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LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 9:00 AM – Monday, May 1, 2023

<p>HB 250</p> <p>By: González, Mary Goldman Cook Collier</p>	<p>Relating to crime victims' compensation.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice and Family Issues</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Various survivors of crime in Texas have raised concerns regarding the Crime Victims Compensation (CVC) program, its eligibility requirements, the scope of care that it provides, and the amount of funding available for those who need it. The CVC was created to provide financial assistance for victims of a crime who may need access to safe relocation, healthcare, and mental healthcare, but many are unable to access such support because of stringent guardrails. HB 250 seeks to address this by making changes to the CVC that will provide more support to grieving families and allow more access to individuals.</p> <p>HB 250 expands qualifications for the CVC by removing language that limits eligibility only to immediate family and to household members who are related by blood or marriage, as well as including in coverage any act that is considered family violence by the Family Violence Code related to protective orders and family violence.</p> <p>Regarding relocation and housing services for victims who experienced certain crimes at their residence, a victim of stalking, family violence, or trafficking, HB 250 removes the \$2,000 cap that may be paid out to victims for relocation services, as well as the \$1,800 cap for rental assistance and instead constitutes these numbers as the minimum. The bill also allows the attorney general to limit the amount of the award the victim may receive. HB 250 includes funding for temporary lodging, and extends authorization to receive coverage to other victims that are not currently eligible, including dependents, family members, and household members of victims.</p> <p>HB 250 establishes that in the event of criminally injurious behavior, for each household application, only one victim and one claimant may be awarded compensation, unless the victim is deceased. In that case, two claimants may be awarded.</p> <p>Regarding lost wages, HB 250 removes the \$1,000 cap that may be awarded, and instead establishes that \$1,000 or ten days' lost wages, whichever is less, shall be the minimum. The bill authorizes the attorney general to establish a limitation.</p> <p>Regarding financial losses as a result of personal injury or death, HB 250 removes language regarding a one night cap on lodging currently in place for an individual traveling to or from an execution in order to witness the</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
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LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 10:00 AM – Monday, May 1, 2023

<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><u>Favorable</u></p>
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<p>HB 1788</p> <p>By: Buckley Burrows González, Mary Bailes Kitzman</p>	<p>Relating to the labeling of analogue and cell-cultured products.</p>	<p>Public Health</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Producers of traditional protein sources like beef and chicken follow strict rules and invest in research to make high-quality products. As new alternative protein products enter the market, Texas must update labeling rules for fair competition and to help consumers know what they're buying.</p> <p>HB 1788 updates labeling for alternative proteins. Analogue products made from plants, insects, or fungi must use labels like "analogue," "meatless," or "plant-based." Cell-cultured products from animal cells grown in a lab need labels like "cell-cultured" or "lab-grown." These labels should be large and near the product name. The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) will create rules to implement these changes. HB 1788 also clarifies that terms like "egg," "fish," "meat," and "poultry" don't include analogue or cell-cultured products based on federal laws and regulations.</p> <p>HB 1788 helps Texas consumers and businesses by creating definitions and standards for clear labeling in an emerging market of alternative protein products.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1791</p> <p>By: Davis</p>	<p>Relating to the qualifications of experts in certain health care liability claims.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1791 ensures that chiropractors or physicians can serve as witnesses in chiropractic malpractice cases. Chiropractors are not currently included in the list of individuals who are allowed to serve as an expert witness in malpractice claims for chiropractic care.</p> <p>HB 1791 allows a chiropractor or physician to qualify as an expert witness in a suit with a health care liability claim against a chiropractor. The witness would be allowed to testify on the causal relationship between the care provided and the injury, harm, or damages claimed.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3607</p> <p>By: Cole</p>	<p>Relating to the processing of United States passport applications by a</p>	<p>County Affairs</p> <p>7 Ayes, 1 Nay,</p>	<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><u>Favorable</u></p>

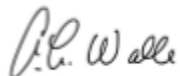
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	district court clerk; authorizing fees.	0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 3607 seeks to make the passport application process faster and more convenient by allowing district clerks to issue money orders. This bill would expand the duties a district clerk may perform to include issuing of money orders to passport applicants for payment purposes, and authorize a reasonable fee for this service.	
HB 3548 By: Anchía Sherman, Sr. Jones, Venton Lalani Cook	Relating to increasing the criminal penalty for assault of certain hospital personnel.	Criminal Jurisprudence 8 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 1 Absent	<p>Recently, violence against medical workers has increased, with the rate of violent attacks growing by 63% between 2011 and 2021. COVID-19 exacerbated this issue, with 44% of nurses reporting violence against them during Spring of 2020. This in combination with the extreme shortage of healthcare professionals underscores a need for enhanced protection for those who work in the medical field.</p> <p>HB 3548 seeks to address this by enhancing the penalty for an assault that results in bodily injury from a Class A misdemeanor to a third degree felony, if the actor committing the offense assaults known hospital personnel while they are providing services. Applicable personnel include nurses, physicians, physician assistants, maintenance or janitorial staff, receptionists, and other individuals who work in a facility that is licensed as a general hospital or special hospital, including state hospitals.</p> <p>Hospital personnel have stood on the frontlines of a public health crisis for years in order to protect Texans. It is vital that their health and safety is prioritized by the state.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

LSG Floor Report For Major State Calendar – Monday, May 1, 2023

HB 1620 By: Holland Canales Goldman Bell, Keith Clardy	Relating to the review date for certain governmental entities subject to the sunset review process.	State Affairs 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>HB 1620 is the sunset safety net bill. HB 1620 would extend the existence of 12 state entities for an additional two years, should their individual sunset bill fail to pass. Should a sunset bill fail, the agency would continue operations for an additional two years and undergo a complete sunset review during the 2024-2025 cycle.</p> <p>HB 1620 amends statute to continue the existence of the following 12 agencies and entities until 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Anatomical Board of the State of Texas; • the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office; • the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; • the Texas Juvenile Justice Board; • the Texas Juvenile Justice Department; • the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement; • the Public Utility Commission of Texas; • the Office of Public Utility Counsel; • the State Soil and Water Conservation Board; • the Office of State-Federal Relations; 	<u>Favorable</u>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Texas Water Development Board; and • the San Antonio River Authority. <p>If any other sunset bill passed during the 88th Legislative Session continues any of these agencies, those bills would supersede HB 1620.</p> <p>HB 1620 guarantees the uninterrupted operation of 12 significant state entities across multiple sectors, such as agriculture, government, health and safety, human resources, occupations, utilities, and water. HB 1620 aims to prevent any potential disruptions in the essential services these agencies provide.</p>	
<p>HB 3474 By: Leach</p>	<p>Relating to the operation and administration of and practices and procedures related to proceedings in the judicial branch of state government and the state of the judiciary; establishing a civil penalty; increasing certain court costs; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Every session, an omnibus court bill is filed that encompasses new courts, changes to judicial administration, and changes to jurisdiction. Under HB 3474, each new court in this bill is determined by needs based on workload data, including caseloads, case backlogs, substantial population growth, objective workload measures, and county support, provided by the Office of Court Administration (OCA). HB 3474 seeks to provide revisions relating to the operations, administrations, practices, and procedures for the judicial branch.</p> <p>This bill creates the following district courts: two in Collin, Denton, Bastrop, and Brazos; a probate court in Travis County; and two county courts at law, one in Waller, and a multi-county court at law for Bee, Live Oak, and McCullen counties.</p> <p>HB 3474 does the following to the judicial administration of counties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates the jurisdiction for the 205th District Court and the 394th District by swapping Hudspeth and Culberson counties. • Grants the Grayson County Court and the District Court concurrent jurisdiction in family law matters. • Addresses the number of persons required for juries in county courts at law with over \$250,000 in controversy, adding Dallas County Court to the same provision. <p>HB 3474 does the following as it pertains to judges, justice court, and Justice of the Peace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorizes the reimbursement of travel or other expenses for a judge traveling for job-related reasons, • Adds various provisions to add state judges, statutory county court judges, statutory probate judges, district and county attorneys to the types of services that can be used for “years of service” to determine pay tiers. • Requires a Justice of the Peace to report any fees, commissions or payments received for performing marriage ceremonies, acting as a registrar for the Bureau of Vital Statistics, or as a notary public to the Texas Ethics Commission • Expands the justice courts jurisdictional limit to \$20,000 in the Property Code. • Clarifies what items can be referred to the associate judge from the sitting judge within the Family Code. 	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides clarity for when a presiding judge may assign a visiting associate judge due to a judge’s illness, injury, emergency, etc. • Makes clear that a retired judge on the list maintained by the presiding judge of an administrative judicial region must file the oath of office with the Secretary of State. • Amends the Government Code to require the Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court to orally deliver the State of the Judiciary to a joint session of the Legislature. • Authorizes a judge to order the reimbursement of funeral and/burial costs from a decedent’s estate. <p>HB 3474 does the following as it pertains to juries, court reporters, and other people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates statute to streamline the way grand and petit juries are called by authorizing the clerk of the court to issue the summons, along with modernizing the statute to account for electronic submissions and clean up of the juror pool. • Increases the rate of juror reimbursement to \$20 the first day and \$58 every day thereafter and raises the minimum age to qualify for the senior citizen juror exemption to 75. • Addresses provisions allowing a court reporter to administer oaths regardless of location, updates statute on payment of expenses, allows for the joint hiring and remote use of court reporters, and allows for a county to update the travel reimbursement amount. • Updates the makeup of the Court Reporter Certification Advisory Board. • Clarifies if someone needs an interpreter, but is unable to pay, is not required to pay for the interpreter costs, information regarding interpretation services must be reported to the Office of Court Administration. • Allows a person who is entitled to expunction due to an identification error to file in the county where the offense occurred. • Authorizes clerks to transfer case files being transferred to another court through the eFile system and allows specific Writs of Habeas Corpus to be sent via email. <p>HB 3474 includes the following local requests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of Magistrates in Grayson and Denton County. • Abolish the Montgomery County Court at Law #2 and replaced it with the Montgomery County Probate Court. • Abolished the Cameron County Court at Law #4 and creates the Cameron County Probate. • Appoints an association judge to Duval County. • Authorizes concurrent jurisdiction in civil cases with higher amounts of controversy between Aransas County Court and the district court. 	
HB 19	Relating to the creation of a	Judiciary & Civil	In Texas, judges partake in partisan elections to serve as a judge. The court system consists of specialized high courts, including the Supreme Court of Texas and the Court of Criminal Appeals. Texas also has over 200	<u>Unfavorable</u>

