or other mental health-related incidences.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Enhancing TCOLE’s Regulatory Authority</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p><b>HB 4387</b> By: González,</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the Texas Transfer Grant pilot program.</p>	<p>Higher Education  Vote: 9 Ayes,</p>	<p>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</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org</p>



<p>Mary   VanDeaver</p>		<p>1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p><b>HB 1683</b> By: Landgraf   Guillen   Ellzey</p>	<p>Relating to the enforcement of certain federal laws regulating oil and gas operations within the State of Texas.</p>	<p>Energy Resources Vote: 6 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Legislation that would prohibit state agencies from cooperating with federal enforcement authorities puts the 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.</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2656</b> By: Moody</p>	<p>Relating to licensing examinations for certain court interpreters.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>HB 2656 will remove barriers to entering the court reporting profession by ensuring equal access and opportunity to take the licensing examination.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org</p>



<p><b>HB 1810</b> By: Capriglione</p>	<p>Relating to maintenance and production of electronic public information under the public information law.</p>	<p>State Affairs Vote: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 4146</b> By: King, Tracy O.   Cole</p>	<p>Relating to a restriction on permits authorizing direct discharges of waste or pollutants into water in certain stream segments, stream assessment units, and drainage areas.</p>	<p>Environmental Regulation Votes: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org</p>



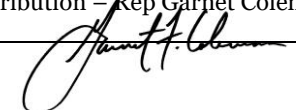
<p><b>HB 2926</b></p> <p>By: Parker   Krause   Minjarez   Talarico</p>	<p>Relating to the reinstatement of the parent-child relationship with respect to a person whose parental rights have been involuntarily terminated.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice &amp; Family Issues</p> <p>Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b></p> <p>Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 1942</b></p> <p>By: VanDeaver   Bernal</p>	<p>Relating to the high school program.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>Votes: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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 the adult high school charter program to provide for additional charter holders and build a regulatory framework.</p> <p>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</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b></p> <p>Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org</p>



			<p>restrictions. The bill revises provisions relating to the program, including charter eligibility, student outcomes and services, accountability frameworks, and state funding.</p> <p>HB 1942 increases access to education by adults and will allow adults to improve their lives through education and workforce training.</p>	
<p><b>HB 2952</b> By: Neave</p>	<p>Relating to suits affecting the parent-child relationship and the calculation and enforcement of child support.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice &amp; Family Issues</p> <p>Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>HB 2952 provides the necessary updates to Texas' child support system to maintain alignment with federal requirements.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 1664</b> By: White   Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to the reinstatement of eligibility for medical assistance</p>	<p>Human Services</p> <p>Vote:</p>	<p>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</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885</p>



	<p>of certain children placed in juvenile facilities.</p>	<p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Maddox@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 692</b>  By: Shine   Bell, K.   Darby   Bell, C.</p>	<p>Relating to retainage requirements for certain public works construction projects.</p>	<p>State Affairs  Vote: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org</p>





			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 costly disputes between the government entity and the prime contractor, saving taxpayer dollars and promoting the efficient completion of public works projects.	
<b>HB 854</b> 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 accidentally carries on a prohibited premise they can be absolved of their charges through the judicial process.	<b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson (512)661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org
<b>HB 2242</b> 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.	<b>Favorable</b> Spencer Carruth (512)463-0760 Spencer.Carruth_HC@House.Texas.gov
<b>HB 4012</b> By: Bonnen	Relating to disclosures by certain health benefit plans to enrollees regarding certain preauthorized medical care and	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	<b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson (512)661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org



	health care services.		<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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</li> <li>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.</li> </ul> <p>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</p>	
<p><b>HB 3081</b> By: Krause   Bailes   Martinez</p>	Relating to the issuance of digital tags for the taking of certain animals.	<p>Culture, Recreation &amp; Tourism</p> <p>Votes: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 4018</b> By: Capriglione   Guillen</p>	Relating to legislative oversight and funding of improvement and	<p>Appropriations</p> <p>Vote: 23 Ayes, 0 Nay,</p>	<p>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</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org</p>



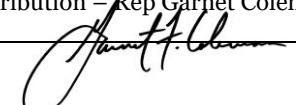
	<p>modernization projects for state agency information resources.</p>	<p>0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>further exemplified the need to update these systems with government systems all over the US breaking with the influx of unemployment applications alone. Many of the proposed legacy system products are not 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>HB 4018 would address the updates needed to assist in more efficiently running state agencies and would begin to address cybersecurity concerns.</p>	
<p><b>HB 4210</b> By: Paul</p>	<p>Relating to the authority of entities regulated by the Texas Department of Insurance to conduct business electronically.</p>	<p>Insurance Vote: 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson (512)661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org</p>



