



Chair, Rep. Garnet Coleman

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Representative

Desk

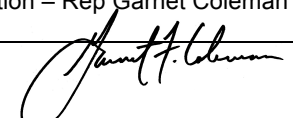
**LSG Floor Report For Major State Calendar – Thursday, May 16, 2013**

Bill	Caption	Committee	Analysis & Evaluation	Recommendation
<b>SB 209</b> By Sen. Huffman, et al. (Rep. Dutton)	Relating to the functions and operation of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence	<p>SB 209 is the Sunset Legislation for the State Commission on Judicial Conduct and is the enacting legislation contingent upon the passage of SJR 42 as it relates to expanding types of sanctions and formal proceedings. This bill adds “public sanction” to the legal definition of formal proceedings. SB 209 clarifies that the Commission is authorized to administer judicial discipline, however they do not have power or authority of a court in Texas. This Commission was constitutionally created in the 59th Legislature and is a Judicial Branch Agency. This bill extends the commission for six years and sets a new Sunset Date for 2019. After 2019, SB 209 allows the Commission to revert back to a periodic Sunset review every 12<sup>th</sup> year. SB 209 authorizes the Commission to hold annual public hearing to allow public input regarding the Commission’s mission and operations.</p> <p>SB 209 grants the Sunset advisory staff access to the Commission’s confidential information found in documents, records, meetings, and proceedings. The staff may evaluate the adjudicated process of the case—not the actual outcome of the given cases. This access is necessary in order to conduct a complete and thorough evaluation of the Commission’s activities. Moreover, this bill maintains that Sunset Advisory Commission’s access to information made between the commission and its attorneys or other employees assisting the Commission in its judicial discipline decision making process that occurs in closed meetings does not violate any attorney client privilege or any other confidentiality law for the purpose of a review. This bill requires the Sunset advisory staff to maintain this confidentiality.</p> <p>In instances in which a complaint is being dismissed, SB 209 requires the Judicial Commission to give an understandable and detailed explanation for why each given complaint failed to constitute judicial misconduct to the complainant. The bill provides that an appeal of sanction issued in a formal proceeding will be heard and considered in the same process as a public sanction. The Special Court of Review (appointed by the Supreme Court) will review the record, and the decisions are final and cannot be appealed. The bill requires the Commission to periodically review the procedural rules and report any needed changes to the Supreme Court.</p>	<p><b><u>Favorable</u></b>            Evaluated by:            Yvonne Okonkwo            512-763-0031            Yvonne@texaslsg.org</p>
<b>Amendment</b> to SB 209	By Rep. Lewis	#831769	This amendment changes the timing of public meetings from each year to every two years. This amendment requires that the public hearing commentary must not compromise the confidentiality of matters considered by the commission.	<p><b><u>Will of the House</u></b></p>