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<p>By: Murr Leach Landgraf</p>	<p>specialty trial court to hear certain cases; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Jurisprudence 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>specialized courts that operate out of district courts and handle specialized cases, including juvenile cases, family cases, drug cases, or mental health cases. Currently, there are no specialized business courts in Texas, and there has been no data that establishes the need for one.</p> <p>Establishment HB 19 aims to create a specialty business court in Texas. The business court would have jurisdiction over all counties in the state, divided into 11 administrative regions. The court would have the same powers as district courts, including the ability to issue writs of injunction, mandamus, sequestration, attachment, garnishment, supersedeas and any other relief granted by district courts. The business court would have jurisdiction over certain business related cases where the amount in controversy exceeds \$10 million, excluding interest, statutory and exemplary damages, penalties, attorney’s fees, and court costs. The party filing the action must present facts if they want to have their case heard in business court. Business court judges will have the same powers, duties, immunities, and privileges of a district court judge. However, these judges would be appointed by the governor, not elected.</p> <p>If HB 3166 passes and creates the 15th Court of Appeals (COA), it will have exclusive jurisdiction over appeals from an order or judgment of a business court. If a 15th COA is not created, these orders or judgments will go to the COA with appellate jurisdiction of civil cases for the county that declared the order.</p> <p>Judge Qualifications HB 19 specifies that judges of business courts will need to be at least 35 years of age, citizens of the United States, and have been residents of a county within the division of the business court to which the judge is being appointed for 5 years before appointment, and be a licensed attorney with at least 10 years of experience in business cases. The governor, with the advice and consent of the senate, will appoint judges for the eleven Business Court Divisions business courts. Business court judges can also exchange benches, sit, and act for each other. Judges will make the same salaries, receive the same benefits, and can be removed for the same reasons as district court judges. Business court judges cannot engage in the private practice of law and must work on a full-time basis. Visiting judges who meet qualifications can also be assigned by the chief justice of the supreme court.</p> <p>Although the Introduced version of the bill required a term limit of two years for the business court judges, the Committee Substitute before the House Floor makes no mention of term lengths or limits.</p> <p>Jury Trials Business court parties have the right to a jury trial when required by the constitution. Jury trials in a case initially filed in the business court must be held in any county in which the case could have been filed under existing Civil Practice and Remedies Code, as chosen by the plaintiff. The parties and the judge can agree to hold</p>	
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		<p>a jury trial in another county, and a party does not have to be required to agree to hold this trial in a different county. Jury selection works the same as it does for district courts.</p> <p>The language used in this bill makes it unclear what impact this will have on the right to trial by jury in business court cases.</p> <p>Location and Staffing The business court’s clerk will be located in Travis County and handle all filings, legal, and administrative functions of a district clerk. Other personnel can be hired as needed. Business courts can take place in any courtroom within the division to which the judge is appointed to. Counties using these courtrooms must accommodate the business court proceedings. Business courts can also be held remotely, but cannot require anyone to attend the trial remotely without good cause or agreement from the parties. Reasonable notice and an opportunity for the public to observe the remote proceeding will be provided. Sheriffs or deputies will also attend business court and be reimbursed by the state.</p> <p>No Data to Support the Need for Business Courts The Office of Court Administration (OCA) does not have data on how many cases would be handled by a business court. The necessity for business courts is also unproven, as many complex business cases are filed in federal court, and not state court. Additionally, the Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence Interim Report for the 88th Legislative session suggested that a pilot program be conducted before establishing this court, to see what works and what does not for Texas before making big policy decisions. No pilot study has been conducted on business courts, and there is no evidence that the cases cannot be handled in existing courts.</p> <p>Business Courts Send a Bad Message to Texans Expediting high-dollar business disputes with specialty business courts sends a message to the majority of Texans that these business cases are higher priority than other cases. It is unjust to treat high-dollar business cases as if they are more important than the average citizen's case. In addition, trial courts handle business disputes fairly, efficiently, and in accordance with the law. Existing courts are well-equipped to handle business cases, and it dampens public trust to insinuate that our court system cannot handle these cases.</p> <p>Cost to the State Given that the caseload of the new business court is unknown, the \$15 million cost to the state over the next two years may provide limited benefits. For example, business court judges will be paid the same salaries and receive the same benefits of district court judges, but may not have nearly as many cases. The clerk, any personnel, and sheriffs will also need to be compensated to run this court. Our courts already need additional funding to provide salaries to current judges; it does not make sense to add a new court system instead of supporting our current one.</p>	
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			<p><i>Appointed Instead of Elected Judges</i> There are concerns about the constitutionality of having the governor appoint judges instead of these judges being elected. HB 19 has a backstop to this, where, if the Supreme Court decides that the governor appointing judges is unconstitutional, then visiting judges who are appointed by the chief justice of the Supreme Court will staff these courts. The Legislature should not be passing bills that could result in Supreme Court Cases. Additionally, the majority of voters across party lines want to be able to elect judges and do not believe the governor should have the ability to appoint judges. Like district court judges, these judges should be beholden to voters and not an extension of the executive branch. This coupled with the bill's absence of term lengths and limits is especially concerning.</p> <p><i>Conclusion</i> HB 19 would create a specialty business court in Texas that has not been studied, favors big businesses over Texans, costs the state money with unknown benefits, and allows judges to be appointed rather than elected. Corporations have and will continue to invest and do business in Texas without a specialty court system. They should not be given more preferential treatment in our court system. Nor should the governor be allowed to appoint judges when that power belongs to the electorate.</p>	
<p>LSG Floor Report For Constitutional Amendments Calendar – Monday, May 1, 2023</p>				
<p>HJR 27 By: Craddick Darby Hunter Guillen Raymond</p>	<p>Proposing a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of and use of money in the Grow Texas fund and allocating certain general revenues to that fund, the economic stabilization fund, and the state highway fund.</p>	<p>Appropriations 24 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The state's oil and natural gas production has continued to grow, but the regions responsible for this growth have encountered challenges that affect the growth of the energy sector and threaten the future of oil and natural gas production. HJR 27 seeks to address this problem by returning a portion of the severance taxes to the oil and gas production communities of Texas through investments in area infrastructure. HJR 27 proposes a constitutional amendment for the creation of the Grow Texas Fund (GTF), which will be used to fund the construction or maintenance of roads, schools, health care facilities, and other infrastructure in the areas of Texas significantly affected by oil and gas production.</p> <p>HJR 27 will establish the GTF as a fund in the state treasury and it authorizes the legislature to appropriate money to the GTF for areas of Texas from which oil and natural gas are produced. These funds are only to address infrastructure needs for these regions that are significantly affected by oil and gas production and will be provided through grants to state agencies and political subdivisions. The GTF consists of: money transferred to the fund; money appropriated to the fund by the legislature; money that the legislature by statute dedicates for deposit to the credit of the fund; money received from the federal government that may be used for a purpose for which money in the fund may be used and that is transferred or deposited to the credit of the fund by the legislature; gifts or grants contributed to the fund; and investment earnings and interest earned on amounts credited to the fund.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

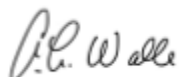
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			<p>HJR 27 requires the comptroller, on the last day of each state fiscal biennium, to transfer any unobligated and unappropriated money that remains in the fund to the Economic Stabilization Fund (ESF). Each time the comptroller determines the amount to be transferred to the ESF, 12 percent shall be reduced from the transferred amount and credited to the GTF. The amount may not exceed \$250 million in a state fiscal biennium. The resolution prohibits the comptroller from considering certain increases in the amount transferred to the ESF for purposes of determining the amount to transfer to the Grow Texas Fund.</p> <p>Similar legislation has passed the Texas House in recent years, but stalled in the Texas Senate. By establishing the Grow Texas Fund Commission, HJR 27, which is enabled by HB 1392, is an attempt to allow the people from these regions to gain an increased benefit from oil and gas production.</p>	
<p>HJR 111 By: Landgraf Guillen Dean Murr Hunter</p>	<p>Proposing a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the Texas severance tax revenue and oil and natural gas (Texas STRONG) defense fund, dedicating the money in that fund to benefit areas of the state significantly affected by oil and gas production, and providing for the transfer of certain general revenues to that fund, the economic stabilization fund, the state highway fund, the oil and gas regulation and cleanup account, the</p>	<p>Appropriations 24 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>HJR 111 redirects a portion of funds that currently would be transferred to the Economic Stabilization Fund towards four separate accounts, primarily for the purpose of reinvesting excess oil and gas severance taxes into the counties that produce the fuels. The provision, if passed, would also constitutionally dedicate money towards two major environmental programs – the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP), overseen by the TCEQ, and the oil and gas cleanup account, which plugs abandoned oil wells and is administered by the Railroad Commission.</p> <p>Current law provides for oil and gas severance taxes collected above a 1987-established threshold to go into the state’s Permanent School Fund. Once those dollars are allocated, any remaining funds are split evenly between two accounts: the State Highway Fund, and the Economic Stabilization Fund (ESF). This 50/50 split has been in place since the State Highway Fund was created and approved by voters in 2014.</p> <p>HJR 111 preserves the 50% of excess funds that go to the State Highway Fund, but further divides up the 50% of dollars going to the ESF. If passed by the Legislature and adopted by voters, HJR 111 would split the dollars as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 38% going to the ESF ● 10% going to a newly created STRONG Fund ● 1% going to the oil and gas cleanup account ● 1% going to the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) <p>Money directed to the STRONG Fund would be capped at \$500 million annually. If the 10% of those dollars would exceed those totals, any remaining (or spillover) dollars of that 10% allocation would flow into the Property Tax Relief Fund. There is no cap for money directed to the oil and gas cleanup account, or TERP. An explanation of the STRONG Fund is included in the analysis for HB 2207, the enabling legislation for HJR 111.</p>	<p>Favorable</p>

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	Texas emissions reduction plan fund, and the property tax relief fund.		<p>The Comptroller has estimated that the Economic Stabilization Fund could hit its cap in FY 2025, as is likely to hit its cap in FY 2026-27. HJR 111 is an attempt to avoid such a scenario by reinvesting the money into the STRONG Fund, which primarily directs dollars into the communities that produce oil and gas.</p> <p>Finally, the bill would be an historic moment for the Texas Legislature by constitutionally dedicating money to support successful environmental programs. If passed, the provision could increase money into TERP by as much as 45% in future biennium – a substantial increase that would greatly expand the program’s capacity to address pollution in the state’s nonattainment areas. The increase into the oil and gas account, which covers costs for covering abandoned oil wells throughout the state, would finally allow the state to start fixing more wells than are opened each year – making critical progress on a long-standing environmental battle in Texas.</p>	
HJR 132 By: Hefner	Proposing a constitutional amendment prohibiting the legislature from imposing a tax on the net worth of individuals or businesses.	Ways & Means 8 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>The original bill as filed is being considered on the House floor, not the committee substitute in which a point of order was sustained.</p> <p>Several states have considered introducing a wealth or net worth tax for their residents. However, in Texas, there is currently no evidence suggesting any significant interest in pursuing this policy.</p> <p>HJR 132 proposes a constitutional amendment that would prohibit lawmakers from imposing a tax on a person’s or family’s wealth or net worth, including a tax based on the difference between their assets and liabilities.</p> <p>HJR 132 is a solution in search of a problem. Texans have not indicated support, one way or the other, for the application of a wealth or net worth tax. This joint resolution requires voters to indicate if they want to indefinitely ban the Legislature from imposing a wealth tax. If this joint resolution passes and voters want to implement this tax in the future, there will be extra steps and barriers to implementing it. As the pandemic has shown, there is no predicting the state’s future economic or political landscape. The state should not tie its hands on any tax revenue options. HJR 132 is unnecessary, and future generations should be able to decide if this is something they want to implement without additional barriers.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Monday, May 1, 2023				
HB 1506 By: Meyer	Relating to the statute of limitations for the offense of abandoning or endangering a child.	Criminal Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>The current statute of limitations for the offense of abandoning or endangering a child is five years from the date of the offense. Concerns have been raised that this is an inadequate time period for a victim of such an offense to come forward and seek charges. Considering that many victims are children, it is pertinent that they are given ample time to process what has occurred and come forward when they are ready.</p> <p>HB 1506 extends the statute of limitations for the offense of abandoning or endangering a child from five years to ten years from the time of the offense. This allows victims more time to come forward and seek justice, ensuring they are given adequate time to report the crime.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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<p>HB 1357 By: Holland</p>	<p>Relating to Medicaid reimbursement for certain medication-assisted treatments for opioid or substance use disorder.</p>	<p>Human Services 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Texas is facing an opioid and substance use disorder crisis. According to the CDC, over 5,000 people died due to drug overdoses between July 2021 and July 2022. Studies have shown that medication assisted treatment is among the most effective methods for treating opioid use disorder, as well as some other substance use disorders. It is crucial for Texans to continue having access to Medicaid reimbursements for certain medication-assisted treatments for opioid or substance use disorder. However, there is a sunset date for Medicaid reimbursement for medication-assisted treatment for opioid or certain substance use disorders.</p> <p>HB 1357 seeks to rectify this issue by repealing the provision establishing that Medicaid reimbursement for medication-assisted treatment for opioid or certain substance use disorders expires on August 31, 2023. This would ensure that this program becomes permanent. HB 1357 allows for delayed implementation if a federal authorization or waiver is required.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1683 By: Walle Bonnen Buckley</p>	<p>Relating to the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Public Health 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Occupational therapists (OTs) in Texas face administrative challenges due to state licensure requirements when clients relocate or OTs need to move. This can be particularly challenging for Texas military families.</p> <p>HB 1683 seeks to establish the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact, improving public access to OT services and enabling Texas-licensed OTs to practice in all other participating states. This would reduce licensing obstacles and lessen the administrative burden on the Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners for out-of-state OT applications.</p> <p>HB 1683 details compact provisions, including state participation, license acquisition for relocating therapists and military personnel, member states' authority over adverse actions, the Occupational Therapy Compact Commission's creation and rulemaking powers, a coordinated database, oversight and dispute resolution, construction and severability, and the process for amending or withdrawing from the compact. The Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners will administer the compact in Texas and adopt necessary implementation rules.</p> <p>The OT Compact established under HB 1683 benefits all Texans, particularly military spouses, who face higher barriers to entry in state-licensed professions due to frequent relocation.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1710 By: Canales</p>	<p>Relating to notice provided to a court regarding a defendant confined in a state jail felony facility.</p>	<p>Corrections 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1710 implements an interim report recommendation from the 83rd Legislature's House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence. Judges who sentence a defendant to state jail aren't notified when the individual is transferred from county jail to state jail. This results in a defendant serving a longer sentence than ordered. HB 1710 requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to notify a sentencing court when a justice-involved individual has been in a state jail facility for 75 days and is eligible for community supervision. In the interest of efficiency and cost, the notifications would be sent via digital communication.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

