



Texas Legislative Study Group

An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

Chair, Rep. Armando L. Walle
 Co-Vice Chair, Rep. Ana Hernandez
 Co-Vice Chair, Rep. Yvonne Davis
 Secretary, Rep. Victoria Neave Criado
 General Counsel, Rep. Lina Ortega

STEERING COMMITTEE

Rep. Rafael Anchia	Rep. Armando "Mando" Martinez
Rep. Diego M. Bernal	Rep. Sergio Muñoz Jr.
Rep. Rhetta Andrews Bowers	Rep. Julie Johnson
Rep. Nicole Collier	Rep. Toni Rose
Rep. Mary E. González	Rep. Carl O. Sherman Sr.
Rep. Abel Herrero	Rep. Chris Turner
Rep. Gina Hinojosa	

Representative:

Desk:

LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 10:00 AM – Monday, April 24, 2023

<p>HB 2374</p> <p>By: Landgraf Darby Manuel Thimesch Button</p>	<p>Relating to the authority of a political subdivision to regulate an energy source or engine.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>10 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2374 is a direct response to local efforts to combat climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by regulating gas-powered lawn equipment and small engines as well as banning the construction of new gas stations.</p> <p>HB 2374 bans municipalities from adopting regulations that directly or indirectly limit the use, sale, or lease of an engine based on its fuel source. Additionally, HB 2374 prohibits local governments or political subdivisions from enacting or enforcing ordinances that restrict access to an energy source, including fuel service stations. Under HB 2374, local governments retain the authority to adopt ordinances relating to engines provided such measures are not preempted by state or federal statute and effectively prohibit the use, sale, or lease of engines or specific fuel sources.</p> <p>HB 2374 eliminates local government's authority to regulate gas-powered lawn equipment in efforts to improve air quality. Operating a typical lawn mower for one hour emits as much smog-forming pollution as driving a new light-duty car about 300 miles. An hour of using a typical leaf blower emits as much as an 1100-mile drive. HB 2374 is a costly prohibition in a state where four metropolitan areas currently do not meet federal ozone pollution standards, impacting the health of millions of Texans.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1516</p> <p>By: Wilson</p>	<p>Relating to the use of unmanned aircraft by the Texas military forces.</p>	<p>Defense & Veterans' Affairs</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV), also known as drones, may be used to capture images for operations by the U.S. military. However, this is not the case for the Texas military. HB 1516 authorizes the Texas military forces to capture images using UAVs. UAV imaging can be used by the Texas military during natural disasters, for search and recovery, and border security.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1955</p>	<p>Relating to establishing</p>	<p>Public Education</p>	<p>Following the recommendations from the Governor's Committee to Support the Military, HB 1955 extends the deadline for military families to provide proof of residence for school admission. When a student of a military</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group — An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

By: Buckley	residency for purposes of admission into public schools.	12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>family is assigned to Texas, the student can enroll in school before arrival. Once they arrive, they have ten days to provide proof of residence to the school where they registered. However, due to increased housing demand, military families may be in temporary housing outside the school's attendance zone, which could result in the child no longer being enrolled in the desired school. There is no guarantee that military families will secure housing before the ten-day deadline, placing significant strain on the family.</p> <p>HB 1955 modifies the current deadline from 10 to 90 days for students with an active-duty military parent or guardian assigned to Texas. HB 1955 could help alleviate the stress of finding housing and proving proof of residency in a narrow time frame while keeping their kids in the school where they are enrolled.</p>	
<p>HB 1159</p> <p>By: Anderson Plesa Flores Hull</p>	Relating to county and municipal housing authority pet policies.	County Affairs 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent,	<p>Public housing authorities enact policies restricting residents from ownership of specific dog breeds. Should a resident bring a dog breed that is outlawed by the housing authority, it must be surrendered to a local shelter, which puts an additional tax burden on the shelter. This conflicts with state laws that allow municipalities and counties to have restrictions on dangerous dogs, so long as they are not restricted specific breeds.</p> <p>HB 1159 brings public housing authorities into compliance with state law by requiring housing authorities to adopt pet policies that align with current county and municipal restrictions on the ownership of dangerous dogs.</p> <p>Prohibiting public housing authorities from enacting their own subjective, arbitrary list of breed restrictions will help keep pets within their family homes and save the taxpayer money. It's unfair to make restrictions based on breed as it is not the breed itself that makes a dog harmful, but the environment in which it was raised. Concerns have been raised about the safety of children and the elderly around larger dogs. However, housing authorities may still restrict dogs based on weight, height, or size.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 1:00 PM – Monday, April 24, 2023				
<p>HB 3607</p> <p>By: Cole</p>	Relating to the processing of United States passport applications by a district court clerk; authorizing fees.	County Affairs 7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>In Texas, district clerks can process passport applications. The passport must be paid for in the form of a personal check or money order. Often, people come to the district clerk to begin the process but neglect to bring either forms of accepted payment.</p> <p>HB 3607 seeks to make the passport application process faster and more convenient by allowing district clerks to issue money orders. This bill would expand the duties a district clerk may perform to include issuing of money orders to passport applicants for payment purposes, and authorize a reasonable fee for this service.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

LSG Floor Report For Major State Calendar – Monday, April 24, 2023

<p>HB 3 Burrows King, Tracy O. Moody King, Ken Bonnen</p>	<p>Relating to the development and implementation of, and funding for public school safety and security requirements.</p>	<p>Youth Health and Safety 7 Ayes 0 Nays 1 PNV 1 Absent</p>	<p>Since 2018, there have been 12 school shootings in Texas. The most recent shooting in Uvalde resulted in the unimaginable loss of 19 children and two teachers. In reaction to these horrific events, the legislature has worked towards a solution that would aim to keep teachers and students safe. One of these solutions is to “harden” schools by enhancing security measures, increasing funding for school safety allotments, hiring school resource officers, and training staff to respond to emergencies. Though these measures have been implemented, there is still great concern regarding poor safety procedures, poor communication during a crisis between schools and agencies, outdated operations standards, and slow response times. All of these shortcomings put children at risk. HB 3 seeks to address this issue by creating various provisions regarding school safety.</p> <p><i>Armed Security Officer Requirement</i> HB 3 would require that each school district and open enrollment charter school determine an appropriate number of armed security officers for each campus, instituting a minimum of at least one during school hours. Such an officer must be: a school district peace officer, a school resource officer, a commissioned peace officer employed as security personnel, or a school marshal. The bill also allows for a school employee to act as a security officer so long as they carry a handgun on their person during school hours in accordance with applicable regulations, and complete a school safety training provided by a qualified handgun instructor certified for school safety.</p> <p><i>School Safety Allotment</i> Currently, the school safety allotment is \$9.72 per student ADA (average daily attendance) or around \$50 million per fiscal year. HB 3 creates a baseline for each districts’ annual school safety allotment, equal to the sum of the following amounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10 for each student in average daily attendance (ADA), plus \$1 for each student in ADA per every \$50 the maximum basic allotment increases ; and • \$15,000 per campus. <p>This equates to approximately \$300 million for the biennium from the Foundation School Fund to increase the school safety allotment.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
--	---	---	--	----------------------------------

In addition to the minimum amounts specified, HB 3 allows the legislature to appropriate a larger amount to the school safety allotment funds to provide security. A district may use this allotment to employ persons other than school marshals, peace officers, and private security officers that are permitted to carry a weapon on school grounds by the board of trustees. The school may also use these funds to employ a school safety director or a similar position to monitor school safety programming. As current law only permits that these funds be used for training and planning, HB 3 specifies that funds are allowed to be used for school safety and security measures, but that a district may only purchase school safety technologies from a vendor approved by Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC). The bill requires these agencies to collaborate in order to designate these technologies, and they are permitted by the bill to enter into a statewide contract with a vendor if they receive permission by the Legislative Budget Board and the contract would prevent cost savings.

Bond Proceeds for School Safety Compliance

HB 3 allows school districts to use proceeds from bonds issued for construction, equipment, and site purchases to be used for meeting school safety requirements. If a school is found noncompliant by the aforementioned monitoring process, they will be required to use such bonds to become compliant before they use the funds for anything else.

Multi Hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Emergency Operations Plans

HB 3 makes several changes to current provisions regarding multi-hazard operations plans (EOP). HB 3 authorizes TEA and TxSCC to establish new or additional requirements to district multi-hazard emergency operation plans and specifies that if requested, an applicable district must submit its EOP within 30 days of the request. If TEA provides a written notice to a school district regarding deficiencies within its EOP, TEA must include recommendations for improvement. If a district has failed to submit an EOP within six months from receiving initial notification of failure, or within three months of a notification of deficiencies, TxSCC must provide the district with notice that they must hold a public hearing regarding noncompliance. The bill outlines further notifications and requirements for a district that continues not to comply with school safety standards.