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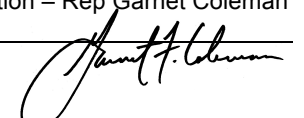
<p><b>SB 2</b> By Sen. Patrick, et al. (Rep. Aycock)</p>	<p>Relating to certain charter schools.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>Please see the attached document.</p>	<p><b>Unfavorable</b> Evaluated by: Nena Chima 512-763-0031</p>
<p><b><u>LSG Floor Report For Constitutional Amendments – Thursday, May 16, 2013</u></b></p>				
<p><b>SJR 42</b> By Sen. Huffman, et al. (Rep. Dutton)</p>	<p>Proposing a constitutional amendment relating to expanding the types of sanctions that may be assessed against a judge or justice following a formal proceeding instituted by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct.</p>	<p>Judiciary &amp; Civil Jurisprudence</p>	<p>SB 209 is the enabling legislation for SJR 42. The State Commission on Judicial Conduct is a constitutionally created Judicial Branch agency that investigates allegations of judicial misconduct and issues censure, sanctions, and other disciplinary action. This resolution amends the Texas Constitution to allow The Commission on Judicial Conduct (Commission) to use its full range of disciplinary actions following a formal public proceeding. Disciplinary actions include issuing an order of public admonition, warning, reprimand, or a requirement to obtain additional training or education, public censure, recommendation of removal or retirement.</p> <p>Currently, the Commission is limited to three options after considering the record and report of a Master. First, the Commission can dismiss a case based on no findings of judicial misconduct. However, if the Commission finds that there is judicial misconduct, the Commission can issue public censure or recommend that the Judge or Justice be removed or retired from office. The constitutional amendment proposed by this joint resolution will only take effect if approved by voters.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Yvonne Okonkwo 512-763-0031 Yvonne@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SJR 18</b> By Sen. Carona (Rep. Villarreal)</p>	<p>Proposing a constitutional amendment to authorize the making of a reverse mortgage loan for the purchase of homestead property and to amend certain requirements in connection with a reverse mortgage loan.</p>	<p>Investments &amp; Financial Services</p>	<p>SJR 18 allows an individual to engage in a reverse mortgage in a homestead property.</p> <p>Currently, Texas is the only state where a senior cannot use a reverse mortgage loan to purchase a new home, due to the regulations in the constitution. This bill gives homeowners another financial option. This is especially beneficial to older homeowners who are currently given the option to defer taxes when they turn sixty-five, but these taxes accrue and they are required to pay back this deferment and are often unaware of this obligation. This bill extends consumer protections by providing consumers with a notice that informs them of their financial obligations. Additionally, this bill does not reduce any protections previously written into law.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Natalie Powell 512-763-0031 Natalie@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b><u>LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Thursday, May 16, 2013</u></b></p>				
<p><b>SB 1365</b> By Sen. Duncan, et al. (Rep. Villarreal)</p>	<p>Relating to the provision of credit by examination for public school students.</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>SB 1365 allows students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade or higher to receive course credit for passing SBOE approved examinations for class subjects. Students receiving course credit are exempt from taking an end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The bill requires school districts to select at least four SBOE approved examinations and AP exams and exams administered through the College-Level Examination Program. A student wishing to obtain course credit by examination may not take a test more than once and is expected to pass within the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile to qualify for course credit and EOC exemption. SB 1365 has a positive impact on students seeking college admittance and provides more flexibility for parents and students. The bill also creates opportunities for disadvantaged students to progress and flourish in the public education system through tested proficiency.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Nena Chima 512-763-0031 Nena@texaslsg.org</p>

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<p><b>SB 12</b> By Sen. Huffman (Rep. Riddle)</p>	<p>Relating to the admissibility of evidence of other similar offenses in the prosecution of certain sexual offenses.</p>	<p>Criminal Procedure Reform, Select</p>	<p>SB 12 increases the court’s ability to determine the guilt of an individual accused of committing sexual offenses against a minor(s). The bill allows evidence of other sexual abuse instances against a different child, or multiple children, to be admitted during the pre-conviction phase of the trial. In order for evidence to be used in this phase of the trial, a judge must conduct a hearing without the presence of the jury. If the judge determines that the evidence may support a conviction beyond a reasonable doubt, the evidence may be used in the trial.</p> <p>Currently, this evidence can only be submitted after the offender has received a conviction. Due to the nature of sexual offenses, physical evidence is often difficult to obtain. Utilizing evidence relating to other children and/or cases can be a significant factor in evaluating the offender’s capacity to commit sexual crimes. Expanding the use of appropriate evidence will result in more convictions and an overall decrease in sexual crimes against minors.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Laura Welch 512-763-0031 Laura@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 63</b> By Sen. Nelson (Rep. Sheffield, J. D.)</p>	<p>Relating to consent to the immunization of certain children.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>SB 63 promotes public health by allowing a pregnant minor or a parent of a child to consent to their own immunizations. This bill provides easier access to immunizations to protect young children and infants from vaccine-preventable diseases. Currently, minor parents can consent to medical treatment for their children but are not allowed to consent to their own immunizations.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Han Bui 512-763-0031 Han@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 356</b> By Sen. Carona (Rep. Ratliff)</p>	<p>Relating to the audit of court registry funds in certain counties.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>SB 356 provides options for counties to use their own county auditors to perform registry fund audits. This bill provides a mechanism for counties to save money. By utilizing county auditors to perform these audits, the county incurs no additional cost. Currently, an independent certified public accountant is required to audit registry fund which is costly to the county.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Han Bui 512-763-0031 Han@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 358</b> By Sen. Hinojosa (Rep. Muñoz, Jr.)</p>	<p>Relating to the use of a polygraph statement as evidence that a defendant or release from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice has violated a condition of release.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>SB 358 prohibits a court from proceeding with an adjudication of guilt on the original charge for a defendant who has been placed on and violated deferred adjudication community supervision, if the only evidence supporting that violation is a polygraph statement. This bill also prohibits a court from revoking community supervision due to a violation based on a polygraph statement. A parole board is prohibited from revoking parole or mandatory supervision if evidence of violation comes solely from a polygraph statement.</p> <p>Due to the variation of examiners and the controversial nature of polygraph tests, solely relying on them to determine whether a defendant has violated a condition of community supervision should be prohibited.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Muna Javaid 512-763-0031 Muna@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 495</b> By Sen. Huffman, et al. (Rep. Walle)</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of a task force to study maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>HB 495 aims to reduce pregnancy-related deaths by creating a task force implemented by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to study and identify trends in maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity. This bill specifies the composition of task force members and authorizes the Commissioner of State Health Services to appoint these members. DSHS must review cases and analyze data on incidence of pregnancy-related deaths and severe maternal morbidity. The task force and DSHS are required to submit a report biennially with findings and recommendations to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives and related committees of the legislature. The task force expires September 1, 2019 and is also subjected for review under the Texas Sunset Act</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Han Bui 512-763-0031 Han@texaslsg.org</p>