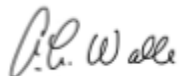
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			HB 1710 aims to reduce overcrowding in state jail facilities, provide sentencing courts with information to assess release, and give justice-involved individuals a chance to engage rehabilitative efforts under community supervision without delay.	
HB 475 By: Hull Noble Rose Klick Manuel	Relating to certain policies and procedures for health care specialty consultations in certain child abuse or neglect investigations and assessments.	Human Services 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>The Forensic Assessment Center Network (FACN) is a group established by the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to provide pediatric expertise to Child Protective Services (CPS) concerning abuse or neglected children. The FACN reviews medical records, working with specialists, including child abuse pediatricians, to determine whether abuse or neglect occurred and offer a second opinion on the child’s medical situation. Currently, parents do not have access to their child’s medical records if there is suspected abuse or neglect.</p> <p>When making referrals for specialty consultations or forensic assessments for abuse or neglect cases, HB 475 would require DFPS to make such referrals to physicians who were not a part of reviewing the case, including as a member of the investigation review team or a multidisciplinary team. HB 475 also prohibits any healthcare practitioner who reviewed the case from providing a forensic assessment connected to the investigation.</p> <p>Before referring a child’s case for specialty consultation, DFPS must give the parent, legal guardian, or attorney all medical records used by DFPS and FACN during the investigation. During a blind peer review process to resolve different opinions of the causes of a child’s injuries or applicable health conditions, DFPS must provide the parent, legal guardian, or attorney with all medical records and the information used to resolve the case. This information would include the physicians’ names and opinions, possible conflicting conditions, all assessments conducted on the child, and the child’s medical records.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 433 By: VanDeaver	Relating to the definition of a commercial fleet.	Transportation 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	<p>Statutorily, a commercial fleet is defined as a group of at least 25 non-apportioned motor vehicles, semi-trailers, or trailers owned, operated, or leased by a corporation, limited or general partnership, limited liability company, or other business entity and used for the business purposes of that entity. Owners of less than 25 commercial vehicles have expressed that managing individual vehicle renewals at different times can be difficult.</p> <p>HB 433 aims to ease the process by decreasing the required number of vehicles to 12 vehicles to be considered a fleet for registration purposes. This change will apply to all corporations, limited or general partnerships, limited liability companies, or other business entities that own, operate, or lease such vehicles for business purposes.</p> <p>By reducing the minimum number of vehicles required for a group to be considered a commercial fleet, HB 433 makes it easier for smaller businesses to obtain the same insurance, registration, and licensing benefits as larger businesses with more vehicles.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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<p>HB 4835 By: Metcalf</p>	<p>Relating to the creation and operations of certain health care provider participation programs.</p>	<p>County Affairs 7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>In Texas, local hospitals can choose to implement a healthcare provider participation program (LPPF), through which a healthcare-related tax is implemented on a local level. LPPFs are administered by an existing unit of local government and are designed specifically to meet federal requirements regarding eligible local funds. Since 2015, the City of Beaumont has been authorized to operate an LPPF. Local stakeholders have asked the program be transferred to Jefferson County.</p> <p>HB 4835 codifies the Jefferson County LPPF and authorizes the governing provisions of the program to the county. HB 4835 repeals Chapter 295 of the Health and Safety Code, which gave the City of Beaumont authority to operate an LPPF. The bill's provisions relating to the county health care provider participation program take effect September 1, 2025.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4363 By: Kuempel Lalani Bucy</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of a scholarship program for aspiring classroom teachers.</p>	<p>Higher Education 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Texas schools are struggling to retain teachers, with an attrition rate of approximately 25% over the past decade. In 2021, more than one in nine teachers left the workforce, citing college debt, financial instability, and insufficient preparation programs as reasons for leaving. Research conducted by the University of Houston found that those who received their preparation from a four-year institution were more likely to remain in the teaching profession than their peers who attended non-profit or for-profit preparation programs.</p> <p>HB 4363 aims to recruit and retain future teachers by establishing the Future Texas Teachers Scholarship (FTTS) Program to provide the necessary tuition, mandatory fees, and other costs of attendance to an eligible institution.</p> <p>To be eligible for this scholarship program, an educator preparation program (EPP) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be operated by an eligible institution; • Provide a structured system of support to assist scholarship recipients in their successful completion of the EPP; • Require additional hours of clinical teaching experience for students above the minimum hours required by the State Board of Educator Certificate (SBOE); • Provide or facilitate opportunities for scholarship recipients to participate in learning opportunities beyond the university classroom setting; and • Comply with other eligibility criteria established by the coordinating board. <p>For a college student to be initially eligible for a scholarship under the FTTS, the student must be a Texas resident, attend college full-time, be admitted to an eligible EPP, and pursue teaching for subjects with severe shortages or schools with mainly educationally disadvantaged students.</p> <p>Continued eligibility is contingent on a demonstrated commitment to the teaching profession, full-time status as an enrolled student and participant of an eligible EPP, making satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree and teacher certification exam, and any other requirements adopted by the coordinating board. If</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>students fail to meet these requirements after completing a semester, they will not receive a scholarship during the next semester. They may reestablish eligibility for FTTS in later semesters if they finish their semester of ineligibility due to failure and meet all eligibility requirements. Eligibility expires on the fourth anniversary of the student’s initial scholarship award or the completion of their degree.</p> <p>Scholarship Amount and Use For the 2023-2024 academic year, the scholarship amount shall be \$12,000. In the following academic year, the scholarship amount will be the same unless an adjustment for inflation is necessary. The scholarship amount may not be reduced by any other financial aid the recipient receives and must be used to pay any college attendance cost.</p> <p>Administration of the Program The coordinating board shall adopt the necessary rules to establish the eligibility of the EPP programs and scholarship recipients, create the application and selection process of applicants, and administer the scholarship program. Criteria for the EPP programs shall be established with consultation from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). In determining student eligibility, the coordinating board must consult with representatives of the EPP from eligible institutions. Rules regarding scholarship distribution shall be in consultation with financial aid coordinators. The coordinating board shall determine the distribution of available scholarship funds from money appropriated by the legislature every year. Those with the greatest financial need whose family contributions do not exceed 60% of the average statewide amount of tuition and fees, first-generation college students, and those demonstrating a commitment to teaching in areas of critical shortage or educationally disadvantaged populations will be given priority for the scholarship.</p> <p>The Future Texas Teacher Scholarship Program aims to attract qualified professionals to pursue and stay in the teaching field for the betterment of the state.</p>	
<p>HB 1907 By: Anchía</p>	<p>Relating to the procedures for the expunction of arrest records and files for persons who complete certain court programs or pretrial intervention programs.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>People who successfully complete pretrial intervention programs, such as veteran’s court, mental health court, and drug court, are only informed by the judge that they qualify for an expunction. This leaves the person to go through the expunction process on their own, oftentimes without counsel. Many people do not follow through with this expunction process due to it being expensive, time-consuming, and confusing.</p> <p>HB 1907 requires trial courts to expunge the records of a person who successfully completes a veterans or mental health treatment court program and qualifies for an expunction. An order for expunction should be entered before the 30th day after the court dismisses the case or receives information regarding the dismissal. The person who is to be granted an expunction must provide the attorney representing the state with all of the required information, and the attorney must prepare the expunction for the court to sign. No fee should be charged for this expunction. Community supervision and corrections departments and an office of an attorney representing the state can retain and use expunction records and files for developing and operating pretrial</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

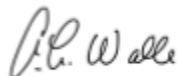
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			intervention programs in a judicial district served by the department or office. HB 1907 helps people get their records expunged after they successfully completed treatment programs.	
<p>HB 2651</p> <p>By: Howard Jetton Johnson, Ann Harless Oliverson</p>	<p>Relating to required training and continuing education requirements for persons who provide medical care or other support to survivors of sexual assault.</p>	<p>Public Health</p> <p>10 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The Sexual Assault Survivors' Task Force (SASTF) was established by the Texas Governor's Office to create a supportive, sensitive, and united approach to help adults and children affected by sexual violence. Last session, the legislature fully backed the SASTF's initial work by approving all 11 proposed policy suggestions.</p> <p>Current Texas law requires emergency department nurses to undergo two-hour training on forensic evidence collection, but content requirements are not clearly defined, and other staff aren't required to receive training. This means not all emergency department personnel can properly address survivors' needs and respect their rights.</p> <p>HB 2651 requires healthcare facilities with emergency departments to provide at least one hour of basic sexual assault response training to employees involved in patient admissions, administrative support, or direct patient care. This training must include survivor-centered care, trauma-informed care, and survivors' rights, including forensic medical exams and advocates' roles. Completing an approved continuing medical or nursing education course in forensic evidence collection will count as completing this training. HB 2651 specifies the types of continuing medical or nursing education courses considered forensic evidence collection training.</p> <p>HB 2651 requires 2 hours of continuing medical education on specific topics for licensed physicians renewing their licenses, physician assistants who treat patients in an emergency room, and nurses who work in emergency rooms. The continuing education topics are trauma-informed care, appropriate referrals and medications, survivors' rights, forensic evidence collection methods, and state laws about handling and tracking forensic evidence, following the attorney general's protocol.</p> <p>HB 1651 clarifies that the survivor's exam is a forensic medical examination, sets a two-hour training duration based on the attorney general's protocol, and defines qualifying continuing medical or nursing courses. It also replaces non-SAFE-ready facilities' need for a training plan with a written policy ensuring examiner training.</p> <p>HB 2651 extends Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) certification from two to three years, allowing nurses to focus more on providing personalized care to survivors.</p>	<p>Favorable</p>
<p>HB 2316</p> <p>By: Canales</p>	<p>Relating to the employment of certain peace officers, detention officers, county jailers, or firefighters who are injured in</p>	<p>Business & Industry</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Concerns have been raised that peace officers, detention officers, county jailers, and firefighters injured in the line of duty are not given enough time to recover. Advocates have stated that these employees should be afforded protection from being terminated from their position before a physician determines that they will not recover enough to return to work.</p> <p>HB 2316 prohibits an employer from discharging, indefinitely suspending, or terminating a peace officer, detention officer, county jailer, or a firefighter injured in the course and scope of duty based on inability to work</p>	<p>Favorable</p>

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	the course and scope of duty.		<p>due to their injury before being certified as having reached maximum medical improvement. An exception to this is if the treating physician indicates the person is permanently restricted from returning to their duties. Disputes regarding these cases are to follow the same procedures as provided in the Texas Workers' Compensation Act.</p> <p>Violating employers are liable for damages incurred by the officer, jailer, or firefighter in response to the termination, suspension, or discharge. HB 2316 caps the damages at \$100,000 and entitles these employees to be reinstated to their former position. Regarding these disputes, the burden of proof in a proceeding is placed on the officer, jailer, or firefighter. HB 2316 waives sovereign immunity to suit and liability for the purposes of its provisions and authorizes a current or former officer, jailer, or firefighter to sue an employer for damages and reinstatement.</p> <p>HB 2316 exempts municipalities that have adopted the firefighters' and police officers' civil service law and counties with a civil service system.</p>	
HB 1817 By: Capriglione	Relating to the validity of a contract for which a disclosure of interested parties is required.	State Affairs 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>Currently, certain contracts with governmental entities require a disclosure of interested parties, or Form 1295, to be filed with the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC). In 2022, a court ruled a contract between the City of Hutto and a developer was invalid because the city did not verify if a Form 1295 was filed with TEC. This court ruling set a precedent that any government contract without a Form 1295 on file could potentially be deemed invalid.</p> <p>HB 1817 aims to address the potential issue of contract invalidation due to the absence of a Form 1295. HB 1817 establishes a cure period of 10 business days and would only void a contract if they fail to file the form upon receiving written notification from a governmental entity.</p> <p>The provisions of HB 1817 only apply to a contract that is either for lobbying services, has a minimum contract value of \$1 million, or requires a governing body's approval before signing the form. Additionally, if a lawsuit challenging the validity of contract is pending, a court may order the government or state agency to provide the required written notice to ensure fairness for involved parties.</p> <p>HB 1817 provides a remedy for contracts at risk of invalidation due to a missing disclosure form, while providing a level of protection for government entities and private parties involved in applicable contracts.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1718 By: Ashby Button Shine Clardy	Relating to rural development funds and insurance tax credits for certain investments in those funds; authorizing fees.	International Relations & Economic Development 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,	Rural counties, which comprise over half of Texas' 254 counties, continue to experience underinvestment in local businesses. Historically, rural businesses receive less than 1% on average in annual private equity and venture capital investments across the state. These businesses are increasingly vulnerable due to rising interest rates, tighter lending standards, and growing consumer prices following the COVID-19 pandemic. Some interested parties are advocating for ways to inject capital into rural communities to stimulate growth and competitiveness.	<u>Favorable with Concerns</u>