TEA Monitoring

HB 3 outlines several provisions that require TEA to monitor school safety compliance in each district. Under HB3, TEA must conduct randomized on-site audits that adhere to criteria set out by TEA and TxSCC which include intruder detection measures to determine if an individual could gain unsecured access. These audits

		<p>must occur annually at each district, with at least 1/4th of the campuses receiving an audit. TEA may make available pertinent information regarding school safety procedures for the purpose of audits or monitoring the districts.</p> <p>TEA and TxSSC must provide technological support in order to implement multi-hazard emergency operations plans, safety and security audits, and other safety requirements. To support these goals and requirements, TEA may establish a school safety security office to coordinate monitoring of safety procedures. Lastly, TEA may review school district records to ensure compliance with safety procedures. Any documents collected are confidential and not subject to public disclosure. HB 3 exempts the monitoring required by the bill from current provisions regarding limitations on program monitoring.</p> <p>Under HB 3, a commissioner may find that a district is not in compliance with school safety measures if the district does not submit to the aforementioned methods of monitoring or address in a timely manner issues previously raised by TEA regarding their school safety methods. If a district is found non compliant, the district is ineligible to receive grant money under any program administered by the TEA except for funds allotted for school safety, and may not provide severance payments to any administrator who was terminated as a result of the noncompliance. Additionally, a student who attends a noncompliant campus may receive a public education grant or attend school in another district.</p> <p>Facility Building Standards Under HB 3, at least once every five years, TxSSC is required to review building standards for school facilities and recommend changes that may improve safety. Additionally, the commissioner of TxSSC will be required to work with counties and municipalities to ensure that buildings are in compliance with recommended standards.</p> <p>School Safety Meetings HB 3 outlines specific requirements in cities with populations less than 350,000 for communities, leadership, and law enforcement to discuss school safety semi-annually. These meetings must include discussions of law enforcement capabilities, resources, technology operability, law enforcement response, and more. HB 3 mandates that various different stakeholders attend each of these meetings, and outlines who must attend. Following such a meeting, the sheriff must provide a report to TxSSC regarding attendees and subjects discussed. These reports must be made publicly available by TxSSC.</p>	
--	--	--	--

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p>Impact HB 3 has a myriad of functions to harden schools. HB 3 provides clarity and support for agencies and stakeholders in terms of structured planning and communication. However, the provisions in HB 3 that require an armed security guard carry with them a series of risks. Police presence at schools has proven to result in further criminalization of our most marginalized students. In short, as an officer will likely not be responding to a violent event day to day, school police spend time monitoring each child. This can result in increasing rates of exclusionary discipline, arrests and criminal charges, and use of force for age appropriate behavior. Lastly, the presence of armed police during these incidents of mass violence is linked to greater casualties, not fewer.</p>	
<p>HB 13 King, Ken Burrows King, Tracy O. González, Mary Buckley</p>	<p>Relating to training, preparedness, and funding for school safety and emergencies in public schools.</p>	<p>Youth Health and Safety 8 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 1 Absent</p>	<p>Since 2018, there have been 12 school shootings in Texas. The most recent shooting in Uvalde resulted in the unimaginable loss of 19 children and two teachers. HB 13 seeks to address these concerns by providing mental health resources and training, adding to the multi-hazard emergency operations plans (EOP), and providing funding for safety infrastructure and guardian hiring and training.</p> <p>School Guardian Training and Stipend HB 13 authorizes any school employee to serve as a “school guardian” and carry a weapon so long as they complete school guardian training that is approved by the TEA. The TEA may approve such a program so long as it requires completion of all training required for a school marshal, including the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement's training program, and includes instruction on mental health and trauma informed care.</p> <p>Out of appropriated funds, HB 13 provides an individual who serves as a school guardian and completes the aforementioned program to a stipend, determined by the education commissioner, not to exceed \$25,000 per school year. This stipend is not to be considered part of the employees compensation.</p> <p>School Safety Allotment Currently, the school safety allotment is \$9.72 per student ADA (average daily attendance) or around \$50 million per fiscal year. The bill increases the school safety allotment to \$100 per student ADA. This equates to approximately \$1 billion for the biennium from the Foundation School Fund to increase the school safety allotment. HB 13 also removes current provisions specifying what types of safety and security costs a district may use their school safety allotment for. HB 13 requires that TEA or the Texas School Safety Center establish</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

and publish a directory of approved vendors that districts may use to equip themselves with school safety technology.

State School Safety Funds and Grants

If there are excess funds in the Foundation School Program, HB 13 requires the commissioner to deposit a portion or all of those funds into the state school safety fund. With these funds, the commissioner must establish a school safety grant program that must be used by a district or charter school for expenditures required for the implementation of a TEA-approved school safety plan. These grants have an annual cap of \$10 million per school, and per year across all schools at \$250 million.

School Safety Infrastructure

Hb 13 requires TEA to establish a grant program that would assist districts and open enrollment charter schools in enhancing the infrastructure of each campus to meet TEA standards.

Multi Hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

HB 13 replaces the requirement for a school district to include in its EOP an active shooter emergency policy using available community resources, with the inclusion of an active shooter preparedness appendix. This appendix is required to include each law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the area and a certification that they have been provided with an accurate map of each campus that is oriented to true north and an opportunity to conduct a walk-through of each facility.

Threat Assessments

The 86th Texas Legislature passed SB 11, which directed school boards to create threat assessment teams to assess threats of violence or harmful behavior made by students. HB 13 builds on this and requires that all school districts and open enrollment charter schools establish a procedure for a student to report concerning behavior exhibited by another student for a threat assessment by the team outlined in their policies and procedures.

Mental Health Training

HB 13 mandates that a public school district require a district employee who regularly interacts with students to complete a mental health first aid training program. These programs will provide instructions for employees on

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p>how to recognize and support a child who may be experiencing mental health or substance use issues. The bill provides a specific timeline for requirements on what percentage of employees must complete this training per year, and mandates that all employees must have completed the training by 2028. HB 13 requires that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) provide an allotment to each district in order to cover costs regarding training and travel.</p> <p>Impact HB 13 includes detailed provisions regarding mental health that address many concerns of Texas community members who have been impacted by school violence. These provisions of the bill are a strong step towards ensuring that all children have access to the resources that they need. However, there are serious concerns with arming school teachers and staff. Arming teachers may also work to harm student’s trust in educators. The provisions of the bill that include a stipend for up to \$25,000 for guardians may incentivize educators to carry guns on school grounds. Arming educators is disfavored by parents, educators, and community members, and increases the risk that students will be exposed to gun violence at schools. Additionally, the bill strikes existing permissible uses of the school safety allotment that include the hiring of licensed social workers and counselors, and replaces it with language that specifies that the funds may be used for “safety and security.” This may create more barriers for schools in hiring additional mental health personnel.</p> <p>HB 13 requires enabling legislation, HJR 170.</p>	
<p>HB 669 By: Thierry Buckley King, Tracy O.</p>	<p>Relating to school districts and open-enrollment charter schools providing silent panic alert technology in classrooms.</p>	<p>Youth and Health and Safety</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 669, cited as “Alyssa’s Law,” is in honor of a 14-year-old student murdered in the mass shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida in 2018. During the tragedy, 6 minutes passed between the initial 911 call and police response, during which many lives were lost. Honoring Alyssa’s life, HB 669 aims to improve school safety by allowing for immediate contact with emergency services in the event of an incident involving school violence.</p> <p>HB 669 requires that school districts and open enrollment charter schools install silent panic alert technology in each classroom. This technology can make schools more safe, as it provides a tool for teachers and students to quickly and silently contact emergency services like the police, fire department, or health department in case of an emergency. It’s important to note that the addition of silent panic alert technology does not satisfy the requirement currently in the education code that school employees have classroom access to a telephone or communication device. These alert devices would be in addition to already existing communication tools.</p> <p>HB 669 will go into effect the 2025-2026 school year, and schools will be authorized to use funds provided to</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p>them in the school safety allotment or their use of their customary procurement process to fund the panic alert technology.</p> <p>In a moment of crisis, every second counts. The addition of this technology will help ensure that authorities can arrive on the scene of a crisis as quickly as possible, saving lives.</p>	
LSG Floor Report For Constitutional Amendments Calendar – Monday, April 24, 2023				
HJR 170	Proposing a constitutional amendment creating the state school safety fund to provide financial support for projects that enhance the safety of public schools in this state.	<p>Youth Health and Safety</p> <p>8 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 1 Absent</p>	<p>HJR 170 proposes an amendment to the Texas Constitution to establish a state school safety fund in the state treasury independent of the general revenue fund. The money in the fund would be required to be administered by the Texas Permanent School Fund Corporation, which manages the Permanent School Fund, a state endowment for Texas public schools, funded through investments and land holdings. The use of this fund would be restricted to use only for school safety standards established by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).</p> <p>HJR 170 authorizes the legislature to allow the Texas Permanent School Fund Corporation to allocate money from the state school safety fund to TEA for purposes of financial assistance for school safety projects. The bill requires the legislature to specify the manner in which the funds may be used. Additionally, the resolution establishes the money appropriated to the fund, specifies that the funds can be transferred and deposited by TEA or the Texas Permanent School Fund Corporation, outlines investment earnings and interest earned on amounts credited to the fund and revenue from any source that the legislature by statute dedicates for deposit to the credit of the fund.</p> <p>Appropriated funds, including any from the Economic Stabilization Fund, will not count towards the state’s spending limits under HJR170 because they are constitutionally dedicated.</p> <p>The resolution establishes a framework for and allows the legislature to design and implement the school safety fund. This resolution is the enabling legislation for HB 13 and HB 4406.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
HJR 150 By: Noble Thierry Klick Raymond	Proposing a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem	<p>Ways & Means</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HJR 150 is the enabling legislation for HB 3640. HJR 150 allows voters to decide whether or not homeowners should be able to claim a homestead exemption for homes that house a family member with an intellectual and developmental disability.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