<p><b>HB 3115</b> By: Shine</p>	<p>Relating to the release of a judgment lien on homestead property.</p>	<p>Business &amp; Industry  Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 3485</b> By: Goodwin</p>	<p>Relating to information reported through the Public Education Information Management System and to parents regarding disciplinary measures used by a school district.</p>	<p>Public Education  Votes: 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>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 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Phuong Nguyen (832)302-9940 Phuong@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2912</b> By: Vasut   Jetton   White</p>	<p>Relating to a violation of the Texas Residential Property Owners Protection Act or a dedicatory</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence  Vote: 8 Ayes,</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Victoria McDonough (251)422-0558 Victoria@TexasLSG.org</p>



	<p>instrument by a board member of a property owners' association.</p>	<p>0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• immediate removal of the board member from the board</li> <li>• a judgment awarding damages to the property owner</li> <li>• a judgment authorizing the owner to deduct the amounts awarded from any future regular or special assessments payable to the association.</li> </ul> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p><b>HB 2998</b> By: Smith</p>	<p>Relating to the requirement that certain business entities obtain a license from the Texas Real Estate Commission.</p>	<p>Licensing &amp; Administrative Procedure</p> <p>Vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>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 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.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporated entities are still registered with the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC)</li> <li>• 51% of the business is owned by a real estate license holder generating revenue for the business</li> <li>• the incorporated entity receives compensation from brokerage performed by the licensed broker or agent</li> <li>• no other broker duties are performed</li> </ul> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Cassidy Kenyon (760)429 8388 Cassidy@TexasLSG.org</p>



<p><b>HB 3920</b> By: Dean</p>	<p>Relating to an application to vote early by mail on the grounds of disability or confinement for childbirth.</p>	<p>Elections Votes: 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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."</p> <p>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.,.</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 3838</b> By: Dominguez</p>	<p>Relating to the display of emergency and other notices by a governmental entity on the entity's Internet website.</p>	<p>State Affairs Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 316</b> By: Buckley   Harris   Smith   Rogers   González, Mary</p>	<p>Relating to the advertising and labeling of certain meat food products.</p>	<p>Public Health Vote: 8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>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 "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".</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• representation made or suggestion by a statement, word, design, image, device, sound, or any combination and</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Devan Daniel (419) 566-5465 Devan@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 1987</b></p>	<p>Relating to eligibility</p>	<p>Elections</p>	<p>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</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by:</p>



<p>By: Vasut</p>	<p>requirements to hold a political party office.</p>	<p>Votes: 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>This bill does not make any real widespread difference to Texas elections except to dismantle third party participation.</p>	<p>Joy Fairchild (713)817-3842 Joy@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 1476</b>  By: Bell, K.   Leach   Cyrier   Romero, Jr.   Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to a vendor’s remedies for nonpayment of a contract with this state or a political subdivision of this state.</p>	<p>State Affairs  Vote: 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Hannah Hall (832) 425-1224 Hannah@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 1793</b>  By: Johnson, Julie</p>	<p>Relating to prohibiting oral releases for automobile insurance claims.</p>	<p>Insurance  Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Chelsea Dalton Pederson (512)661-9708 Chelsea@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 4403</b></p>	<p>Relating to an agreement</p>	<p>Higher Education</p>	<p>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</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by:</p>



<p>By: Turner, John</p>	<p>between a school district and public institution of higher education to provide a dual credit program to high school students enrolled in the district.</p>	<p>Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Audrey Erwin (928)210-4303 Audrey@TexasLSG.org</p>
<p><b>HB 2822</b>  By: Hull   Oliverson   Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to the availability of antipsychotic prescription drugs under the vendor drug program and Medicaid managed care.</p>	<p>Human Services  Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>HB 2822 requires that the executive Commissioner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require automation of clinical PA for each drug in the antipsychotic drug class</li> <li>• when a denial is given for a non-preferred or clinical PA, a pharmacist is immediately provided a point-of-sale return message that:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ specifies the contact and other information for the pharmacist to submit a PA for the prescription.</li> <li>○ instructs the pharmacist to dispense a 72 hr. supply of the prescription if appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Maddox Hilgers (512) 739-4885 Maddox@TexasLSG.org</p>