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		<p>1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1718 provides approval for rural development funds by the comptroller of public accounts, providing specific financing to targeted small businesses. HB 1718 also establishes tax credits against state insurance liability for eligible investors in these funds.</p> <p>A "targeted small business" is defined as having fewer than 250 employees and its principal operations in Texas. The bill clarifies the criteria for a business's primary operations location and outlines situations where an out-of-state business that agrees to relocate or hire new employees using growth investment proceeds may qualify as a targeted small business.</p> <p>Rural Development Fund HB 1718 requires the comptroller to process applications for entities seeking approval as rural development funds. Applications must include investment authority, proof of affiliation with a federally licensed rural business investment principal, a federal license copy, estimated job creation and retention, a business plan with a revenue impact assessment, signed affidavits from investors, and a \$5,000 fee. "Jobs created" must be new, located in the state, require at least 35 hours of work per week, and have not existed before the investment. For rural, historically underutilized businesses, each job is multiplied by two in calculations.</p> <p>The comptroller must decide on applications within 30 days, and can approve up to \$300 million in investment authority. Applications can be denied for incompleteness, unpaid fees, licensing issues, lack of positive economic impact, insufficient credit-eligible capital contributions, or if the investment authority limit is reached. Denied applicants have 15 days to provide additional information.</p> <p>Approval HB 1718 mandates the comptroller to send a written notice to the applicant upon approval, including the approved investment authority amount, and issue tax credit certificates to investors with affidavits in the application. The fund must collect credit-eligible capital contributions, cash investments equal to the unattributed investment authority, and provide documentation within 65 days of approval. Failure to comply results in approval lapse, allowing the comptroller to redistribute the lapsed investment authority to other funds or new applicants.</p> <p>Authority HB 1718 mandates that rural development funds invest at least 60% of their investment authority in state growth investments within two years or face tax credit reductions. A 100% investment must be made within three years to avoid further consequences. Growth investments are capped at \$5 million per targeted small business in rural areas. Failure to maintain growth investments between the third and sixth anniversaries results in tax credit and investment authority reductions, with a \$7.5 million limit per targeted small business. Distributions or payments</p>	
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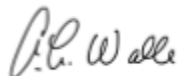
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			<p>causing failure to meet investment requirements lead to the revocation of tax credit certificates and investment authority.</p> <p>The comptroller may reduce tax credits and investment authority if a fund invests in a targeted small business with a direct or indirect relationship, but there are exemptions. Before any reductions or revocations, the comptroller must notify the fund, giving them 90 days to rectify the violation. Reduced or revoked investment authority is redistributed proportionally among affected rural development funds or awarded to new applicants.</p> <p>Certain Fund Operations HB 1718 outlines the exit process for rural development funds, requiring compliance with prescribed procedures and including a state reimbursement amount calculation in the application. The comptroller has 30 days to respond, and the fund must remit the reimbursement amount within 60 days of confirmation. The fund can exit if no tax credit certificates have been reduced or revoked and no uncorrected reduction or revocation notices have been received.</p> <p>Rural development funds must submit an annual report detailing growth investments, job creation, and other required information until exiting the program. A participation fee is established for funds that haven't exited by the first day of a state fiscal year, calculated annually by the comptroller and based on the fund's investment authority relative to all funds required to pay a fee.</p> <p>Reporting HB 1718 requires the comptroller to submit a report detailing the chapter's economic benefits before the 91st Legislature, Regular Session, to the lieutenant governor, speaker of the house, and legislature members. The report must assess the aggregate effects of growth investments, state cost savings from job creation and retention by targeted small businesses, and the total fiscal impact on state and local governments. The comptroller must use nationally recognized estimation techniques and data from rural development funds while excluding confidential information.</p> <p>Additional Provisions HB 1718 establishes a new chapter in the Insurance Code, introducing tax credits for investments in rural development funds, with three subchapters: General Provisions, Tax Credit, and Recapture of Credit. The General Provisions subchapter provides definitions and authorizes the Comptroller to adopt implementation rules. The Tax Credit subchapter outlines eligibility, qualification requirements, credit amounts, and carryforward provisions for entities holding tax credit certificates. Credits cannot be transferred to non-affiliate entities, and entities claiming credits are exempt from additional retaliatory tax.</p>	
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			<p>The Recapture of Credit subchapter states that the Comptroller shall recapture the claimed credit amount if the tax credit certificate is reduced or revoked, capturing an amount equal to the excess of the credit previously claimed over the reduction or revocation.</p> <p>Impact Rural Texas businesses face increasing vulnerability due to rising interest rates, tighter lending standards, and growing consumer prices following the COVID-19 pandemic. Injecting capital into rural communities and small businesses could stimulate growth and competitiveness. HB 1718 aims to provide a funding avenue, but concerns exist about performance calculation and accountability. Texas hopes to receive an indirect return from tax revenue generated by the anticipated new economic activity. However, some states with similar programs have not seen expected outcomes fully materialize. HB 1718 lacks sufficient safeguards to ensure the state benefits. Only a few firms can compete for these credits due to specific certification requirements. With approval on a first-come, first-served basis, the state can only reject applicants who don't meet these narrow criteria. Texas may also effectively support small businesses through existing federal and state programs and improving access to and security for small business loans. With the proper guardrails for accountability, HB 1718 has the potential to help rural, small, and minority-owned businesses.</p>	
<p>HB 2334 By: Burns Button</p>	<p>Relating to an exception from the plumbing licensing law for certain work performed on certain private property.</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures</p> <p>10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2334 creates an exception to the Plumbing Code enabling utility contractors to carry out plumbing-related tasks such as installing, repairing, or servicing service mains or lines, delivering water, sewer, or storm drainage services to private properties, within 5 feet of a building or structure, without supervision from a plumber. It is important to note that the local municipal water department must still inspect all work completed.</p> <p>Under HB 2334, this exception is not applicable to private properties that have been designated for use as a one-family or two-family dwelling. Interested parties are concerned that this bill would allow for unqualified workers to be able to work on private properties and potentially cost taxpayers and property owners money in repairs done by skilled professionals.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>
<p>HB 2557 By: Buckley Raney</p>	<p>Relating to the Licensed Professional Counselors Compact; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Human Services</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>As the provision of telehealth continues to grow, there is a need to open the channels for various medical professionals to provide services across state lines. Requirements for licensed professional counselors (LPCs) vary state by state, making it difficult to provide telehealth services or obtain new licenses when moving to a new state. A national committee was formed to create an interstate LPC compact, which 21 other states have already joined. HB 2557 adds Texas to the list of member states participating in the Licensed Professional Counselors Compact.</p> <p>HB 2557 would allow good-standing LPCs in other states be able to work in another within the compact without a new license, including telehealth services. HB 2557 outlines eligibility requirements for states to participate in the compact, how LPCs may work under the compact, and requirements for anyone moving to another member state. HB 2557 establishes the Counseling Compact Commission as a joint public agency and an executive committee to act on behalf of the commission. The commission would have rulemaking authority and would be</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>responsible for the oversight and enforcement of the compact.</p> <p>HB 2557 states that to utilize the compact, a licensee must hold a license in their home state, be eligible to practice in any member state, meet any continuing competence/education requirements established by their home state, and pay any applicable fees. HB 2557 also creates a centralized database with information regarding licensure, investigations, and other pertinent information for all licensees in member states. HB 2557 outlines provisions to amend the compact or allow a member state to withdraw. HB 2557 designates the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (BHEC) as the compact’s administrator in Texas and authorizes BHEC necessary rules to implement the bill’s provisions.</p>	
<p>HB 2683</p> <p>By: Burns</p>	<p>Relating to the use of dyed diesel fuel to operate a motor vehicle during and for a limited period following certain disasters.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Diesel fuel meant for off-road use only, such as in construction and farm equipment, is not taxed. Federal law requires that tax-exempt diesel fuel be dyed red so it can be identified, as it is against the law to use it to drive on the highway or knowingly sell it for this purpose. During Winter Storm Uri, regular diesel fuel was widely unavailable for agriculture. However, many farmers and ranchers had off-road, dyed diesel fuel available for their equipment but were not legally allowed to use it for their vehicles on the highway.</p> <p>HB 2683 aims to solve this problem by allowing people to use dyed diesel fuel to operate a motor vehicle on a public highway as long as they have a signed statement with an end user number issued by the comptroller, operate the vehicle during a state of disaster, and fuel and operate the vehicle in designated disaster areas. People would be allowed to use this fuel as soon as a state of disaster is declared and 30 days after this declaration ends, allowing the dyed fuel to have proper time to cycle out of a vehicle’s tank. HB 2683 seeks to ensure that farmers and ranchers have access to fuel during times of disaster so they can take care of themselves and their communities.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2808</p> <p>By: VanDeaver</p>	<p>Relating to the finality of public school accountability determinations.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas Education Agency (TEA) recently gave a rating for career, college, and military readiness to a school district at the start of the year, but later removed the rating. HB 2808 seeks to address the fluctuations and removal of ratings by prohibiting TEA from modifying the accountability rating assigned to a district for one school year after TEA has released the rating.</p> <p>HB 2808 also prohibits a district or charter school from challenging a decision after the TEA has released the district’s final rating for the school year. The bill was written to prohibit the agency from downgrading ratings after the a final decision. HB 2808 allows districts due process and creates stability in TEA ratings.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2818</p> <p>By: Cain</p>	<p>Relating to the production and regulation of hemp; providing an administrative penalty; requiring a</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>The U.S. Department of Agriculture modified federal law regarding hemp production requiring changes at the state level. HB 2818 intends to reflect federal updates in state statutes and change other provisions related to hemp cultivation.</p> <p>Once an applicable state statute, federal statute, or federal regulation takes effect, HB 2818 requires the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) to propose any hemp cultivation rules needed to implement the change within</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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	<p>permit to conduct certain research involving hemp; authorizing a fee; creating a criminal offense.</p>	<p>2 Absent</p>	<p>90 days of the change and to submit amendments to the state plan for monitoring and regulating hemp plant production to implement the change to the secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture within 120 of the change. HB 2818 prohibits rules adopted by TDA to implement federal statutes or regulations from being construed to conflict with state statutes relating to hemp cultivation or the state hemp production plan.</p> <p>HB 2818 includes Texas-produced hemp in its natural state or processed by the producer as an agricultural commodity relating to the commodity producers board. HB 2818 requires TDA to issue a hemp research permit to higher education institutions or nonprofit research entities in Texas that request the permit. Research permit holders are exempt from being required to obtain lot crop permits or other permits from the TDA for each location where hemp is grown, and they are exempt from having to do preharvest testing except as provided in the bill. Permit holders can cultivate and handle varieties of hemp seeds and plants not certified or approved. Permit holders are exempt from being subject to provisions related to negligent violations for hemp grower license holders. Permit holders are allowed to sell or transfer hemp if the variety is approved for sale and if the transaction occurs at least six months after the hemp is harvested. Permit holders may conduct research in conjunction with a hemp grower license holder at the license holder’s facility for research use only.</p> <p>HB 2818 authorizes TDA to adopt a shipping certificate or cargo manifest different than what is required by current state law if it’s for transporting or shipping a sample of hemp to a testing laboratory or if the sample is not more than what TDA allows and is accompanied by laboratory results indicating a lot’s or plot’s delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (delta 9 THC) concentration from which the sample was taken. HB 2818 requires laboratories performing testing under its provisions to report the delta 9 THC concentration, total THC concentration, and the concentration levels of any other federally regulated cannabinoid. HB 2818 provides the required means these concentrations must be measured and comply with International Organization for Standardization standards and federal law.</p> <p>HB 2818 authorizes hemp growers to obtain preharvest and postharvest testing and to harvest plants if their license is suspended or revoked after they planted hemp. TDA is to establish standards to determine if the person can use or sell the harvested hemp, depending on the circumstances of their suspension or revocation. Based on these standards, TDA is authorized to prohibit a person from selling or using the harvested hemp while their license is suspended or revoked. Once reinstated, then the person may sell or use the hemp.</p> <p>HB 2818 authorizes a person to transport and a hemp grower license holder to obtain and cultivate immature plants propagated outside of Texas. HB 2818 authorizes a Texas hemp grower license holder to obtain and cultivate immature plants propagated by another Texas license holder. The bill provides the labeling requirements to ship the plants. HB 2818 provides a preharvest testing exemption for propagated plants in Texas that were sent to another Texas hemp grower license holder. HB 2818 authorizes a license holder to transplant immature plants propagated by another license holder from one plot to another.</p>	
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			<p>HB 2818 authorizes a person to transport and a hemp grower’s license holder to obtain and cultivate immature plants propagated in or outside of Texas if the plants are accompanied by shipping documents that comply with requirements of the original state, identify the grower is licensed in the original state, lists the Texas license holder’s name and license number, and verifies the is certified or approved. For plants propagated in Texas and shipped to another license holder within the state, HB 2818 requires the recipient to maintain records that match the lot crop permit numbers for where the plants were propagated and cultivated and that these plants are exempt from preharvest testing.</p> <p>HB 2818 includes federal regulations on which TDA must enforce a hemp grower’s negligent violation of state hemp cultivation provisions or rules adopted for those provisions. A license holder cannot be subject to more than one negligent violation related to cultivation per calendar year. If an individual violates the hemp grower’s licensing requirement, then TDA may issue a written warning, impose a \$500 administrative penalty, and require a person to obtain a license. For a person who continues to violate this requirement, the next offense is punishable by a Class C misdemeanor, a Class B misdemeanor following that conviction, and then a Class A misdemeanor from then on.</p>	
<p>HB 2851 By: Burns</p>	<p>Relating to the composition of the board of directors of the Texas Agricultural Finance Authority and grant amounts under the young farmer grant program administered by the authority.</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Even though Texas is a leader in farming, there has been a steady decline in farming operations nationally. A vast majority of farmers are over the age of 35, meaning the industry needs more young farmers to feed future generations. HB 2351 seeks to address the decline in farmers through changes to the Young Farm Grant Program (YFGP) to help the next generation of agricultural workers afford the high capital investment needed to start out in the industry.</p> <p>Primarily, HB 2351 expands the maximum amount that can be awarded by the grant from \$20,000 to \$35,000.</p> <p>HB 2351 also makes changes to the composition of the board of the Texas Agricultural Finance Authority (who awards the grant) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacing an existing member from Prairie View A&M from the Institute for International Agribusiness Studies with a member who represents the College of Agriculture and Human Services; • Adds a representative from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources as Tarleton State University; and • Adds a person appointed by the Agricultural Commissioner who is knowledgeable on the subject and graduated with an agricultural degree in the past 8 years. 	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