	taxation of a portion of the market value of a property that is the primary residence of an adult who has an intellectual or developmental disability and who must be related to the owner or trustee of the property within a certain degree by consanguinity.			
LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Monday, April 24, 2023				
HB 4434 By: Kuempel	Relating to the Texas First Early High School Completion Programs and the Texas First Scholarship Program.	Higher Education 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	The 87th Legislature passed SB 1888, establishing the Texas First Early High School Completion Program. Also known as Texas First, this program allowed early high school graduation for students who demonstrated readiness for college. Currently, only colleges designated as “research institutions” or “emerging research institutions” are eligible for participation in the Texas First Scholarship Program. This selective criterion limits these students’ choices for post-secondary education. HB 4434 expands the list of eligible institutions for the Texas First program by including all public institutions of higher education in Texas. Including more universities in Texas First will give students greater flexibility in selecting the institution that better fits their personal and academic needs.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 114 By: Thompson, Ed	Relating to the possession of e-cigarettes on public school property or at certain school events; creating a criminal offense.	Public Education 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Students caught on school property or during school activities using an e-cigarette (vape pen) to smoke marijuana must be expelled and sent to the district’s disciplinary alternative education program (DEAP). If the DEAP is at capacity, the overflow students are sent to the county juvenile justice alternative program (JJAEP). These programs were initially intended for students who engaged in violent behavior or may be dangerous to themselves or their peers to have access to education in a safe environment. However, the use of marijuana is so pervasive these programs are flooded with these nonviolent student offenders. HB 114 seeks to give school districts discretionary authority in these situations by allowing them to choose where to place students caught with marijuana.	<u>Favorable</u>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p>Under HB 114, the district may choose whether or not to remove students from class and place them in DEAP for selling, providing, or delivering marijuana to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana. The incident must be within 300 feet of the school property or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off the school’s property. HB 114 adds a requirement for the student who engages in the conduct above to complete a TEA-approved drug and alcohol awareness program within 30 days of the incident. Under HB 114, school administrators, resource officers, and peace officers are permitted to confiscate and dispose of an e-cigarette if they witness a student using, possessing, or delivering it on school property or at a school-related or school-sponsored activity off school property. School administrators, resource officers, and peace officers may notify law enforcement regarding the student’s conduct.</p> <p>HB 114 would keep more students in the classroom by creating alternatives to the current mandatory expulsion, as this severe consequence can upend the student’s academic career for a nonviolent offense. Additionally, it is a more efficient use of school district and county funding, as nonviolent offenders take the seat of a taxpayer-funded resource intended for students with serious behavioral concerns.</p>	
<p>HB 2455 By: King, Tracy O.</p>	<p>Relating to an annual occupational medical examination for fire fighters.</p>	<p>Urban Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Due to the strenuous and hazardous nature of their work, firefighters face an increased risk of cancer, pathogenic illnesses and cardiac conditions. Many of these illnesses can be expensive to treat if not caught early, so many Texas fire departments offer annual screening checks for firefighters and other fire protection personnel.</p> <p>HB 2455 requires a municipal, county, or political subdivision fire department to provide all professional fire protection personnel certified by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection an annual medical evaluation at no cost. This confidential evaluation will include screening for cardiac issues, cancer, and certain infectious diseases. It also includes a chest x-ray every fifth year. The Texas Commission on Fire Protection shall adopt rules establishing minimum standards for these evaluations matching those developed by the National Fire Protection Association. This proactive approach will help take care of Texas firefighters as they serve their community.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 44 By: Swanson Klick Slawson Hefner Morales Shaw</p>	<p>Relating to provider discrimination against a Medicaid recipient or child health plan program enrollee based on immunization status.</p>	<p>Public Health 7 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Texas law currently provides conditions for child immunization exemptions, but there is no mechanism to prevent individuals from being denied health care services by taxpayer-funded programs due to immunization status. Some Medicaid or CHIP providers refuse treatment for children and their family members based on their immunization status. One example is the Austin Regional Clinic, which stated that it would not accept new unvaccinated patients.</p> <p>HB 44 would prohibit Medicaid and CHIP providers from refusing treatment solely based on a person's "refusal or failure" to obtain a vaccine for a particular infectious or communicable disease. HB 44 requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to deny Medicaid or CHIP reimbursement for violating providers and disenroll these providers from Medicaid and/or CHIP. The executive commissioner of HHSC is directed to adopt necessary rules for implementation.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p>HB 44 may interfere with a physician’s ability to maintain a safe practice environment for their patients. Physicians must protect medically fragile patients from exposure to illnesses. HB 44 also potentially infringes on physicians' rights to make decisions for their practice, which could lead to fewer physicians and reduced patient access to care.</p> <p>Vaccines have been consistently proven to be safe and effective in preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Evidence-based medicine supporters strongly recommend parents fully immunize their children according to approved immunization schedules, including physicians from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), American Academy of Family Physicians, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Imposing additional barriers to providing clinical care, particularly for vaccine-hesitant parents, could have negative consequences. Texas already faces a shortage of physicians who accept Medicaid patients due to low reimbursement rates and administrative issues.</p> <p>By interfering with physicians' decision-making, HB 44 may ultimately reduce access to care for those who need it most.</p>	
<p>HB 1996 By: Hull Oliverson Cortez Perez Harris, Caroline</p>	<p>Relating to the regulation of group family leave insurance issued through an employer to pay for certain losses of income.</p>	<p>Insurance 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Short-term disability insurance is an income replacement benefit that enables policyholders to receive a percentage of their income during extended work absences due to an accident or illness. Employers typically offer short-term disability insurance as a benefit to attract, retain, and support employees. HB 1996 uses the short-term disability framework to create an optional employer-provided group insurance offered by insurers expressly for paid family leave.</p> <p>Qualifying Events HB 1996 establishes group family leave insurance as a type of short-term disability insurance that insurers who are authorized to provide life, health, and disability income insurance can offer as its own product to employers as an optional employee benefit. HB 1996 outlines a wide-range of qualifying events group family leave insurance policies should cover. The qualifying events provided for in HB 1996 are comprehensive and inclusive, allowing policyholders to use family leave insurance to take care of family members, give birth, or adopt a child in a variety of circumstances. Additionally, HB 1996 requires plans to include details on qualifying events, establish the duration of coverage for each qualifying event, and provide benefit coverage for a minimum of two weeks in a 52-week calendar period.</p> <p>Benefits and Terms Insurers providing this insurance plan are required to issue a certificate of insurance coverage that includes a summary of benefits and terms of coverage. HB 1996 mandates group family leave insurance policies specify the amount of financial support or percentage of income provided and the period of time insured individuals must</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group — An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p>wait without pay before the benefit goes into effect, if applicable. The terms of these insurance policies must transparently outline restrictions to benefit coverage. HB 1996 permits group family leave insurance policies to limit or disallow coverage for specific reasons. These reasons include when the family leave is taken due to an injury or illness of a family member caused by the policyholder, or when the policyholder receives payment from other sources during the same period.</p> <p>Impact HB 1996 creates a framework for employers to offer family group leave insurance plans. HB 1996 addresses the needs of working families given that Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave is unpaid and short-term disability only covers injury or illness of policyholders. HB 1996 will help Texas workers have access to paid leave to take care of themselves or their family during life circumstances that pull them away from their jobs — like growing their family or taking care of a loved one with a serious health condition.</p>	
<p>HB 1580 By: Metcalf Hull</p>	<p>Relating to paid leave by certain state employees for the birth or adoption of a child.</p>	<p>State Affairs 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Texas statute does not mandate state agencies provide paid parental leave for the adoption or birth of a child. Research shows that paid parental leave policies benefit both working families and employers. For working families, access to paid parental leave improves financial stability, social well-being, and health outcomes. Similarly, employers that offer paid parental leave consistently report higher employee retention, productivity, and engagement. HB 1580 aims to improve state agency recruitment and retention efforts with a 60-day paid leave policy.</p> <p>Currently, state employees are entitled to unpaid, job-protected leave during a 12 month period for the birth or adoption of a child under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), so long as they have worked for the State for at least a year. HB 1580 entitles eligible state employees who are members of the Employees Retirement System (ERS) to 60 days of paid leave during their FMLA for the birth or adoption of a child. The provisions of HB 1580 include the birth of a child by a spouse or gestational surrogate. Additionally, employees do not have to exhaust paid vacation or sick leave before claiming the benefit. HB 1580 does not entitle employees to any additional FMLA leave.</p> <p>HB 1580 improves the lives of state employees and bolsters state agencies’ efforts to attract new and retain current employees.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1391 By: Schaefer Bell, Keith Goldman</p>	<p>Relating to the requirements to obtain a residential wireman license.</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures 7 Ayes, 3 Nays,</p>	<p>HB 1391 allows prospective residential wireman to substitute on-the-job training for a career and technology education (CTE) program. A licensed residential wireman performs electrical installations in single-family and multifamily dwellings not exceeding four stories. To apply for a license, an applicant must pass an exam and complete at least 4,000 hours of on-the-job training under the supervision of a master electrician or residential wireman. HB 1391 would make it so applicants may opt to complete a CTE course in lieu of completing 4,000 hours of on-the-job training. Applicants would still have to pass the licensure exam.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