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<p><b>SB 772</b> By Sen. Uresti (Rep. Springer)</p>	<p>Relating to the elimination of obsolete and redundant reporting requirements for the Department of Agriculture.</p>	<p>Agriculture &amp; Livestock</p>	<p>SB 772 removes provisions that require the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) to submit various reports and copies of reports to the governor and the legislature. Removing these obsolete and redundant reporting requirements will ease administrative burdens on TDA.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Little 512-763-0031 Katherine@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 983</b> By Sen. Ellis (Rep. Harper-Brown)</p>	<p>Relating to in camera review and filing of the information at issue in a suit filed under the public information law.</p>	<p>Government Efficiency &amp; Reform</p>	<p>SB 983 seeks to maintain privacy and provide parties in a suit to establish an agreement about evidential information. Specifically, the bill establishes that information from any suit filed under the Texas Public Information Act may be filed with the court for an in-camera inspection— an inspection in which a judge reviews evidence to determine whether the evidence should be provided to outside parties. This usually occurs when both parties are in a disagreement about a specific piece of evidence being made public. After the in-camera inspection is complete, the court must enter an order that includes the filing date and time and would either prevent the release of, or provide access to evidence to other parties aside from the court, court of appeals, or permitted parties. The bill makes further stipulations for <i>information at issue</i> being filed for an in-camera inspection and requires that no information at issue will constitute court records and must not be available for public inspection.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Nena Chima 512-763-0031 Nena@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 1156</b> By Sen. Hinojosa (Rep. Longoria)</p>	<p>Relating to land reclamation projects using tires.</p>	<p>Environmental Regulation</p>	<p>SB 1156 prohibits a person from beginning a land reclamation project using scrap tires without a permit issued by the TCEQ. The bill requires scrap tires that are authorized for land reclamation to be shredded, split, or quartered. The TCEQ may grant an exception to this requirement under certain circumstances. The bill outlines the conditions and processes under which the TCEQ may or may not grant a permit for land reclamation projects using scrap tires, including specified application requirements such as an analysis and evaluation of any potential environmental impacts on the land. SB 1156 establishes the requirement by the TCEQ to prescribe standards to protect the soil and water for a land reclamation project using scrap tires and states that the TCEQ may revoke or amend a permit for reasons concerning public health and safety or pollution.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Amanda Williams 512-763-0031 Amanda.Williams@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 1238</b> By Sen. Hinojosa, et al. (Rep. Pickett)</p>	<p>Relating to the composition and duties of and investigations conducted by the Texas Forensic Science Commission, the administrative attachment of the Texas Forensic Science Commission to Sam Houston State University, the accreditation of criminal laboratories by the Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas, and the status of certain local government corporations as criminal justice agencies for the purpose of engaging in criminal identification activities, including forensic analysis.</p>	<p>Homeland Security &amp; Public Safety</p>	<p>SB 1238 allows the Texas Forensic Science Commission to initiate an investigation of a forensic analysis that contains an allegation of professional negligence or professional misconduct if the commission determines it would advance the integrity and reliability of forensic science in this state.</p> <p>This bill specifies that if the commission conducts certain investigations of an accredited crime lab for professional negligence or misconduct involving an accredited field of forensic science, the commission must prepare a written report, with expanded criteria. SB 1238 requires a condensed report to be prepared if the commission conducts certain different investigations. Additionally, this bill requires the commission to prepare and publish an annual report and requires accredited entities to consent to cooperation with the commission.</p> <p>SB 1238 administratively attaches the commission to Sam Houston State University. The bill requires the Texas State University System board of regents to provide administrative support to the commission when necessary. This bill establishes procedures relating to open records limitations and states that a written report prepared by the commission is not inadmissible in a civil or criminal action.</p> <p>SB 1238 extends the governor’s authority to appoint nine, as opposed to three, members of the Texas Forensic Science Commission.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Amanda Foster 512-763-0031 Amanda.Foster@texaslsg.org</p>