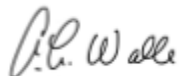
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<p>HB 2673</p> <p>By: Hull Capriglione Slawson Lozano Johnson, Ann</p>	<p>Relating to requirements for the use and transfer of electronic devices to students by a public school.</p>	<p>Youth Health & Safety, Select</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Many local education agencies (LEAs) seek guidance from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) on school-issued devices. However, the TEA currently lacks the authority to provide guidelines, resulting in inconsistent policies. Parents are also concerned about content access and data privacy standards.</p> <p>To address these issues, HB 2673 directs the TEA to establish rules for what kind of electronic devices and software applications schools can use. The rules aim to limit data collection on students, require parental permission for certain applications, and provide resources on cybersecurity and online safety. HB 2673 also limits students' access to social media websites or apps, requires districts to consider installing an internet filter to block inappropriate content, and designates a person to receive complaints or concerns from parents, students, and staff.</p> <p>HB 2673 seeks to balance district obligation and parent responsibility, enabling the TEA to support and protect Texas students when accessing technology in schools.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3317</p> <p>By: Frank</p>	<p>Relating to programs established and operated by federally qualified health centers to provide primary care access to certain employees.</p>	<p>Health Care Reform, Select</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>A study by the Urban Institute estimates two-thirds of uninsured Texans are from working families. Direct primary care is a method of health care where patients pay a flat monthly fee for unlimited access to their doctor. Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) offer various primary and preventive care services, and working families in Texas could benefit from a program that combines direct primary care and other services at a FQHC.</p> <p>HB 3317 aims to improve primary care access at FQHCs for low-income and vulnerable individuals, improve employee and family health by offering better access to health care, aid small business competitiveness by promoting a healthy workforce with attractive health care benefits, and support innovative health care services and financing for employees. HB 3317 allows FQHCs to create a primary care access program for employees and dependents of participating employers. The program aims to achieve several goals such as reducing the amount of individuals without primary care access, promoting preventive care, offering fair payment rates, and encouraging innovative health information technology use.</p> <p>FQHCs can set participation criteria and require contributions from employers and employees. Additionally, FQHCs can seek donations and grants to fund primary care services, benefits, and lower participation costs. The bill also establishes a grant program managed by The Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) and the commission to award to FQHCs, create performance goals, and monitor progress. The TDI and the commission must submit a report to the legislature assessing the program's success and recommending actions to improve or support it.</p> <p>HB 3317 aims to increase primary care access for uninsured or underinsured Texans by establishing and financing federal qualified health center primary care access programs to be run by FQHCs.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 3361 By: Cain</p>	<p>Relating to the slaughtering of livestock.</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock 8 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 3361 amends the Agricultural Code to simplify the definition of slaughterer to slaughtering livestock for profit, removing references to specific counties</p> <p>However, HB 3361 also repeals the section of the Local Government Code that allows a county to regulate slaughterers in the unincorporated area of certain counties. Currently, this section of code is only bracketed to specific counties (which appear to include Dallas and all adjacent counties).</p> <p>This bill undermines eligible commissioners' courts' ability to have local control in unincorporated areas to provide restrictions on where a slaughterhouse may operate. Current allowable restrictions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibiting operations near schools or residences; and • Requiring permits. <p>This bill preempts duly elected local leaders in applicable counties from exercising safeguards over where slaughterhouses can operate.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3165 By: Holland Rose González, Mary Bell, Cecil Zwiener</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment, administration, and use of the Texas land and water conservation fund.</p>	<p>Natural Resources 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Millions of people visit Texas state parks annually, increasing revenue for the state. As the number of visitors increases, there is concern about decreasing land availability for public parks, making it critically important to protect them.</p> <p>HB 3615 establishes the Texas Land and Water Conservation Fund - a special fund outside the state treasury. This fund will be used by the Texas Land and Water Conservation Board, also established by HB 3615, to award grants for public parks, natural areas, or natural resource conservation projects and to pay certain administrative expenses. HB 3615 identifies the various funding sources for the fund, including appropriations to the fund by law and fees or other revenue sources dedicated by law to the fund. HB 3615 restricts the use of the fund from being used to acquire property by eminent domain or acquiring or transferring property managed by the federal government. HB 3615 outlines which governmental entities may receive grants from the fund.</p> <p>HB 3165 creates the Texas Land and Water Conservation Board, consisting of five voting members: Commissioner of the General Land Office (GLO), Executive directors of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Executive Director of the State and Soil and Water Conservation Board, and Executive administrator of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).</p> <p>The board may appoint up to two non-voting members with relevant professional or academic experience who will serve for two years. The Land and Water Conservation Technical Advisory Committee chair, established by HB 3615, will also serve as a nonvoting member. The chair of the board will be the commissioner of the General Land Office or their designee.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>HB 3615 establishes the types of projects eligible for grants under the fund. The projects must benefit, protect, and enhance public parks, natural areas, or natural resource conservation. HB 3615 requires the board to establish criteria for prioritizing grant-eligible projects, including the project’s overall ecological benefit and long-term sustainability and benefits. HB 3165 requires the conservation board to provide financial aid to eligible organizations for conservation planning and application preparation. HB 3615 includes funding allocation guidance if the board receives sufficient applicants.</p> <p>HB 3165 establishes the Land and Water Conservation Technical Advisory Committee. The committee will consist of one representative from GLO, TCEQ, TPWD, and TWDB and five other representatives appointed by the board. The committee will help develop and evaluate the application process and scoring criteria for project funding and recommendations to the board. HB 3165 requires the board to submit a biannual report that quantifies the benefits of grant projects.</p> <p>HB 3165 is a considerable advancement in protecting public land and funding essential conservation projects in Texas. HB 3615 is the enabling legislation for HJR 138.</p>	
<p>HB 3315</p> <p>By: Bell, Keith Buckley Harris Hefner Dutton</p>	<p>Relating to a school district's grievance procedure regarding complaints concerning violation of parental rights.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, school boards are required by law to adopt a policy for addressing grievances related to violating parental rights. Some parties contend that some grievance policies are unfair to parents or do not address concerns in a timely manner. HB 3315 establishes more stringent grievance procedures for districts. Current law requires a public school’s board of trustees to create a process to address grievances concerning a violation of parental rights. Some view these procedures as prioritizing protecting the district and not ensuring parent grievances are considered in a timely manner. HB 3315 seeks to prioritize parents' grievances by establishing a requirement for a district's grievance procedure.</p> <p>Under HB 3315, districts must file a parent’s complaint in writing with the principal of the school. These procedures must be considered timely regardless of when the event that led to the complaint occurred.</p> <p>If the principal does not grant the requested relief, then the parent may appeal to the superintendent. If the superintendent denies the requested relief, then a written request for an appeal may be submitted to the board of trustees that includes a review of all documents previously given to the principal and superintendent. The board of trustees must reach a conclusion within 120 days after the request for appeal was submitted, unless otherwise agreed by the involved parties. If the board of trustees fails to meet this deadline, the final decision will be made in favor of the parent. If the board of trustees does not grant the requested relief, then parents shall receive notice on their right to file an appeal with the education commissioner. HB 3315 requires that the grievance procedure and instructions on filing a complaint must be posted on the district’s website and provided to parents at the beginning of the school year and on request.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>HB 3315 also requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to adopt a model grievance procedure for school districts and post it on their website. General guidelines on how a parent can file a complaint or appeal a district’s decision must also be posted on TEA’s website.</p> <p>The law already requires school boards adopt a policy to address grievances. HB 3315 lays out structured processes and timelines for doing so. This would help ensure parents they have recourse for violations of parental rights.</p>	
<p>HB 2959 By: Cain Neave-Criado Gates Plesa</p>	<p>Relating to providing children committed to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department and prisoners serving a sentence in a county jail with certain documents on discharge or release; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>County Affairs 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Recently, concerns have been voiced regarding the release of children committed to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) and the discharge of prisoners from a county jail with respect to the difficulties they face in society without basic identification documents (ID). HB 2959 seeks to ensure these individuals of basic identification documents by establishing procedures for providing prisoners of county jails with certain documents upon release.</p> <p>HB 2959 changes the language regarding the time frame for the TJJD to submit a request on a committed child’s behalf for the issuance of various identification documents, requiring this be done “on intake of the child” instead of the current language stating “as soon as is practicable.” None of the procedures outlined in the bill apply to prisoners who are not legally present in the US or were not residents before custody.</p> <p>Before discharging a prisoner from a county jail, HB 2959 requires a sheriff to determine whether the prisoner has any valid form of ID. If the prisoner is found to be without, the sheriff must submit a request for the issuance of the ID to the Department of Public Safety (DPS). The sheriff must submit the request on intake of the prisoner to ensure the ID is given upon discharge.</p> <p>The Commission on Jail Standards, DPS, and the vital statistic unit of the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) must adopt a memorandum of understanding requiring DSHS to electronically verify the prisoner’s birth record with any other personal information provided by the sheriff and electronically report the record filing information to DPS to validate the prisoner’s identity. The sheriff or commissioner's court shall reimburse DPS or DSHS for costs incurred by the agencies to perform their responsibilities. This cost or the price of the ID can be passed along by the sheriff to the prisoner.</p> <p>In addition to the issuance of an ID, before discharging a county jail prisoner, the county sheriff must determine if the prisoner has a certified copy of their birth certificate and social security card. Should the prisoner have neither, the sheriff must submit a request for the issuance of these documents. This request must be done upon intake to ensure the prisoner will possess the documents upon discharge and is not applicable to prisoners not legally present in the United States or who were not residents before custody.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>Texas law requires that a victim of service theft send a demand letter as a first step to recover the payment owed to them before they are allowed to pursue charges through law enforcement. This letter must be sent correctly, but the process is incredibly confusing for a victim who was paid with a hot check, because theft of service and theft by check provide two different directives in statute about where such a letter should be sent. This leaves small businesses struggling to recover the funding that was stolen from them.</p> <p>HB 2897 seeks to remedy this by correcting the current conflicting instructions in statute. The bill expands the types of mailing addresses to which a notice demanding payment must be sent for the purposes of establishing an offense of theft of service to include: an address for the defendant in other records that the victim may have or, if the actor secured service by passing a hot check, the address shown on the check or the records of the bank from which the check was drawn. In short, a victim of theft of service will no longer be required to send the same demand letter to two different addresses.</p> <p>HB 2897 will protect victims and ensure that the avenue to recover their property is clear and easily understandable.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
<p>HB 2897 By: Walle</p>	<p>Relating to the prosecution of the offense of theft of service.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Texas law requires that a victim of service theft send a demand letter as a first step to recover the payment owed to them before they are allowed to pursue charges through law enforcement. This letter must be sent correctly, but the process is incredibly confusing for a victim who was paid with a hot check, because theft of service and theft by check provide two different directives in statute about where such a letter should be sent. This leaves small businesses struggling to recover the funding that was stolen from them.</p> <p>HB 2897 seeks to remedy this by correcting the current conflicting instructions in statute. The bill expands the types of mailing addresses to which a notice demanding payment must be sent for the purposes of establishing an offense of theft of service to include: an address for the defendant in other records that the victim may have or, if the actor secured service by passing a hot check, the address shown on the check or the records of the bank from which the check was drawn. In short, a victim of theft of service will no longer be required to send the same demand letter to two different addresses.</p> <p>HB 2897 will protect victims and ensure that the avenue to recover their property is clear and easily understandable.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
<p>HB 4070 By: Schaefer</p>	<p>Relating to the punishment for trafficking of persons, online solicitation of a minor, and prostitution and to the dissemination of</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The 87th Legislature passed HB 1540, which required both public and private schools to post certain warning signs of the increased penalties for human trafficking. HB 4070 seeks to remove private schools from this required sign postage by striking language in the bill referencing private schools in the bill's definition of "school."</p> <p>Supporters of the legislation say that due to the nature of private schools having different regulations than public schools, they do not need to be subject to the same requirements. However, it is important to create awareness</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>