		<p>1 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1391 establishes guidelines for the CTE program which may be offered by a high school or higher education institution. The bill directs the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (TCLR) to establish standards for the essential knowledge and skills obtained through the CTE program, in conjunction with the State Board of Education (SBOE) if the courses are offered in a high school.</p> <p>Additionally, HB 1391 authorizes TCLR to waive license renewal fees for persons licensed as a master electrician, journeyman electrician, or residential wireman who teach a CTE course. This bill will take effect immediately if it receives a 2/3 vote in each chamber or on September 1.</p> <p>HB 1391 aims to increase the number of residential wiremen in Texas. However, there are serious concerns about the potential lack of hands-on training. Under HB 1391, a recent high school graduate with no on-the-job training may perform electrical work in a home with no supervision. Mistakes have the potential to cause serious damage to individuals and properties. Many residential homes are built with wood framing and often do not include sprinkler systems unlike commercial properties. Altogether, it increases the potential for fire. Although the bill requires the CTE to have “a practical component,” it does not lay out what this means or how many hours are required. At the end of the day, nothing is more practical than real life experience. Allowing prospective wireman to forgo the current 4,000 hour on-the-job training requirement is not in the best interest of the industry or the safety of Texans.</p>	
<p>HB 1575 By: Hull Harless Slawson Rose Frank</p>	<p>Relating to improving health outcomes for pregnant women under Medicaid and certain other public benefits programs.</p>	<p>Health Care Reform, Select 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>A Milliman report revealed that women with nonmedical health needs like food, housing, and transportation are more likely to experience high-risk pregnancies and higher maternal morbidity rates. According to the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee, most pregnancy-related deaths are preventable. Other research suggests that Medicaid patients using certified doulas experience better health outcomes and fewer hospital visits.</p> <p>Low-income pregnant women and their families can access services like housing assistance and food banks, but these services are often fragmented and uncoordinated. HB 1575 seeks to address these issues by creating a case management program to connect pregnant women with community resources, standardizing public benefits program screenings, and mandating data reporting to inform policymakers.</p> <p>HB 1575 directs the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to develop standardized questions for Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) and Alternatives to Abortion (A2A) providers to assess pregnant women's non-medical needs. Participants must be informed about data collection, its purpose, and their right to decline or discontinue screenings without retaliation. HB 1575 requires HHSC to submit a biennial report to the legislature using de-identified information and data reported by MCOs and A2A providers. This report may be consolidated with another report on the same subject matter.</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p>HB 1575 establishes separate provider types for community health workers and doulas who offer case management services, allowing them to enroll as providers and be reimbursed, and requiring them to complete trauma-informed training on various topics. HB 1575 requires HHSC to submit a status report on the program's implementation and case management services provided, including de-identified information about the nonmedical health-related needs of recipients, numbers and types of referrals made, and birth outcomes. HB 1575 allows for delayed implementation should a federal waiver or authorization be required.</p> <p>HB 1575 aims to improve health outcomes for mothers and babies and foster self-sufficiency for Texas families. While identifying the "nonmedical" needs of pregnant people is essential in providing appropriate resources and support, it will be critical to ensure proper safeguards are in place. The main concern is that the screening expands the responsibilities of A2A providers who have historically provided medically inaccurate information to pregnant women.</p>	
<p>HB 1769 By: Meyer</p>	<p>Relating to the statute of limitations for certain offenses committed against children.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The offense of trafficking a child into forced labor has a statute of limitations of 10 years from the victim's 18th birthday. The offense of sexual performance by a child has a statute of limitations of 20 years following the victim's 18th birthday, if they were under 17 at the time of the offense. The current statute fails to address victims who were 17 at the time of the offense. Additionally, these statutes of limitation provide inadequate time for many victims to process the crime committed against them and decide to pursue charges.</p> <p>HB 1769 aims to provide justice for victims by extending the statute of limitations for trafficking a child with the intent to force labor from 10 years following the child's 18th birthday to 20 years. HB 1769 eliminates the requirement that the child must be younger than 17 at the time of the offense for the statute of limitations for sexual performance by a child. This adjustment will allow those who were 17 at the time of the offense to seek justice.</p> <p>HB 1769 is a positive step towards protecting vulnerable members of society and holding offenders accountable for their crimes.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1859 By: Schaefer Bell, Keith Goldman</p>	<p>Relating to the regulation of air conditioning and refrigeration contracting, including eligibility for an air conditioning and refrigeration</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures 7 Ayes, 3 Nays, 1 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1859 modifies the requirements to become a certified air conditioning and refrigeration technician. An air conditioning and refrigeration technician assists a licensed air conditioning and refrigeration contractor in performing air conditioning and refrigeration maintenance work. Currently, certified air conditioning and refrigeration technicians must complete a 2,000-hour certification training program, a combination of classroom instruction and work experience under the supervision of a contractor.</p> <p>HB 1859 creates a career and technology education (CTE) program that the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) must recognize as a certification training program for technician licensure. The bill establishes guidelines for the CTE program which may be offered by a high school or higher education</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

	<p>technician registration or certification.</p>		<p>institution. The bill directs the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (TCLR), in consultation with Texas State Technical College and relevant industry groups, to establish standards for the essential knowledge and skills obtained through the CTE program. The State Board of Education (SBOE) must also approve the standards, if the CTE courses are offered in a high school.</p> <p>HB 1859 removes the condition that an applicant must complete the certification training program within the 48 months preceding application.</p> <p>Additionally, HB 1391 authorizes TCLR to reduce the number of continuing education requirements and waive license renewal fees for licensed air conditioning and refrigeration contractors or certified air conditioning and refrigeration technicians with at least five years experience who teach a CTE course.</p> <p>The bill lowers the age that a person can register as a technician from 18 to 16 years old. A person under 18 would be required to be supervised by a contractor or technician at all times. A person must still be at least 18 years of age for a certification.</p> <p>HB 1391 aims to increase the number of certified air conditioning and refrigeration technicians in Texas. However, there are concerns about removing the licensure requirement that a person complete their training program within the last 48 months. A lot of industry and safety practices can change in four years. It is imperative that technicians are up to date to protect safety and property. Additionally, there are concerns about individuals under 18 years working on HVAC systems, even with supervision. Lastly, there are concerns about the potential lack of hands-on training. Under HB 1859, a person with no on-the-job training may become certified. Although the bill requires the CTE to have “a practical component,” it does not lay out what this means or how many hours are required. Allowing prospective wireman to forgo the current 2,000 hour combination of classroom and work supervision is not in the best interest of the industry or the safety of Texans.</p>	
<p>HB 2237 By: Thompson, Senfronia Price Wu Johnson, Ann</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the child first grant program.</p>	<p>Youth Health and Safety 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Children who experience neglect, abuse, family dysfunction, and other types of trauma are at increased risk for a myriad of negative health outcomes that follow them well into adulthood including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, PTSD, heart disease and even cancer. Due to the adverse effects of negative childhood experiences impeding on development that follows individuals into adulthood, these experiences can become generational, inadvertently affecting families for several decades as the cycle continues. Early interventions can mitigate these outcomes, resulting in better coping skills, decreased rates of depression, and increased resiliency.</p> <p>HB 2237 seeks to provide such services through a grant program for home-based mental health assistance for children and families. The Department of Family Services (DFPS) would be responsible for awarding grants to nonprofit organizations to implement, maintain, and expand child first programs in Texas. The bill requires that</p>	<p>Favorable</p>