<p><b>SB 1451</b> By Sen. Hinojosa (Rep. Sheets)</p>	<p>Relating to the prosecution of the offense of money laundering and to the forfeiture of certain contraband.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p>	<p>SB 1451 authorizes a district court to issue a search warrant for an officer to seize “substitute property”-- property that was <i>derived</i> from criminal activity and is owned by a person who is or <b>was</b> the owner of contraband valued at \$200,000 or more. The state attorney must prove that the contraband was subject to seizure and forfeiture, even if it is no longer in the person’s possession. This bill does not require that the owner have simultaneously owned all the property constituting contraband. If the value of the property exceeds the highest fair market value of the contraband during ownership, the court must make appropriate orders that property equal in value to the excess is returned to the person from whom it was seized.</p> <p>For contraband located outside of the state, an officer must provide the attorney representing the state a statement identifying the contraband and the reasons it is subject to seizure. Upon receipt of the statement, the attorney must file an intended forfeiture in a district court in a certain county or Travis county. A citation must be served to the person who owns the contraband that it must be returned to the court’s jurisdiction. If it is found that any person, after being served with a citation has transported, concealed, or disposed of the contraband, the court may order the payment to the attorney representing the state of costs incurred in investigating the location of the contraband. They may also enter a judgment for civil contempt and impose fines, confinement and civil penalties.</p> <p>This bill expands the definition of money laundering to <i>include knowingly, supervising or facilitating</i> a transaction in violating the federal Bank Secrecy Act.</p> <p>SB 1451 includes funds used in the commission of criminal activity in the definition of proceeds. Many crime organizations commit the act of 'structuring', or depositing money in small increments in order to avoid reporting the transaction. This bill seeks to close this loophole.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Muna Javaid 512-763-0031 Muna@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 1665</b> By Sen. Carona (Rep. Smithee)</p>	<p>Relating to the deposit of assessments and fees collected for examination expenses.</p>	<p>Insurance</p>	<p>SB 1665 allows the Texas Department of Insurance’s (TDI) self-directed account to cover reimbursements for administrative costs, premium tax credits for examination costs, and overhead assessments. Reimbursements are realized through the assessments and fees collected during the insurer examination process. These fees are collected by the department and deposited into the Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company.</p> <p>The TDI’s self-directed budget was established last session through SB 1291 (Hegar/Taylor, Larry), which established an account in the treasury to cover certain examination costs incurred by the Examinations and Actuarial Divisions of the TDI. Under this legislation, the TDI cannot cover those examination costs with funds from its primary account.</p> <p>Under the current proposed version of HB 1, the TDI would be required to use its primary account to cover \$10 million in premium tax credit reimbursements for related examination costs in FY 2015. If the engrossed version of SB 1 includes this provision, it would force the TDI to violate the terms of the Insurance Code to cover these expenditures.</p> <p>Due to the provisions of SB 1291 (Hegar/Taylor, Larry), the TDI would be unable to offset those costs through reimbursements from the self-directed account, creating a conflict between current law and potential budgetary requirements. The bill simply clarifies this nuance and grants the TDI the authority to transfer certain funds from the self-directed account to the primary account to cover these costs.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Laura Welch 512-763-0031 Laura@texaslsg.org</p>