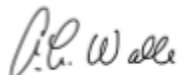
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	certain information, including the required posting of certain signs, regarding human trafficking.		regarding human trafficking and private school students are no less susceptible to victimization, making education regarding this topic important for all. State law often requires private entities, such as bars, to display content displaying the warning signs of trafficking and who to call for help.	
HB 3456 By: Ashby	Relating to the operation of certain healthcare provider participation programs in this state.	County Affairs 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Several healthcare provider participation programs (LPPF) across the state are set to expire at the end of this year. HB 3456 seeks to extend expiration dates so a district may continue to administer and operate its LPPF. HB 3456 postpones expiration dates for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A county with a population over 125,000, that borders Oklahoma, and has a hospital district that is not countywide from December 2023 to December 2027. • The Dallas County Hospital District and the Tarrant County Hospital District from December 2025 to December 2027. • A hospital district created in a county with a population greater than 800,000 that was not included in the hospital district boundaries before September 1, 2003, Bexar County Hospital District, and El Paso County Hospital District. • The Harris County Hospital District from December 2023 to December 2025. The bill also revises eligibility for local governments to participate in a health care provider participation program by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacing a hospital district or county or municipality that is not participating in a program authorized by other statutory provisions with a hospital district that is not authorized to create a program under other statutory provisions. 	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 264 By: Toth Cortez Wilson Schaefer	Relating to requirements for the physical presence of a borrower for signing certain documents related to a home equity loan.	Pensions, Investments, and Financial Services 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Under the Texas Constitution, a home equity loan can only be closed in person at the office of the lender, an attorney, or at a title company. Some Texans have expressed their concern about being unable to arrive in person as a borrower in certain circumstances. HB 264 aims to address this issue by providing a virtual closing option for those borrowers. HB 264 authorizes an exception for requiring the borrowers to close in person at the office of a lender, an attorney, or a title company. The eligible borrower has to meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The borrower is located outside of Texas at the time of closing and is a member or the spouse or surviving spouse of one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Member of the U.S. armed forces who is on active duty; ◦ An officer of the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service who is on active duty; and ◦ Member of the reserve component of the armed forces who is on active duty; • The borrower is outside of Texas at the time of closing and is a civilian employee of the federal government assigned to a foreign country or unit of the U.S. armed forces. 	<u>Favorable</u>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The borrower has a disability that prohibits traveling or is quarantine to protect their health or others' health that is verified by a physician • The borrower is unable to travel because they are incarcerated or under house arrest <p>If the borrower fits one of the criteria under HB 264 they are able to close the loan from a remote online notarization or through an agent that meets certain criteria. That agent must appear in person for the closing at the office of the lender, attorney, or title company on behalf of the borrower.</p> <p>HB 264 makes conforming changes in the Estates Code pursuant to the bill. In addition, the bill clarifies that home equity loan transactions fall under the category of real property transaction purposes in order to grant the agent powers. These changes only apply on or after the bill's effective date.</p>	
<p>HB 148</p> <p>By: Johnson, Julie Leach</p>	<p>Relating to the Texas Medical Disclosure Panel.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas Medical Disclosure Panel develops informed consent notices for physicians to provide patients with information about medical treatments and procedures. Informed consent is essential for patient safety and autonomy, and provided information must be easily comprehensible so Texans can make informed decisions about their health. The panel is composed of nine members, including three lawyers and six licensed physicians.</p> <p>HB 148 aims to expand the membership of the Texas Medical Disclosure Panel to eleven members, adding two that must represent the public, one of whom must have a background in health literacy. HB 148 also requires that one of the lawyers on the Texas Medical Disclosure Panel be board certified in personal injury trial law and another be board certified in health law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Members will be selected by the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and those representing the public cannot be a registered lobbyist, healthcare provider, the spouse of a healthcare provider, or a person who works in any healthcare related field, including health insurance. The commissioner must give preference to people with experience advocating for public interest. HB 148 updates language in this area of code to reference HHSC instead of the Texas Department of Health.</p> <p>Texans deserve to be fully and adequately informed about medical treatments and procedures. HB 148 ensures that the public is represented in creating accessible, understandable informed consent materials.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 469</p> <p>By: Smith</p>	<p>Relating to the sequestration of a jury in a criminal case.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Jury sequestration is the legal action of isolating jurors from the public and other outside influences during a trial. Under current law, jurors must be sequestered if any party involved in a court case requests it. Concerns have been raised, however, that the laws regarding sequestration complicate the process. Requests to sequester jurors are rare, often only used in high profile trials with extensive media coverage. Current law does not allow the court to decide whether or not to grant the request and has no required timeframe in which the request must be made, making it difficult for deputies and jurors to plan for accommodations and meals under these circumstances. HB 469 proposes a deadline for sequestration requests and a hearing process, with the possibility of exceptions if a valid reason is given.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>HB 469 replaces the current requirement regarding jury sequestration with a hearing process, where either party can motion for sequestration and the court will determine if there is good cause to grant the request. If good cause is found, the court will enter an order for sequestration. The motion must be filed no less than 10 days before jury selection begins, unless there is a valid reason for filing after that deadline. This amendment only applies to criminal proceedings that start on or after the effective date of the bill.</p> <p>HB 469 helps resolve challenges associated with an outdated law regarding sequestration of a jury and helps jurors plan for the disruption in their lives.</p>	
<p>HB 3419</p> <p>By: Cain Toth Hefner Manuel Schaefer</p>	<p>Relating to the transportation of horse meat.</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock</p> <p>6 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, Texas law prohibits the sale, possession and transportation of horse meat for human consumption. However, horses may be transported to other countries for slaughtering, and their meat is able to be transported through Texas.</p> <p>The Agricultural Code allows for the transportation of equine meat only between the hours of 10pm and 4am, unless the horse meat is in individual packages of 5lbs or less clearly labeled horsemeat. HB 3419 repeals this provision.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>
<p>HB 476</p> <p>By: Jones, Jolanda Thompson, Senfronia Martinez Fischer Allen</p>	<p>Relating to the release of certain defendants detained in jail pending trial.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>There is a deep backlog of legal cases across Texas counties, with Harris County hitting an all time high of 145,000 backlogged cases in 2021. This results in defendants being held in jail for an excessively long period of time, resulting in large costs to taxpayers and violating the detainee’s constitutional protection against unlawful detainment. HB 476 seeks to solve this problem by prohibiting a defendant from being held in jail for longer than the maximum length of time they would spend in jail if they were found guilty.</p> <p>HB 476 limits the detention of defendants in jail pending trial. If passed, the bill would restrict the amount of time a defendant could be held in jail before trial based on the maximum sentence they could receive if convicted. HB 476 has a few exceptions, such as defendants being evaluated for competency or who have been found incompetent to stand trial, those charged with Class C misdemeanor public intoxication, or those charged with any other Class C misdemeanors who are also detained for an outstanding warrant for any offense.</p> <p>HB 476 could reduce the number of individuals detained in jails, particularly those who are charged with low-level offenses and pose little risk to public safety. This could alleviate overcrowding in jails, reduce the financial burden on local governments, and mitigate the negative effects of pretrial detention on defendants and their families.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1883</p> <p>By: Bhojani Cunningha</p>	<p>Relating to the administration of assessment instruments on religious holy days.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>8 Ayes, 2 Nays,</p>	<p>State-mandated exams routinely fall on certain religious holy days, which may practice sacred traditions such as fasting and prayer. These practices of the religion conflicting with exam schedules puts students in a position to choose between partaking in their religion and scoring well on these exams. HB 1883 seeks to absolve this conflict for these students by requiring district’s to provide alternative dates should the exam fall on certain religious holy days.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>m Allen Hinojosa Jetton</p>		<p>0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1883 expands considerations of religious holy days in scheduling assessment instruments, ensuring that STAAR-tests and End of Course exams are not schedule on the following religious holidays: All Saints Day, Christmas Day, Diwali, Eid al-Ahda, Eid al-Fitr, Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Vaisakhi, Vesak, and Yom Kippur.</p> <p>A school district’s board of trustees may consider these days or periods of observance to see if there are any conflicts with the period set by the State Board of Education (SBOE) for the administered of state-mandated exams. When establishing a school calendar, the district’s board of trustees must provide for alternative dates for the exam to be taken for student’s absent for religious reasons.</p> <p>Scoring well on a state exam should not have to come at the cost of a student having the opportunity to observe religious holy days with their families and communities. Provisions against such conflicts are already made for major Christian holidays, like Christmas and Easter, across the nation; other religions deserve the same acknowledgement and respect.</p>	
<p>HB 2568 By: Hayes Morales, Eddie Cain Rogers</p>	<p>Relating to a study of carrizo cane on the international border of this state.</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock 7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Carrizo cane is a non-native, invasive plant species that has caused issues as it lines the banks and floodplains of the Rio Grande River. The plant has created issues with law enforcement efforts along the border and taking from the water source for communities along the border. As a part of the governor’s border security priorities, the 84th legislature directed the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) to implement a program to eradicate carrizo cane. HB 2568 will conduct a study to assist TSSWCB in administering the program.</p> <p>HB 2568 requires the TSSWCB to study the extent of carrizo cane growth along the Rio Grande. In this study, the TSSCWB must determine the acreage of carrizo cane remaining along the Rio Grande, the amount of water consumed along the Rio Grande, and the program’s cost of eradicating carrizo cane. TSSCWB is to report its results and recommendations to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, and standing committees with jurisdiction over natural resources.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2672 By: Frazier Leo-Wilson Swanson Lalani</p>	<p>Relating to the eligibility for student loan repayment assistance under the math and science scholars loan repayment program.</p>	<p>Higher Education 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The math and science scholars loan repayment program is underutilized across the state, largely due to the program only being available for teachers employed by public schools that receive funding under Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.</p> <p>HB 2672 seeks to expand eligibility for this program from only Title I schools to any public school. HB 2672 authorizes the same amount of loan repayment assistance received during the first four consecutive years of teaching if the person continues working at any public school for the number of consecutive school years determined per the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) rules.</p> <p>By allowing recent graduates entering the profession who have student loan debt into STEM, HB 2672 could help address teacher shortages in these key subjects.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 2933</p> <p>By: Dorazio Gates Shaheen</p>	<p>Relating to ensuring certain adoptive parents may consent to medical care and access information regarding their child who is eligible for benefits under Medicaid.</p>	<p>Human Services</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Only one adoptive parent can a legally authorized representative who can consent for medical decisions on a child’s behalf if the child was adopted from the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) conservatorship due to the IMPACT system used by DFPS and the TIERS system used by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). This can cause unnecessary stress on families if the authorized representative is unable to make decisions for the child’s medical needs.</p> <p>HB 2933 aims to solve this issue by requiring HHSC to collaborate with DFPS to ensure both adoptive parents of a child, who was adopted from DFPS and is Medicaid eligible, can consent to medical care provided to the child under Medicaid. HB 2933 would also allow both adoptive parents to receive and provide information, including electronically, regarding the child’s Medicaid benefits to HHSC, a Medicaid managed care organization, or a healthcare provider providing services under Medicaid. HB 2933 allows for delayed implementation if a federal authorization or waiver is required.</p> <p>This proposed change would reduce stress on adoptive parents by ensuring that both parents have a say in their child’s medical care, without having to rely on one parent to make all the decisions.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1392</p> <p>By: Craddick Guillen Hunter Raymond Darby</p>	<p>Relating to the allocation of certain constitutional transfers of money to the economic stabilization fund, the state highway fund, and the Grow Texas fund and to the permissible uses of money deposited to the Grow Texas fund.</p>	<p>Appropriations</p> <p>24 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1392 is the enabling legislation for HJR 27, creating the Grow Texas Fund (GTF). The GTF would create a grant program to fund the construction or maintenance of roads, schools, health care facilities, and other infrastructure in the areas of Texas significantly affected by oil and gas production.</p> <p>Under HB 1392, the comptroller would be responsible for ensuring that the transfer of funds does not exceed the Economic Stabilization Fund (ESF) threshold. The ESF threshold should equal to seven percent of the certified general revenue-related appropriations made for that biennium by repealing the provision setting this requirement to expire on December 31, 2034.</p> <p><i>Grow Texas Grant Program</i> HB 1392 establishes the GTF as a fund in that state treasury and requires the comptroller and the Grow Texas Fund Commission established under HJR 27 to establish a program under which the commission may select applicants to receive grants provided by the comptroller to construct or maintain roads, schools, health care facilities, and other infrastructure in the areas of Texas the commission determines to be significantly affected by oil and gas production.</p> <p>To administer the funds, HJR 27 establishes the seven-member Grow Texas Fund Commission. The commission consists of two members of the senate appointed by the lieutenant governor, two members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house, and three members of the public appointed by the governor, with the governor designating the presiding officer.</p> <p>HB 1392 requires the commission to establish eligibility criteria for grant applicants, guidelines relating to grant</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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			<p>amounts, and procedures for evaluating and approving or denying grant applications. The comptroller will establish the procedure for applying for a grant, adopt a form that applicants must use to apply for a grant, and establish procedures for monitoring the use of the grant and ensure compliance with any grant conditions. These funds would prioritize the needs of the people in these oil and natural gas regions.</p>	
<p>HB 2207 By: Landgraf Guillen Dean Murr Hunter</p>	<p>Relating to the allocation of certain constitutional transfers of money to the economic stabilization fund, the state highway fund, the oil and gas regulation and cleanup account, the Texas emissions reduction plan fund, the property tax relief fund, and the Texas severance tax revenue and oil and natural gas (Texas STRONG) defense fund and to the permissible uses of money deposited to the Texas severance tax revenue and oil and natural gas (Texas STRONG) defense fund.</p>	<p>Appropriations 24 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2207 is the enabling legislation for HJR 111, which would redirect a portion of funds that currently would be transferred to the Economic Stabilization Fund towards four separate accounts, primarily for the purpose of reinvesting excess oil and gas severance taxes into the counties that produce the fuels. A discussion of the change in how the dollars would flow is included in the HJR 111 analysis.</p> <p>HB 2207 would create the Texas Severance Tax Revenue and Oil and Natural Gas (Texas STRONG) defense fund, as well as an accompanying grant program that will use funds to invest in major oil and natural gas producing regions and coastal communities engaged in oil and natural gas production, refinement, or export. The bill caps money going to the fund at \$500 million a year. Counties that produce at least 0.5% of the oil and gas in the state are eligible for dollars from the STRONG Fund. Money that flows into the STRONG Defense Fund can be directed to four separate locations, in amounts appropriated by the Legislature through the normal budget process. Those locations are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The STRONG Grant Program 2. Trusteed Programs within the Office of the Governor, for meeting economic development needs 3. Department of Public Safety, for salary increases to department employees or to address human trafficking 4. TxDOT, for the county road program <p>Money directed from the STRONG Fund into the four locations listed above must be spent in eligible counties, with the exception that TxDOT funds may also go to any county that contains a port or navigation district.</p> <p>HB 2207 creates the STRONG Grant program, which would be administered by the Governor. The grant program allows nonprofits, school districts, public institutions of higher education, and other political subdivisions (counties, cities, etc.) to apply for money from the program. Grant funds will be awarded for first responders, emergency and trauma care services, health care, mental health care, educational, and workforce preparedness needs. The Governor’s office is responsible for developing grant program guidance, applications, and reviews.</p> <p>HB 2207 also makes no statutory change to the other programs through which HJR 111 redirects money – the Property Tax Relief Fund, the Oil & Gas Cleanup Account, and the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan. Those programs would simply receive a transfer of dollars once the Comptroller disperses the funds.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>HB 2207 and its enabling legislation, HJR 111, are an attempt to reinvest excess oil and gas severance tax dollars into the counties that generate the money, as well as create an historic dedication of money to successful environmental programs.</p>	
<p>HB 718 By: Goldman Turner Sherman, Sr. Leach González, Jessica</p>	<p>Relating to the issuance of certain tags, permits, and license plates authorizing the movement of vehicles.</p>	<p>Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 718 aims to eliminate the temporary paper license plate system in Texas. This system has led to the use of fraudulent plates, which have resulted in various criminal activities. Despite recent redesigns by the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, concerns still need to be addressed regarding the effectiveness of the new security features in curtailing this illegal activity. HB 718 seeks to bring Texas in line with other states that do not issue temporary paper license plates to address public safety concerns and reduce fraud.</p> <p>HB 718 repeals provisions in the Transportation Code authorizing motor vehicle dealers or converters to issue temporary tags for a vehicle and requires them to issue a license plate or set of plates on the buyer’s behalf under the bill’s provisions. HB 718 eliminates the buyer’s temporary tag database and requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to develop and maintain a secure, real-time database. The database will be used by law enforcement to monitor dealer-issued plates and to obtain information about the person associated with the plates. Vehicle dealers must complete and sign a TxDMV-designated form that indicates the dealer entered certain information about the buyer into the database before issuing the license plates.</p> <p>HB 718 must follow TxDMV rules and procedures relating to displaying a license plate or set of plates, obtaining license plates, and charging the buyer a registration fee. Dealers are responsible for the safekeeping and distribution of each license plate or set of plates. Dealers cannot issue plates for vehicles exempt from paying vehicle registration fees until TxDMV approves the vehicle’s registration.</p> <p>TxDmv must ensure that dealers can obtain sufficient plates to continue selling vehicles without an unreasonable disruption of business due to the unavailability of license plates and must establish an expedited process to get license plates to remain in business. TxDMV is authorized to establish and monitor the maximum number of dealer-issued plates a dealer can obtain in a calendar year. HB 718 provides the criteria for determining a dealer’s limit, like expected changes in the dealer’s market or temporary conditions impacting a dealer’s sales. TxDMV is authorized to provide a dealer at the dealer’s request with more plates past their limit in response to needs resulting from business operations.</p> <p>HB 718 authorizes TxDMV, after giving electronic or mailed notice to a dealer, to deny a dealer access to the database if they determine that the dealer is fraudulently obtaining license plates or using the database. Dealers may request a hearing to review the denial. HB 718 also prohibits the fraudulent issuance and use of dealer-issued license plates and sets penalties for violators.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>HB 718 removes provisions related to issuing temporary buyer’s out-of-state license plates and additional specific temporary permits. The permits included in the bill are: nonresident owned vehicles used to transport farm products, annual permits in lieu of registration for certain foreign commercial vehicles, trailers, or semitrailers, temporary 72-hour or 144-hour registration permits, temporary one-trip or 30-day permits, and temporary transit permits for purchased vehicles.</p> <p>HB 718 seeks to improve the efficiency and security of the licensing process for vehicles in Texas.</p>	
<p>HB 1747 By: Leach Jones, Venton</p>	<p>Relating to the consequences of a criminal conviction on a person's eligibility for an occupational license.</p>	<p>Corrections 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The current occupational licensing process requires a state regulatory board to approve individuals before working in certain professions. This process creates obstacles for individuals with a criminal record, making it difficult for them to secure employment. Research suggests that stable employment, income, housing, and access to basic needs increases self-sufficiency and by extension reduces recidivism rates.</p> <p>HB 1747 aims to simplify the licensing review process. As such, HB 1747 authorizes applicable licensing authorities to approve occupational licenses for justice-involved individuals primarily convicted of nonviolent offenses after five years have passed since the end of incarceration or conviction, whichever is later. HB 1747 also raises the standard of evidence required for a license to be denied, suspended, or revoked based on a criminal record. Licensing authorities are required to provide notice of the impact a criminal record may have on an application and track the number of applications received, approved, and denied. Under HB 1747, licensing authorities may suspend or revoke a license or deny an application if an individual is convicted of certain, namely violent or sexual, offenses.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1634 By: Walle Garcia Gates</p>	<p>Relating to requirements for beneficial tax treatment related to a leasehold or other possessory interest in a public facility used to provide multifamily housing.</p>	<p>Urban Affairs 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Public facility corporations (PFC) with multifamily housing developments that meet certain requirements qualify for a 100% property tax and construction material sales tax exemptions in exchange for providing affordable housing. The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program helps families with low-incomes afford the cost of rental housing. Landlords of PFCs currently can discriminate against voucher holders and deny them housing. This can make it difficult to find affordable housing before vouchers expire, leaving these families with few housing options, potentially resulting in homelessness.</p> <p>HB 1634 specifies that a PFC cannot refuse to rent to a tenant because they participate in the HCV program. PFC also cannot use a financial or minimum income standard that requires a tenant in this program to have a monthly income of more than 250% of their share of the total monthly rent. HB 1634 prohibits HCV program recipients from being discriminated against, ensuring that the tax incentives are helping those who have the most severe housing needs.</p> <p>HB 1634 brings the PFC incentive one step closer to providing a sizable public benefit worth the tax incentives they are currently receiving.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 2700</p> <p>By: Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to prosecution of certain criminal offenses prohibiting sexually explicit visual material involving children.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Deepfake technology is a type of artificial intelligence that can create highly realistic images or videos. Recently, concerns have been raised that this technology may be used to create sexually explicit visual material of children. Because this technology is more recently developed, the state has no current statutes that prohibit this.</p> <p>HB 2700 aims to provide clarification to the provisions of offenses related to sexually explicit visual material involving minors and its electronic transmission. The bill clarifies that visual material includes a depiction of a minor who is identifiable through their face, likeness, or other distinctive features. Additionally, HB 2700 specifies that the visual material must involve an image of a child or minor who was under the age of 18 when the material was created, adapted, or modified, including situations where the material was produced using artificial intelligence or other computer software.</p> <p>HB 2700 will ensure that the legislature is adapting along with new technologies and keeping children safe.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1939</p> <p>By: Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to the route designation for the issuance of a permit for the movement of oversize and overweight vehicles in Webb County.</p>	<p>Transportation</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Differences in truck weight limits between Texas and Mexico can force some companies to divide shipments into multiple trucks before crossing international bridges, creating inefficiency and additional cost.</p> <p>HB 1939 provides the Texas Transportation Commission authority to allow the City of Laredo to expand permit issuance for oversize/overweight cargo vehicles on certain roads in Webb County. HB 1939 enables these permits for specific roads, namely State Highway 255 between the Laredo-Colombia Solidarity International Bridge and its intersection with Interstate Highway 35, and FM 3338 between its intersection with State Highway 255 and its intersection with FM 1472.</p> <p>HB 1939 expands the permit zone for oversize or overweight vehicles in Webb County, increasing efficiency and reducing costs for Texas freight transportation companies.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2026</p> <p>By: Darby Raney González, Mary Stucy Rogers</p>	<p>Relating to the Rural Veterinarian Incentive Program.</p>	<p>Higher Education</p> <p>6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 5 Absent</p>	<p>The 87th Legislature passed HB 1259, which reformed the rural veterinarian incentive program to select and incentivize veterinarians to service high-need areas by providing educational loan assistance in exchange for practice in shorthanded areas across the state. Throughout the program's implementation, some issues have arisen that need legislative action to be resolved. HB 2026 seeks to refine the program by changing the entity with which program participants enter into an agreement, extending eligibility to out-of-state students, and expanding the eligibility for more counties.</p> <p>HB 2602 changes which the program participant must enter into an agreement with from the applicable university system to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. HB 2026 extends program eligibility to students enrolled in an accredited college of veterinary medicine outside of Texas. HB 2602 requires the rural veterinarian incentive program committee to adopt rules to establish preferential treatment in applicant</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>selection for Texas residents who graduated from a Texas high school or a Texas-accredited college of veterinary medicine. HB 2026 expands the minimum population to be considered rural from 100,000 to 150,000.</p> <p>Expanding eligibility of both counties and program participants could lead to an increase in participation and the overall success of the program.</p>	
<p>HB 3497</p> <p>By: Morrison Hunter Lopez, Janie Guillen Martinez</p>	<p>Relating to the requirement that certain persons taking oysters on a licensed commercial oyster boat obtain a commercial fisherman's license.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation & Tourism</p> <p>6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>During the 85th Texas Legislature, HB 51 passed, which contained a requirement that an individual needed a general commercial fisherman's license to work aboard a licensed commercial oyster boat. However, an exception in Parks and Wildlife Code allows those without a general commercial fisherman's license to take or assist in taking oysters on licensed commercial oyster boats creating conflict with the requirement created in HB 51. Additionally, an oyster boat captain must hold a commercial oyster boat captain's license and a general commercial fisherman's license to take or assist in taking oysters from Texas public waters. HB 3497 seeks to change conflicting statutes and reduce the required licensure for an oyster boat captain to take or assist in taking oysters.</p> <p>HB 3497 exempts a commercial oyster boat captain license holder from needing a general commercial fisherman's license to take or assist in taking oysters on a vessel licensed as a commercial oyster boat. HB 3497 clarifies that this exemption also applies to the requirement for all crew members to have a general commercial fisherman's license to take oysters on a vessel licensed as a commercial oyster boat used to take oysters. HB 3497 removes the exemption that allows those without a general commercial fisherman's license to take or assist in taking oysters on a vessel licensed as a commercial oyster boat.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4051</p> <p>By: Goldman Ashby Hunter Morrison Collier</p>	<p>Relating to the criteria for media production development zone recognition.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation & Tourism</p> <p>5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>Current media production development zone requirements have impacted the ability of some productions to come to Texas, resulting in the loss of business. Interested parties are concerned that the eligibility and population requirements to be recognized as a media production development zone is limiting.</p> <p>HB 4051 changes the criteria for an area to be recognized as a media production zone by removing the minimum population threshold for the principal municipality in the metropolitan statistical area in which the area is located.</p> <p>Ultimately, HB 4051 would open up more media production location opportunities in Texas and positively impact associated industries.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 247</p> <p>By: Thompson</p>	<p>Relating to the consideration of a subsequent writ of habeas corpus in certain felony cases.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays,</p>	<p>Under current law, incarcerated Texans are often only given one opportunity to file a writ of habeas corpus to challenge a wrongful conviction and sentencing. This creates a situation in which legitimate claims of innocence or new evidence may arise, but an incarcerated individual has no avenue in which to bring them to the courts. Wrongful convictions are not rare, with 161 occurring in 2021 alone – totalling 1,849 years in prison for the exonerated.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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		<p>o PNV, o Absent</p>	<p>HB 247 addresses this issue by allowing the courts to consider a subsequent application for a writ of habeas corpus in a felony case if the prosecuting attorney consents in writing to the court's consideration of and ruling on the merits of the subsequent application. This additional writ of habeas corpus application may not be considered in capital cases.</p> <p>Post-conviction, many incarcerated individuals receive little to no assistance from an attorney, causing them to file writs that do not include all pertinent information and are often denied by the courts. If legitimate exculpatory evidence later arises, it may end up in litigation because of previously denied writs, or not considered at all. HB247 would allow for subsequent writ filings that could help ensure that those who are wrongfully convicted are exonerated.</p>	
<p>HB 1552 By: Guillen Lopez, Janie</p>	<p>Relating to the limitation of liability of a financial institution acquiring a trustee financial institution.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>5 Ayes, 2 Nays, 1 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>There is always a possibility for issues to arise between family members, surviving spouses, and trustees in trust accounting. Disagreements with the distribution of a trustee's account to beneficiaries can result in frivolous lawsuits.</p> <p>HB 1552 seeks to reduce the amount of frivolous lawsuits by limiting the amount that a trust beneficiary may sue a financial institution responsible for the trustee's accounting to less than \$10 million or less than the aggregate value of all distributions of trust property made by a predecessor trustee.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>
<p>HB 1832 By: Kacal Herrero</p>	<p>Relating to authorizing the payment to employees of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for vacation leave.</p>	<p>Corrections</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Many state agencies, including the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), are experiencing difficulty recruiting and retaining employees. HB 1832 proposes a solution for TDCJ employees to receive extra compensation to address this issue. HB 1832 authorizes TDCJ to offer employees an option to receive a once-per-year payment for up to 40 hours of unused vacation time. Under this new policy, the maximum amount of vacation time that can be paid is 40 hours, or the total amount the employee has accumulated, whichever is less. To calculate the payment, TDCJ will multiply the employee's hourly pay at the time of the request by the number of hours being paid. Upon payment, the employee's vacation time balance would be reduced by the time paid.</p> <p>HB 1832 allows TDCJ employees the flexibility to receive a lump-sum payment for unused vacation time, an option that increases income and incentivizes attendance. While HB 1832 offers an additional financial benefit, this policy may result in TDCJ employees electing to work instead of taking vacation time to increase their pay.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 1745 By: Leach</p>	<p>Relating to vicarious liability of a transportation network company for acts of a driver using the company's digital network.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), like Uber and Lyft, provide \$1 million in liability insurance coverage for drivers, riders, and any third parties injured while the contracted driver is providing a ride on a company platform. TNCs have reported being implicated in lawsuits that occur even though liability is not alleged on the part of the TNC and when damages are within insurance policy limits.</p> <p>HB 1745 aims to solve this problem by limiting a TNCs vicarious liability for damages. This bill indicates that TNCs can not be held vicariously liable for damages in an action or arbitration proceeding if the claimant does not prove by clear and convincing evidence that the company was grossly negligent <i>or</i> the company has fulfilled all company obligations for TNC drivers under the Occupations Code. HB 1745 specifies that TNCs are still liable for their own negligence or gross negligence for an act or omission while the company's platform is in use, including the failure to barr a driver who does not meet qualifications under the Occupations Code from working for the company before the event that caused the cause of action to occur.</p> <p>HB 1745 aims to help TNCs avoid vicarious liability for accidents caused by incidents and not the TNC. Hospital bill bills alone for a multi car wreck can cost well over \$1 million dollars. The bill may limit people's ability to hold large rideshare companies accountable. Most rideshare drivers are gig workers trying to make ends meet.</p> <p>As written, the bill's threshold for TNCs to avoid being held vicariously liable is low – the claimant is unable to prove company negligence or the company shows they fulfilled driver requirements for TNCs laid out in the Occupations Code. If an amendment were offered to heighten this threshold so the company couldn't be held vicariously liable if the claimant couldn't prove negligence and all driver requirements were followed, then the rating would change to "Will of the House."</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1163 By: Smith Metcalf Cook</p>	<p>Relating to creating the criminal offense of boating while intoxicated with a child passenger; changing the eligibility for deferred adjudication community supervision.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>As summer approaches, concerns will once again surface regarding public safety while boating in Texas. Currently, the penalty for boating while intoxicated is a Class B Misdemeanor. Concerns have been raised that there is no statute that accounts for a situation in which there is a child passenger in the boat.</p> <p>HB 1163 seeks to remedy this by creating a state jail felony offense for boating while intoxicated with a child passenger. For the bill's purposes, "child passenger" is someone under 15 years old. A third degree felony enhancement will occur for a person convicted of this offense if it is shown during the trial that the person has previously been convicted of intoxication manslaughter (or a similar offense under the laws of a different state), or two offenses relating to the operations of a motor vehicle, water craft, or amusement ride while intoxicated.</p> <p>HB 1163 also amends statutory provisions in the Penal, Alcoholic Beverage, Transportation, Parks, Criminal Procedure, and Wildlife codes to help support this adjustment. These adjustments are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes minors that operate a boat or watercraft while intoxicated with a child passenger 	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes boating while intoxicated with a child passenger among the offenses for which a law enforcement agency is excepted from diversion requirements regarding those in a mental health crisis or struggling with substance use • after a conviction, requires conditions for ignition interlock devices on the boat or the vehicle most regularly driven by the defendant • adjusts protocols and procedures for alcohol content collection, including circumstances where the collection is no longer voluntary • makes a defendant charged with boating while intoxicated with a child passenger ineligible for deferred adjudication community supervision (DACs) • regarding driver’s license (DL) suspension, once acquitted, the suspension may not be imposed; if a suspension is imposed, the bill maintains the ability to petition, specifying the length of time that the suspension must stay on appeal <p>There are concerns regarding the provisions that make an individual charged with the aforementioned offenses ineligible for DACs, as that may impede on judicial discretion. However, similar provisions already exist for offenses relating to motor vehicles, making creating a comparable statute regarding waterways sensible. Overall, HB 1163 will provide proper accountability and safety for Texans on our waterways.</p>	
HB 3158 By: Leach	Relating to occupational licensing of inmates in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.	Corrections 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Access to legal employment is vital in reducing recidivism rates and alleviating social disadvantages that justice-involved individuals face upon release. HB 3158 seeks to provide justice-involved individuals convicted of a felony the opportunity to reinstate their occupational licensure while incarcerated. HB 3158 establishes that revoking an occupational license following a felony conviction or revocation of parole, mandatory supervision, or felony community supervision does not preclude a licensing authority from accepting applications from incarcerated individuals in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. This allows justice-involved individuals to know their license status before release and plan accordingly.	Favorable
HB 376 By: Rogers Bell, Keith Bailes Bell, Cecil	Relating to a landowner's bill of rights statement in connection with the acquisition of real property through eminent domain.	Land & Resource Management 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>Eminent domain is when the government takes someone's property for public use and pays them a fair amount. However, certain projects, such as constructing transmission lines or pipelines, may decrease the value of an owner's remaining property. Not many landowners know they can submit a report about the reduced value to applicable appraisal districts.</p> <p>HB 376 seeks to address this issue by adding a statement to the landowner's bill of rights that is provided in connection with eminent domain property acquisition. The statement will include information on how a landowner can report a decrease in the value of their remaining property to the county’s appraisal district office. The statement must include a copy of the report of decreased value form issued by the comptroller. The bill would require the attorney general's office to make the landowner's bill of rights statement available on their website by January 1, 2024.</p>	Favorable