Texas Legislative Study Group — An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p>an applicant for a grant must demonstrate a commitment to a family centered approach to care that emphasizes comprehensive services to both children and families, possess a track record of success in providing early childhood and preventive care services to low-income and high risk families, and have experience providing home based care.</p> <p>Under HB 2237, any program that receives a grant must be modeled after the programming of the Child First National Service Office in which a team of licensed professionals regularly visit the homes of their client families to improve child and parent mental health, promote school readiness, and decrease child abuse and neglect. HB 2237 mandates that the commissioner of DFPS collaborate with the Child First National Service Office to adopt standards for programs that are recipients of the grant. Lastly, the bill enables DFPS to access a wide range of monetary sources to fund the grant program.</p> <p>The grant established in HB 227 will help to interrupt generational cycles of trauma and improve the mental health of families.</p>	
<p>HB 2504</p> <p>By: Button Burns Bucy Clardy Howard</p>	<p>Relating to the award of scholarship money by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy to certain accounting students.</p>	<p>Higher Education</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, scholarship money awarded by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy (TSBPA) may only be granted to fifth-year accounting students.</p> <p>HB 2504 seeks to expand eligibility by removing the restriction that the scholarship be designated only for fifth-year accounting students. The TSBPA scholarship money would be eligible for students in any year of their accounting program if they've completed at least 15 hours of upper-level accounting coursework. HB 2504 would also expand the type of expenses that scholarships can cover to any incurred costs connected to the student's accounting program.</p> <p>HB 2504 could help students needing financial assistance complete their postsecondary education.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2629</p> <p>By: Rogers Green Longoria Klick Stucky</p>	<p>Relating to the reporting of direct campaign expenditures by certain persons and political committees.</p>	<p>Elections</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, a political committee, commonly referred to as a "PAC," is required to include the name of each candidate or officeholder who "benefits from" a direct campaign expenditure. HB 2629 would make it so PACs have to specifically disclose whether their expenditure was made to support or oppose a candidate or officeholder.</p> <p>HB 2629 aims to provide more information on PAC expenditures.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group — An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

<p>HB 2662</p> <p>By: Ashby Anderson Rose Bailes Clardy</p>	<p>Relating to broadband development.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2662 aims to enhance broadband access, mapping, and eligibility in Texas by aligning state statute with recent federal guidelines. The changes outlined in the bill are designed to position Texas to receive the maximum amount of federal funding available through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, which was established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill.</p> <p>HB 2662 sets the minimum speed requirements for qualification as broadband service to a minimum network round-trip latency of 100 millisecond based on the 95th percentile of speed measurement. HB 2662 authorizes the comptroller to correspondingly adjust the state’s internet service standards when the Federal Communication Commission adopts new federal standards.</p> <p>The state broadband development map is significantly restructured under HB 2662. Mapping helps to identify which areas of the state have the greatest broadband needs. HB 2662 revises the classification of broadband serviceable locations for the state broadband development map. The three new classifications include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unserved locations that do not have access to reliable broadband capable of providing the minimum broadband speed needed to qualify as broadband service; • Underserved locations are not unserved but lack broadband service capable of providing a speed of not less than 100 megabits per second for a download, a speed of not less than 20 megabits per second for an upload, and a network round-trip latency of less than or equal to 100 milliseconds based on the 95th percentile of speed measurements; and • Served locations are areas in which broadband services reliably meet or exceed the aforementioned speeds. <p>The current map only displays “eligible areas” and “ineligible areas.” The information displayed on HB 226’s map is expanded to include the number and percentage of unserved, underserved, and served locations within each designated area.</p> <p>HB 2662 authorizes the Broadband Development Office (BDO) to award grants, low-interest loans, and other funding incentives to facilitate broadband infrastructure projects that expand accessibility and affordability. Moreover, transparency measures embedded in HB 2662 require the BDO to publicly post funding applications for projects and disclosure of federal funding commitments by broadband service providers.</p> <p>By improving access to broadband services across the state, HB 2662 begins to close the digital divide and ensure that all Texans have access to reliable and high-quality internet services. These improvements will not only benefit individuals and families but support businesses, schools, and healthcare providers.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
--	---	--	---	--------------------------------

Texas Legislative Study Group — An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

<p>HB 2804 Kuempel</p>	<p>Relating to use of the name, image, or likeness of a student-athlete participating in an intercollegiate athletic program at an institution of higher education.</p>	<p>Higher Education 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 2 Absent</p>	<p>The 87th Legislature passed SB 1385, which gave Texas some of the most competitive Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) laws in the country that balanced the interests of student-athletes and universities. Since then, over thirty states have passed some form of NIL legislation. It is important that Texas remains at the forefront of Name, Image, and Likeness, so collegiate athletes are drawn to bringing their talent here.</p> <p>HB 2804 enhances protections for both students and universities, improves student-athlete confidentiality, and allows more assistance for students exploring NIL contracts.</p> <p><i>Protections for Universities</i> Under HB 2804, a student-athlete cannot use an institution's facility, uniform, registered trademark, copyright-protected product, or official logo in connection with their NIL contract without the institution's express permission and fair compensation at the market average.</p> <p>The bill prohibits an athletic conference or an athletic association, like the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), from enforcing any rules that prohibit any Texas institution's participation in intercollegiate activities, nor can they penalize institutions for participation in authorized activities.</p> <p><i>Changes Related to Student-Athletes</i> HB 2804 maintains the student athlete's confidentiality for any information related to their NIL contract. The institution may withhold this information without requesting a decision from the Attorney General regarding whether or not the withholding is permissible.</p> <p>HB 2804 prohibits a student-athlete from entering into a contract in which compensation is provided for an act that occurs during an official team activity designated by the institution. The bill also clarifies they cannot receive compensation in exchange for registration on the institution, rather than attendance.</p> <p>HB 2804 authorizes an institution or institution employee to assist with opportunities for student-athletes to earn NIL compensation from a third party. However, they cannot act as an athlete's agent, receive compensation from the student or third party for their assistance, attempt to influence the student athlete's choices or diminish the student-athlete's opportunities from competing third-parties.</p> <p>HB 2804 repeals the mandate for universities to require student-athlete participation in a financial literacy and life skills workshop their first and third academic years. Under the bill, they only have to participate once in their first year.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
--	---	---	--	--------------------------------