<p><b>SB 1756</b> By Sen.Uresti (Rep. Villalba)</p>	<p>Relating to the expedited processing of certain applications for permits under the Clean Air Act; authorizing a surcharge.</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p>	<p>SB 1756 authorizes certain permit applicants to request the expedited processing of a permit application if the applicant demonstrates that the purpose of the application will benefit the state’s economy. The bill grants the executive director of the TCEQ the authority to grant an expedited processing request.</p> <p>SB 1756 states the expediting of an application does <i>not</i> affect a contested case hearing or applicable federal, state, and regulatory requirements, including public hearings and the submission of public comment. This bill authorizes the TCEQ to impose an application fee for an expedited application in order to cover any expenses incurred from the process, including overtime and contract labor.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Amanda Foster 512-763-0031 Amanda.Foster@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 1803</b> By Sen. Huffman (Rep. Kolkhorst)</p>	<p>Relating to investigations of and payment holds relating to allegations of fraud or abuse and investigations of and hearings on overpayments and other amounts owed by providers in connection with the Medicaid program or other health and human services programs.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>SB 1803 increases due process for Medicaid providers under investigation for fraud or abuse and eliminates confusion regarding the processes of payment holds and recoupment of overpayment. SB 1803 ensures that Medicaid providers are informed of and allowed due process in relation to allegations of fraud and abuse. This bill will help Medicaid providers to continue to serve Texas’ vulnerable populations who are most in need of health care.</p> <p>SB 1803 states that if the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) received a complaint or allegation of Medicaid fraud or abuse, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) must conduct a preliminary investigation, as opposed to the current required integrity review. HHSC is required to maintain confidential records of all allegations of Medicaid fraud or abuse. OIG must prepare a report on the preliminary investigation, including the allegations, evidence, procedures, findings, and final determination if they should proceed to a full investigation. If the preliminary investigation gives the OIG reason to believe that fraud or abuse has occurred, OIG must refer the case to the state’s Medicaid fraud control unit, conduct a full investigation, and issue a payment hold when it is determined that a credible allegation of fraud exists. If the state’s Medicaid fraud control unit declines to accept a fraud referral, HHSC must remove any payment holds imposed on a provider.</p> <p>SB 1803 states that when issuing a payment hold on a provider, OIG must include the reason for the payment hold, provide supporting evidence, and describe due process remedies. Due process remedies include filing a request with the appeals division of HHSC for an expedited hearing, filing a request with the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH), petitioning final determinations in a district court in Travis County, and requesting an informal resolution hearing.</p> <p>HHSC must hire a person who is independent of the OIG to attend informal resolution meetings as a neutral third party observer and report proceedings and outcomes to the executive commissioner. SB 1803 repeals a provision relating to informal resolution meetings that becomes obsolete with the new provisions described above.</p> <p>SB 1803 requires OIG to employ two medical directors; one licensed physician and one licensed dentist. Preferably, both should have knowledge of the Medicaid program and they must ensure that any investigative findings based on the necessity or quality of services are reviewed by an expert before payment holds are imposed on providers.</p> <p>OIG must post on their website a description and video explaining the processes and procedures used to determine whether a payment hold is warranted.</p> <p>If HHSC makes a final determination to recoup overpayment, debt, damages, or penalties from a provider, written notice is required and must include the basis for recoupment, a description of facts and evidence, a sample of documents used as evidence, methodology, the calculations use to determine the amount, the exact amount to be recouped, and a description of administrative and judicial due process remedies.</p> <p>SB 1803 allows the Medicaid provider to appeal the determination of recoupment and request an administrative hearing with the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH). If the amount to be recouped is more than \$1million, the provider can request an administrative hearing with SOAH or file a petition to appeal the determination in a district court in Travis County.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Little 512-763-0031 Katherine@texaslsg.org</p>