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			HB 376 ensures a property owner affected by eminent domain acquisition is fully informed of their rights.	
HB 2230 By: Canales	Relating to the determination of the sufficient balance of the economic stabilization fund for the purpose of allocating certain constitutional transfers of money to that fund and the state highway fund.	Appropriations 25 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>In 2014, Proposition 1 passed with over 79 percent of voter approval to amend the Texas Constitution so that a portion of existing oil and natural gas production taxes, also known as severance taxes, would be divided evenly between the Economic Stabilization Fund and the State Highway Fund. Funding is used for constructing, maintaining, and acquiring rights of way for public roads other than toll roads.</p> <p>The 86th Legislature extended the expiration of Proposition 1 transfers for an additional 10 years from December 2024 to December 2034. HB 2230 would make Proposition transfers permanent. The bill repeals provisions of the Government Code to make this possible.</p> <p>HB 2230 will allow the state to plan for projected growth and future transportation infrastructure investments.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 2414 By: Frank	Relating to certain practices of a health maintenance organization or insurer to encourage the use of certain physicians and health care providers.	Insurance 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>To improve the healthcare market, patients need to be actively involved and rewarded for choosing affordable, high-quality care. Currently, patients don't have a reason to look for cheaper options because they pay the same amount no matter which provider they choose. Texas law, as interpreted by the Department of Insurance, makes it illegal for insurance plans to reward people who seek affordable, high-quality care. HB 2414 aims to change this by allowing insurance plans to offer incentives for choosing lower-cost providers.</p> <p>HB 2414 authorizes health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and health care insurers to offer incentives to encourage enrollees to use lower-cost providers by adjusting deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, or other cost-sharing provisions. HB 2414 specifies that HMOs or insurers promoting a specific physician, provider, or tiered network plan must act in the best interest of the enrollee or group contract holder, ensuring that their primary goal is to benefit them.</p> <p>HB 2414 would allow insurers to steer patients to low cost providers, regardless of quality, by waiving cost sharing requirements like deductibles and copays. This could create a race to the bottom for healthcare quality. Additionally, the language about the fiduciary duty to act in the primary benefit of the enrollee is not clearly defined, and therefore, unenforceable. Lastly, there are concerns that by allowing incentives for certain providers, insurers would be able to pick winners and losers, and potentially retaliate against certain providers. It would be more beneficial to Texas consumers if the tiering structure was required to include quality information on the providers.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>