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

<p>HB 2929 By: Lozano</p>	<p>Relating to continuing education and training requirements for classroom teachers and public school counselors.</p>	<p>Public Education 10 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 3 Absent</p>	<p>The 87th Legislature passed SB 1267, which considered the recommendations made by an education working group during the 2019-2020 interim. These recommendations sought to ensure our schools have well-trained staff by giving staff the flexibility to obtain the mandatory continuing professional education (CPE) for certification renewal in topics most applicable to their profession. However, because of a misinterpretation of the bill, teachers weren't able to credit more than 25% of CPE hours in mandatory topics toward their total hours required. Additionally, counselors found the 25% cap on select topics unnecessary, citing the CPE topics for counseling to be more purposeful.</p> <p>HB 2929 seeks to resolve these unintended consequences by allowing mandatory training topics to count for over 25% of the total CPE hours required for certification renewal and providing that a minimum of 25% of the total number of CPE hours required for counselors must include listed topics in current law.</p> <p>By allowing teachers to count more than 25% of the hours of CPE they receive in mandatory topics towards their total CPE, HB 2929 gives flexibility for teachers to choose how their hours are counted and what topics they may select. Additionally, the removal of the limit on the number of hours in the required topics can contribute to counselors' overall hours and lets them focus on the topics best suited for the skills they use on the job.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4005 By: Raney Lalani Darby</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the Texas Competency-Based Education Grant Program for certain students enrolled in competency-based baccalaureate degree programs and to formula funding and dropped and repeated course restrictions for students enrolled in those degree programs at public institutions of higher education.</p>	<p>Higher Education 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent</p>	<p>Competency-based education (CBE) measures learning achieved rather than time spent in classrooms. This approach benefits adult learners, who often have some prior education or experience in a field and are seeking to complete their degree. Pursuing a post-secondary education is especially difficult for those caring for a family or with full time employment. These adult learners are typically eligible for Federal Pell Grants. However, the time lapse between the start or return to their post-secondary degree often renders them ineligible for state financial aid programs. HB 4005 seeks to resolve this financial aid gap for adult learners by establishing the Texas Competency-Based Education Grant Program.</p> <p>HB 4005 defines a competency-based baccalaureate degree program as a baccalaureate degree program under which academic credit is awarded based solely on a student's attainment of competencies. CBE are typically designed to help students complete a degree in significantly less time.</p> <p><i>Administration of the Program</i> Under HB 4005, the Texas Competency-Based Education Grant Program would be administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), authorizing them to adopt rules for the implementation of the program, including the ability to determine the allocation of funds for eligible institutions.. Students with the greatest unmet financial needs must be given the highest priority when awarding grants. The THECB must also develop rules pertaining to standards and limitations on dropping or repeating courses by students enrolled in a competency-based baccalaureate degree program.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<p><i>Student Eligibility and Academic Performance Requirements</i> Students who have already received a bachelor’s degree are not eligible to receive a grant from this program. To be eligible for a grant under the Texas Competency-Based Education Grant Program, as determined by the THECB, the student must: be a resident of the state; meet financial need requirements; be enrolled in a CBE program at an eligible institution; not already be receiving any other state-funded student financial assistance for the same academic period; and comply with any additional nonacademic requirements set forth by the THECB.</p> <p>Once a student has qualified for a grant under this program, they may continue to receive the grant awarded to them each semester of their enrollment if they meet the criteria for initial eligibility and make satisfactory academic progress toward their degree. Satisfactory academic progress is based on the student’s completion of at least 12 semester credit hours or competency units.</p> <p><i>Grant Use and Amount</i> HB 4005 restricts the use of grants awarded under this program to tuition and required fees. It is estimated that the cost of filling the financial gap between federal funds (Pell Grants) and total tuition is about \$500, per student, per semester. HB 4005 takes this estimation into account and specifies that the amount awarded to full-time undergraduate students must be the lesser of the difference between the amount charged for that academic year and the amount of aid awarded to the student, or \$500. This amount may be increased or decreased at the discretion of the THECB in proportion to the number of hours the student is enrolled. HB 4005 specifies that admission may not be denied based on the applicant’s eligibility or receipt of a grant under this program.</p> <p>Finally, HB 4005 specifies that all contact hours obtained by the student prior to and throughout enrollment in a CBE program may not be excluded from being counted in the contact hours reported to the Legislative Budget Board for formula funding.</p> <p><i>Impact</i> H.B. 4005 would allow more adult learners to complete their degrees and enter high-need areas of the workforce, such as teaching, nursing, business, and IT.</p>	
<p>HB 4101 By: Shine</p>	<p>Relating to the matters that may be the subject of limited binding arbitration to compel compliance with procedural</p>	<p>Ways & Means 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Last session, HB 988 passed and enabled property owners to access limited binding arbitration to address procedural issues related to protests on appraised property values. Since the passage of this bill, there has been cause to expand the reasons for limited binding arbitrations to ensure everyone can access a fair hearing.</p> <p>HB 4101 expands the scope of limited binding arbitration to ensure that the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) or chief appraiser complies with hearing procedures outlined by the Comptroller relating to taxpayer protests. HB</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

	requirements related to protests before appraisal review boards.		4101 ensures fair hearings for property owners by allowing them to address errors by appraisal districts.	
HB 3504 By: Leach	Relating to an application for emergency detention and procedures regarding court-ordered mental health services.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>Clarifications have been requested to clarify and modernize the law relating to court-ordered mental health services and emergency detention.</p> <p>Rather than being permissive, HB 3504 requires judges or magistrates to allow a physician to present an application to issue a warrant for emergency detention. An application for court-ordered mental health services must be filed with the county clerk where the patient resides. HB 3504 expands this provision to include the county where the patient is at the time the application is filed or where the patient was apprehended for emergency detention. Under HB 3504, judges and magistrates must also accept electronic or paper applications at any time, even if it is filed after business hours, on weekends, or during holidays.</p> <p>HB 3504 ensures that judges cannot decline to appoint an attorney to represent a proposed patient because the judge believes or knows that the patient is not indigent. HB 3504 also addresses conflicting recommendations on commitment by requiring local mental health authorities (LMHAs) to include a certificate of medical examination for mental illness and to identify facts on their commitment determination. Motions for orders of protective custody (OPC) would no longer be required to include a recommendation from an LMHA. Additionally, courts would no longer have to consider recommendations from an LMHA if the recommendation does not comply with requirements.</p> <p>Rather than being permissive, HB 3504 requires judges or magistrates to issue a protective order if certain requirements are met and require they set a hearing date if a determination cannot be made from the application and certificate only. Judges or magistrates should not deny a motion for a protective custody order only on the basis that the proposed patient was not detained. HB 3504 adds the applicant as a person that can appear in court to present evidence on the proposed patient presenting a risk of serious harm to themselves or others. If no probable cause is found, judges are able to order the facility administrator to release the person under an OPC.</p> <p>HB 3504 also allows medical or psychiatric testimony for court-ordered mental health hearings to be conducted via video call. The court must put their findings in writing on their decision to deny court-ordered mental services based on the proposed patient not meeting criteria.</p> <p>HB 3504 improves access to mental health services, cleans up the application process, clarifies what criteria judges or magistrates can deny a motion on, and expands access for mental health professionals in the court process.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

Texas Legislative Study Group — An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