<p><b>SB 427</b> By Sen. Nelson (Rep. Raymond)</p>	<p>Relating to the regulation of certain child-care facilities and administrators of those facilities.</p>	<p>Human Services</p>	<p>SB 427 authorizes the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to conduct unannounced <i>biennial</i> inspections of licensed day-care centers or group day-care homes, rather than an unannounced <i>annual</i> inspection, if DFPS determines that the facility has a positive history of compliance in past inspections. SB 427 adds residential child-care facilities into the list of facilities that must submit fingerprints for the director, owner, or operator of that facility.</p> <p>DFPS is given the authority to impose administrative <i>sanctions</i> as an alternative to administrative <i>penalties</i> for noncompliance with these provisions. Administrative <i>penalties</i> may be imposed before administrative <i>sanctions</i> for violations relating to background and criminal history checks.</p> <p>SB 427 prohibits a person from serving as a child-care administrator of a general residential operation, as opposed to a child-care institution, without a license from DFPS. Eligibility requirements for child-care administrators and a child-placing agency administrator’s license are expanded to require fingerprints and criminal history and background checks.</p> <p>The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission is required to adopt rules relating to criminal history and background checks prior to issuing or renewing licenses.</p> <p>While inspecting certain child-care facilities biennially will focus limited resources towards facilities that are in higher need, allowing a child care facility to operate for two years without inspection could be a concern.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Katherine Little 512-763-0031 Katherine@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 819</b> By Sen. Duncan (Rep. King, Susan)</p>	<p>Relating to the disposal of demolition waste from abandoned or nuisance buildings by certain local governments.</p>	<p>Environmental Regulation</p>	<p>Currently the TCEQ may issue a permit to authorize the governing body of a county or municipality with a population of up to 10,000 to dispose of demolition waste from a building under certain circumstances. Without an appropriate permit, debris from demolition is regulated as municipal solid waste, which can be costly.</p> <p>SB 819 raises this population cap from 10,000 to 12,000, which will extend permit eligibility to additional cities and counties, relieving them from costs involved with disposing demolition waste from abandoned and nuisance buildings.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Amanda Williams 512-763-0031 Amanda.Williams@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 894</b> By Sen. Whitmire, et al. (Rep. Bonnen, Dennis)</p>	<p>Relating to real property within the Capitol complex.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p>	<p>SB 894 prohibits the Texas Facilities Commission (TFC) from leasing, selling, or otherwise disposing of real property located in the Capitol complex. The bill does not affect the TFC’s authority to lease space in state office buildings and parking garages. The bill outlines certain authorities and provisions that do not apply to real property located in the Capitol complex.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Amanda Williams 512-763-0031 Amanda.Williams@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 944</b> By Sen. Nelson (Rep. Kolkhorst)</p>	<p>Relating to criminal history record checks for certain employees of facilities licensed by the Department of State Health Services.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>SB 944 ensures patient safety by requiring background checks for unlicensed employees working in mental health units. This bill expands the definition of facility to include mental health units in hospitals that must perform criminal background checks. Currently, hospitals are not required to conduct background checks for unlicensed employees working in a mental health unit.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Han Bui 512-763-0031 Han@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 1719</b> By Sen. Rodríguez (Rep. Moody)</p>	<p>Relating to the construction, remodeling, or rehabilitation of certain hotel projects.</p>	<p>Economic &amp; Small Business Development</p>	<p>SB 1719 would allow cities that border Mexico with a population of more than 500,000 to incentivize the construction or rehabilitation of hotel projects within 3,000 feet of a Convention Center by expanding the definition of “qualified hotel project.” This bill would enable these qualified hotel projects to receive the benefits of the Texas Enterprise Zone Program in which the hotel occupancy tax revenue would help pay for bonds. SB 1719 would enable the City of El Paso to incentivize more economic development.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Yvonne Okonkwo 512-763-0031 Yvonne@texaslsg.org</p>

<p><b>SB 1120</b> By Sen. West (Rep. Anchia)</p>	<p>Relating to a residential tenant's lease obligation after the loss of the leased premises resulting from a natural disaster.</p>	<p>Business &amp; Industry</p>	<p>SB 1120 prohibits a landlord from requiring a lease term longer than the time remaining on an existing lease, when a tenant moves to a second property or unit owned by the same landlord after their original property becomes uninhabitable due to natural disaster. The move helps mitigate ease of recovery for those affected by natural disasters.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Kristen Macaluso 512-763-0031 Kristen@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 1167</b> By Sen. Hegar (Rep. Coleman)</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of a county assistance district.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p>	<p>SB 1167 removes language in current statute that limits the number of County Assistance Districts (CADs) that can be created in a precinct. This bill allows for the creation of more than one CADs in a precinct as well as provides the tools for counties to address population growth and fund necessary infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Han Bui 512-763-0031 Han@texaslsg.org</p>
<p><b>SB 1556</b> By Sen. Seliger (Rep. Davis, John)</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of a school safety certification program and the School Safety Task Force.</p>	<p>Homeland Security &amp; Public Safety</p>	<p>SB 1556 creates the School Safety Task Force to study best practices for school multi-hazard emergency operations planning and make recommendations to the legislature, the Texas School Safety Center, and the governor's office of homeland security. This bill lays out the composition of the task force and requires the chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management or the chief's designee to serve as the presiding officer of the task force. A member of the task force is not entitled to compensation for service but is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses while performing task force duties. When performing it's duties for schools, the task force will consult with and consider recommendations from listed organizations and personnel. This bill requires the task force to prepare and submit to the legislature a report with the results of the most recent study no later than September 1 of each even-numbered year.</p> <p>SB 1556 requires the Texas School Safety Center and the School Safety Task Force to develop a school safety certification program. The Texas School Safety Center will award a school safety certificate to a school district that meets the established criteria.</p>	<p><b>Favorable</b> Evaluated by: Amanda Foster 512-763-0031 Amanda.Foster@texaslsg.org</p>