<p>HB 3640</p> <p>By: Noble Raymond Thierry Klick</p>	<p>Relating to an exemption from ad valorem taxation of a portion of the appraised value of a property other than a residence homestead that is the primary residence of an adult who has an intellectual or developmental disability and who must be related to the owner or trustee of the property within a certain degree by consanguinity.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) cannot receive certain federal and state benefits if they own a home. Oftentimes, family members will purchase a home in their own name for these individuals so they can live by themselves and continue receiving these benefits. Unfortunately, these homes often do not qualify for a homestead exemption for their property taxes, as the family member usually already owns one home that qualifies.</p> <p>HB 3640 allows these homeowners to claim a homestead exemption for property that houses their family member with IDD. This bill specifies that this real property must be the primary residence of an individual with IDD who is related to the owner or trustee to the third degree of relation. This exemption, once allowed, applies to the property until ownership changes or the person's qualification for the exemption changes.</p> <p>HB 3640 requires enabling legislation, HJR 150.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 576</p> <p>By: Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to the confidentiality of certain autopsy records.</p>	<p>Public Health</p> <p>10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Texans may encounter difficulties accessing specific autopsy records, including photographs and X-rays, of deceased family members under existing state law.</p> <p>HB 576 aims to address this problem by permitting the disclosure of autopsy photographs or X-rays exempted from public disclosure to the next of kin or the deceased's legal representative.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 352</p> <p>By: González, Jessica Smith Moody Leach Bowers</p>	<p>Relating to the representation of certain indigent applicants for a writ of habeas corpus.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>A writ of habeas corpus allows individuals in custody to challenge the legality of their imprisonment. Texas law currently limits court-appointed representation for indigent defendants in habeas corpus proceedings to specific cases. Local district attorneys and indigent defense advocates propose changing this law to ensure indigent defendants aren't unlawfully confined and their constitutional rights are protected.</p> <p>HB 352 aims to address instances where the state suspects an indigent defendant may have a valid habeas corpus claim and allows appointed counsel to investigate the claim's merits. HB 352 broadens eligibility for court-appointed representation by using the more inclusive term "potentially meritorious claim," encompassing a wider range of claims, such as actual innocence, guilt of a lesser offense, convictions or sentences under unconstitutional laws, or constitutional violations.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			HB 352 would increase access to justice for financially disadvantaged individuals by expanding eligibility for court-appointed representation in habeas corpus proceedings.	
HB 115 By: Ortega Patterson Harless Johnson, Ann Gamez	Relating to the offense of public consumption of alcoholic beverages during certain hours.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures 9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	It's illegal for Texas businesses to allow alcohol consumption after 2:15 a.m. However, the law does not make it clear whether this applies to both TABC-licensed and unlicensed establishments. HB 115 clarifies that the prohibition from consuming alcohol in a public place during certain hours applies to both licensed and unlicensed businesses. This will ensure that the law, as it stands, may be properly enforced.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 386 By: Gonzalez, Jessica Swanson Bucy Plesa	Relating to accommodating a voter unable to enter a polling place.	Elections 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Curbside voting is available for persons unable to enter the polling place. The Texas Secretary of State's (SOS) office provides signs informing voters how to access curbside voting in English and Spanish. However, some signs have reportedly been hard to read, and provide little to no information on how to access curbside voting at that particular polling place. HB 386 seeks to remedy this issue by requiring an election officer to designate a parking space at each polling place specifically for curbside voting. Under HB 386, the space would be reserved for a voter unable to enter the polling place, and will display a phone number in large font, for the voter to call or text upon arrival to request assistance from an election officer. HB 386 also states that as an alternative, an election officer may give the voter a button or intercom to request assistance. HB 386 aims to make curbside voting more accessible to Texans who need it.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 390 By: Howard Capriglione Anchía Anderson	Relating to the Internet broadcast or audio recording of certain open meetings.	State Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,	State governmental entities hold public meetings to increase transparency and engage Texans. Many state agencies already livestream and archive public meetings on their websites, although it's not required by law. As a result, the manner and process by which state agencies broadcast and share meetings is inconsistent. HB 390 addresses this by establishing guidelines for webcasting and archiving open meetings by state agencies. HB 390 requires qualifying state agencies share the following on their respective websites and, in some instances, social media accounts: public notice of an open meeting at least 72 hours in advance, live audio or video broadcasts of open meetings, and recordings of live broadcasts within seven days. HB 390 also requires agencies to archive broadcast recordings for two years. Under HB 390, qualifying state agencies are defined as government entities within the executive or legislative branches of state government that receive at least \$10 million in general revenue funds and employ 100 or more people. The provisions of HB 390 only apply to agencies meeting these qualifications and exempts agencies from the requirements in the event of a catastrophe or technical difficulties.	<u>Favorable</u>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			For many Texans attending meetings in person can be difficult due to personal and professional responsibilities. HB 390 improves government transparency and makes it easier for Texans to stay informed and engaged.	
HB 609 By: Vasut	Relating to the liability of a business owner or operator arising from the exposure of an individual to a pandemic disease.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>Texas has the second highest totals for COVID-19 cases and deaths nationwide. A high proportion of cases are linked to workplace exposure. Studies show that most worksite outbreaks occurred in manufacturing, retail trade, and transportation, all of which are large industries in Texas.</p> <p>HB 609 provides liability protection to business owners or operators who do not require their employees or contractors to be vaccinated against a pandemic disease for injury or death caused by exposure to a pandemic disease through an employee or contractor. This protection would apply to any case in which a person is exposed to a pandemic disease by an employee or contractor, including customers of the business as well as other employees or contractors that work for the business.</p> <p>HB 609 reduces the incentive for businesses to take steps to protect the health and safety of their employees and customers, as they will not be held accountable for any harm caused by a pandemic disease. Additionally there are concerns HB 609 may disproportionately affect vulnerable communities and low-income workers, who may be unable to work remotely or take other precautions to protect themselves from exposure to disease in a high-exposure work environment.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
HB 711 By: Frank Harless	Relating to certain contract provisions and conduct affecting health care provider networks.	Health Care Reform, Select 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	<p>Competition is crucial for a healthy market, leading to better services and affordable prices. However, the healthcare industry has become increasingly consolidated, resulting in anti-competitive practices that allow companies to act like monopolies and raise prices without consequences. The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) notes that since 2009, health insurance premiums have increased by over 50%, while deductibles have risen by 162%. Insurers and medical providers often use anti-competitive clauses in contracts, harming consumers.</p> <p>HB 711 prohibits insurers and providers from including specific anti-competitive clauses in contracts, fostering competition in the healthcare market and encouraging lower prices and improved quality.</p> <p>HB 711 prevents insurance companies and providers from including the following anti-competitive clauses in provider network contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anti-steering clauses: restrict insurers or employers from encouraging enrollees to use a provider's competitor; ● Anti-tiering clauses: limit insurers or employers from implementing tiered network plans or assigning providers to different tiers; ● Gag clauses: prevent insurers or providers from disclosing price or quality information; and 	<u>Favorable</u>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most-favored-nation clauses: stop insurers or providers from offering better rates to other parties. <p>HB 711 makes such clauses void and unenforceable, but the remaining contract provisions remain valid. It also establishes a fiduciary duty for health benefit plan issuers to benefit enrollees or policyholders by encouraging specific providers or modifying tiered network plans.</p> <p>HB 711 aims to ban anti-competitive contract clauses between insurers and providers, promoting competition in the healthcare market. This encourages participants to reduce prices and improve quality and access for Texans.</p>	
<p>HB 790</p> <p>By: Patterson Longoria Frazier Thimesch Isaac</p>	<p>Relating to the processes for and the adjudication and payment of certain claims under the workers' compensation system.</p>	<p>Business & Industry</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Concerned parties have raised concerns about how the workers' compensation system can cause delays in employees returning to work; specifically, employees' inability to request their own doctor's examinations, unclear timelines for carriers to provide certain coverages, or being unable to use videoconferencing to conduct contested claims hearings.</p> <p>HB 790 authorizes the Texas Department of Insurance's division of workers' compensation to authorize a medical examination of the compensable injury at the employee's request. Compensability is whether an injury or illness happened while the employee was performing duties related to their employment. HB 790 allows the workers' compensation commissioner to adopt rules relating to requirements for requests of medical examinations from insurance carriers and employees.</p> <p>HB 790 establishes that if an insurance carrier fails to begin benefit payments or notify the division or the employee about refusing to pay benefits by the 60th day from a claim's receipt date, the carrier waives its right to contest the extent of an injury claimed by the employee. Extent-of-injury is a determination of what medical conditions are part of a work-related injury.</p> <p>If an insurance carrier refuses to pay benefits, it must include a statement explaining why the carrier denies the compensability or the extent of the injury and provide the evidence reviewed to reach its conclusion. HB 790 provides for reimbursing medical expenses of the employee's claimed injury should the insurance carrier refuse to pay benefits and an administrative judge or an appeals panel determine that the employee is due benefits. HB 790 allows an injured employee or their attorney to request a contested case hearing to be conducted over videoconference.</p> <p>HB 790 aids employees in streamlining procedures in the complicated process of navigating workers compensation, helping employees get back to work quicker.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

<p>HB 898</p> <p>By: Stucky Frazier Lujan Spiller Harless</p>	<p>Relating to the offense of passing certain vehicles on a highway; increasing a criminal penalty.</p>	<p>Transportation</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Since 2019, more than 25 emergency responders have been hit and killed on Texas roads. On average, 24 emergency responders and roadside workers in Texas lose their lives yearly due to unsafe driving practices. Historically, the Move Over or Slow Down Law required a driver to move to the next lane or slow their speed to 20 mph for police, fire, emergency vehicles, and tow trucks. This law has been expanded to include tow operators, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) vehicles, and utility service vehicles. Still, many drivers violate its provisions, resulting in dangerous work environments for emergency responders and roadside workers.</p> <p>HB 898 increases penalization for drivers that violate the provisions of the “Move Over or Slow Down” law. HB 898 would increase the initial fee for violating this law from a maximum of \$500 to a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$1,250. For a subsequent offense within five years of the initial offense, one could be subject to a misdemeanor charge and a fee ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000. The offense can be enhanced to Class A misdemeanor if it results in serious bodily injury to another or a state jail felony for a second or subsequent violation that results in serious bodily injury to another. Courts are given the authority to suspend an individual’s driver’s license for six months if the individual has prior convictions for this offense. Courts are also given the authority to require an individual to complete court-ordered community service to discharge assigned fines should they fail to pay for the fines associated with their offense or if they do not have sufficient income or resources.</p> <p>HB 898 aims to hold accountable those who endanger workers' lives by providing daily critical emergency response, roadside assistance, and maintenance services for Texans.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1130</p> <p>By: Spiller</p>	<p>Relating to a district or county attorney participating as counsel in certain proceedings.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Legal assistance may be more limited in rural areas or small counties. Currently, district and county attorneys are not allowed to be of counsel adverse to the State in any case or court. This has left children in CPS custody needing ad litem representation with few options. Judges may be forced to appoint attorneys that do not live or practice anywhere near the court or child’s locale. This is a disservice to the children in CPS custody who have a right to representation from an ad litem they have built trust with. The associated legal fees and travel expenses may also be costly for these counties.</p> <p>HB 1130 provides that district and county attorneys shall not be of counsel adverse to the State in any case, in any court, except to serve as a court-appointed guardian ad litem in a suit by the State to protect the health and safety of a child.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1207</p> <p>By: Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to the statute of limitations for tampering with certain physical evidence.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>Currently, the statute of limitations for destroying or tampering with evidence related to criminal homicide is three years. Law enforcement has expressed concerns regarding this short timeframe, as destroyed evidence or tampered evidence has prevented them from solving cold case murders. Such evidence can be vital in solving these cases and bringing justice to the affected families, who have often waited years for answers regarding their lost loved ones.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

		0 Absent	<p>HB 1207 seeks to address this issue by removing the statute of limitations for the felony offense of tampering with physical evidence if the evidence is a human corpse or could be reasonably believed to have been related to criminal homicide.</p> <p>HB 1207 aims to ensure that those who tamper with physical evidence related to serious crimes, such as homicide, can be held accountable regardless of when the crime was committed. Additionally, the bill will provide law enforcement and prosecutors with more tools to ensure that justice is brought to grieving families.</p>	
HB 1221 By: Metcalf	Relating to authorizing the comptroller to release a reported owner's unclaimed property to the owner's crime victim in certain circumstances and payment by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice of certain amounts owed by an inmate.	Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent	<p>Currently, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) can withdraw funds from an incarcerated individual's account to pay for court costs, fines, and restitution. They are not, however, authorized to access funds from the unclaimed property fund, maintained by the Comptroller of Public Accounts, for the same fees. This is because Texas law only permits the property owner to release unclaimed property. Because of this, victims of a crime who are owed restitution from the perpetrator do not have access to the property in the fund.</p> <p>HB 1221 seeks to remedy this by establishing a process in which TDCJ may file a claim for unclaimed property on behalf of the victim to pay their restitution. HB 1221 will require counties, once they have received the restitution payment, to forward that payment to the victim and return any remaining funds to TDCJ. Additionally, HB 1221 requires TDCJ to send quarterly reports to the Comptroller's Office regarding claim-related information to initiate the filings and obtain approval of unclaimed property requests.</p> <p>HB 1221 will help to ensure that more victims have access to the funds they are owed through court ordered restitution.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 679 By: Bell, Keith Bell, Cecil Thompson, Ed Lambert Romero, Jr.	Relating to limitations on the use of workers' compensation insurance experience modifier values in soliciting and awarding public and private construction contracts.	Business & Industry 7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>Experience modifier rates (EMRs) are used to determine the pricing of workers' compensation insurance. They are used to calculate insurance premiums for companies and contractors. There has been an issue with third-party companies misusing EMRs as indicators of a contractor's commitment to safety and denying contract bids or work opportunities based on a contractor's EMR. HB 679 intends to stop this inappropriate use of EMRs and preserve contractors' ability to obtain work.</p> <p>HB 679 prohibits requiring a person to have a specified experience modifier to accept construction contract offers or respond to construction contract solicitations. HB 679 also prohibits construction contracts or construction agreement collaterals from requiring a person to have a specified experience modifier. Contracts that violate the provisions in HB 679 would be considered void.</p> <p>HB 679 corrects the inappropriate applications of EMRs and ensures contractors are not denied work based on a metric not designed to evaluate commitment to safety.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

<p>HB 637 By: Bailes Rose Harris, Cody</p>	<p>Relating to the payment of permanency care assistance after a child’s 18th birthday.</p>	<p>Human Services 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Permanency Care Assistance (PCA) is intended to help monetarily assist families that serve as kinship placements. PCA payments may only be extended past the child’s 18th birthday if the PCA agreement with the kinship provider was entered into after the child’s 16th birthday. This current limitation can cause difficulties for kinship placements with foster youth that turn 18 before completing high school, but do not qualify for continued PCA payments.</p> <p>HB 637 addresses this situation by permitting the continuation of PCA payments if the child is regularly attending high school or in a program leading toward a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. HB 637 requires the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to extend PCA payments until the last day of the month of either the child’s 18th birthday or when the child receives a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, whichever is later.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 611 By: Capriglione</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of the criminal offense of unlawful disclosure of residence address or telephone number.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent</p>	<p>Doxing is posting an individual’s address or phone numbers online without their consent and with malicious intent. This practice can lead to severe consequences, including physical harm or even death. Currently, Texas has no specific laws addressing doxing.</p> <p>HB 611 would create a Class B Misdemeanor offense for the disclosure of an individual’s residential address or phone number online with the intent to cause harm to said individual or their family. If the disclosure leads to bodily harm, the offense would be enhanced to a Class A Misdemeanor. Intent to harm is presumed if the actor receives a written request to remove the information, but posts the information to a secondary site within four years, or refuses to remove the information from the site more than 48 hours after the request.</p> <p>Internet crime, a rapidly evolving problem, can be challenging for legislation to keep pace with but should be taken seriously. Doxing can put intimate partner violence survivors and their children at risk, making their personal information more accessible to abusers.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2121 By: Paul Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to the form of a rendition statement or property report used to render property for ad valorem tax purposes.</p>	<p>Ways & Means 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, all business owners must file the Business Personal Property Rendition of Taxable Property form (Form 50-144) annually and have it notarized. Having the form notarized can be a hassle and an extra expense for small business owners.</p> <p>HB 2121 allows businesses who estimate in good faith that their properties are valued under \$500,000 to submit this form without having it notarized.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2664 By: Tepper</p>	<p>Relating to the disclosure of customer information by government-operated</p>	<p>State Affairs 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>HB 2664 aims to ease the transition of Lubbock Power and Light’s (LP&L) into the ERCOT retail market. HB 2664 enables government-operated utilities to disclose customers’ personal information to ERCOT and other retail utilities for the express purpose of transitioning customers from municipally owned utilities (MOU) to retail electric providers.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

	utilities.	2 Absent		
HB 2681 By: Frazier Bumgarner Kitzman	Relating to the authority of a fire department to remove certain personal property from a roadway or right-of-way.	Transportation 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Only law enforcement and transit authorities can remove personal property from rights-of-way. Unsecured items on roadways have led to fatal secondary collisions involving emergency responders and workers. HB 2681 will authorize fire departments with permanent, full-time staff to remove personal property from a roadway or a right-of-way if it blocks the roadway or threatens public safety. The governing body of a political subdivision with a fire department must develop and implement a policy regarding the fire department consulting with law enforcement on the removal of personal property from a right-of-way or roadway. HB 2681 aims to allow fire departments to help keep Texans safe and prevent unnecessary accidents.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 3125 By: Gamez	Relating to the use of certain lighting equipment on authorized emergency vehicles.	Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Only an authorized emergency vehicle may display a red, white, or blue beacon, flashing, or alternating light. It has become common practice for authorized emergency vehicles to use flashing white lights, but the current state statute does not explicitly permit using them for emergency vehicles. HB 3125 will codify this common practice of using these lights to avoid potential confusion. HB 3125 enables authorized emergency vehicles to be equipped with signal lamps that display alternating or flashing white lights, provided that they meet specific requirements outlined in the code.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 3189 By: Garcia Rose Lozano Shaheen Johnson, Ann	Relating to information provided to an individual identified as a potential relative or designated caregiver of a child in the conservatorship of the DFPS.	Human Services 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Kinship placements serve as a vital resource to a child that is removed from their home by the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). These kinship placements allow for the child to receive familial support, which can help the child thrive. Before being determined as an adequate placement, DFPS completes a background check and a home study evaluation; however, DFPS is not required to inform relatives or potential caregivers regarding specific criteria evaluated during the home study. HB 3189 seeks to remedy this issue by requiring DFPS to explain the minimum living standards used in the home study to evaluate a relative's or designated caregiver's home. HB 3189 updates the information DFPS must provide to certain relatives, potential relatives, or potential caregivers to include the minimum living standards that are evaluated during a home study to determine if the home is appropriate for a child's placement. This includes requirements about appropriate sleeping arrangements for the child, spatial requirements including play spaces, and any exceptions to these standards depending on the child's age, needs, or the relative's or potential caregiver's capacity to comply. HB 3189 aims to properly inform family members and potential caregivers of necessary requirements to be considered as appropriate placement and help keep children with family members when removed from their homes.	<u>Favorable</u>