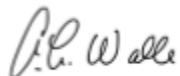
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<p>HB 2073</p> <p>By: Price Metcalf Hefner Dean</p>	<p>Relating to the recovery of fuel and purchased power costs by electric utilities.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 5 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2073 aims to streamline fuel cost recovery for non-ERCOT utilities to avoid large and unexpected surcharges being passed on to customers.</p> <p>Non-ERCOT utilities purchase fuels to generate electricity. The fuel cost recovery process is complex and lengthy, often leading to large uncollected balances that ultimately get reflected as surcharges on customer bills. These balances accumulate because it is difficult to predict the future fuel price accurately when assessing customer rates. HB 2073 simplifies this process by establishing a more efficient fuel cost validation process that allows for timely, smaller adjustments to fuel charges, reducing the need for surcharges or refunds. HB 2073 reduces complex and expensive legal proceedings and ensures customers are not unfairly burdened with large charges.</p> <p>Under HB 2073, a non-ERCOT electric utility’s fuel factor would be subject to a fuel cost review every quarter with necessary adjustments made to the fuel factor. HB 2073 requires the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to establish rules that ensure the utility collects fuel and purchased power costs as quickly as possible and that any under-collected or over-collected balance is collected from or refunded to customers through adjustment of the utility’s fuel factor within 90 days of the balance being accrued. This allows PUC to direct an electric utility to adjust its fuel factor to defer recovery of the under-collected balance over a period of two years, with the utility receiving a return set at its most recently established weighted average cost of capital. Additionally, any change resulting from the reconciliation must be incorporated into the utility’s fuel factor over a three-month period. Combined, this prevents the accumulation of fuel balances that can often result in surcharges on bills to customers.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1876</p> <p>By: Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to the Rita Littlefield Chronic Kidney Disease Centralized Resource Center established within the Health and Human Services Commission.</p>	<p>Public Health</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Texans have expressed concerns about the lack of a central kidney disease resource center to provide proper resources and educational materials for patients and doctors on kidney disease. HB 1876 aims to address this by establishing the Rita Littlefield Chronic Kidney Disease Centralized Resource Center within the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). The center would serve as a centralized system for individuals to request and obtain information on chronic kidney disease, related illnesses, genetic testing for genetic kidney diseases, including APOL1-mediated kidney disease, and to register for a kidney health clinical trials registry.</p> <p>HB 1876 directs the center to establish the kidney health clinical trials registry, enabling patients and their families to register and receive information on trial opportunities for chronic kidney disease and related illnesses. HB 1876 directs the HHSC to administer and operate the center, ensuring comprehensive access to information and resources on chronic kidney disease and related illnesses, including for each clinical stage of kidney disease and end-stage renal disease. The center must ensure that all provided information is available in both English and Spanish.</p> <p>Under HB 1876, and in collaboration with the Chronic Kidney Disease Task Force, HHSC will create and maintain a website for the resource center. This website will allow direct communication and information</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>exchange between employees and the public on chronic kidney disease and related illnesses and enable individuals to register in the clinical trials registry. HHSC may seek and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source for this project.</p> <p>HB 1876 honors a strong advocate for kidney disease in Texas, Rita Littlefield, and establishes a resource center to support Texas families.</p>	
<p>HB 2170 By: Guerra</p>	<p>Relating to toll collections by a toll project entity.</p>	<p>Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Customers reported confusion regarding Texas’ toll system and a lack of understanding that separate entities are involved in toll collections like TxTag, TollTag, or EZPass. There needs to be more transparent communication between some toll entities and customers. When payment to a toll transponder fails, the consumer may not realize it was an issue. HB 2170 seeks to rectify this by requiring toll projects to notify customers of failure and ensure bills for unpaid tolls are marked as bills.</p> <p>HB 2170 requires a toll project entity to immediately notify an electronic toll collection customer that a payment by credit or debit card associated with their account was declined or not processed. HB 2170 requires a notice or invoice of unpaid tolls to be marked on the envelope that it is a bill and requires payment. HB 2170 allows toll project entities to provide an invoice or notice via text message as an alternative to mailing or emailing the notice if the customer provided their number and opted in to receive text messages.</p> <p>HB 2170 helps improve communication and transparency between toll project entities and their customers to address confusion and inadequate information regarding toll collections.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1914 By: Kacal</p>	<p>Relating to compensatory time accrued by an employee of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.</p>	<p>Corrections 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Many state agencies, including the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), are experiencing difficulty recruiting and retaining employees. Under the current statute, there is a discrepancy in how long various TDCJ employees can retain accrued compensatory time, an employer-offered time off as an alternative to paying overtime.</p> <p>HB 1914 addresses this by expanding the current statute that allows correctional officers to have 24 months to use compensatory time following the end of the workweek in which the compensatory time was accrued to all TDCJ employees.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2729 By: Harris, Cody</p>	<p>Relating to staff member requirements for high-quality prekindergarten programs.</p>	<p>Public Education 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The 86th Legislature passed HB 3, which required schools to provide full-day pre-K to 4-year-olds and half-day to 3-year-olds. However, some schools have struggled to provide pre-k due to limited resources. A jointly administered pre-k partnership program by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) aims to aid these schools in providing free pre-k. A pre-k partnership is a collaboration between a school district or charter school and one or more private childcare providers to administer high-quality care, education, and wraparound services to eligible children. However, many schools are not utilizing this option. It has been suggested that a reason for this is that districts are setting up redundant pre-k services, rather than</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

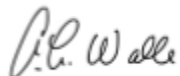
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			<p>utilizing these public-private partnerships.</p> <p>HB 2729 attempts to resolve this by requiring different qualifications for pre-k teachers in pre-k partnership classrooms.</p> <p>HB 2729 modifies the requirements to be a pre-k teacher. Currently, teachers must be certified and meet at least one of the following additional qualifications: an early childhood education credential; certification offered through an accredited training center; a minimum of eight years experience in a nationally accredited child care program; employed as a pre-k teacher in a school district with a pre-k instructional training plan approved by the commissioner of education; or an equivalent qualification. HB 2729 adds a minimum of eight years of experience teaching in a Texas Rising Star program to the list of possible additional qualifications.</p> <p>HB 2729 sets up different guidelines for pre-k teachers in pre-k partnership classrooms. These teachers would no longer have to be certified themselves. Instead, they must be supervised by a certified pre-k teacher and hold at least one of the aforementioned additional qualifications. The supervising teacher may oversee multiple classrooms, but the extent and nature of that supervision are not defined. The bill takes effect immediately if it receives a 2/3 vote in each chamber, the 2023-2024 school year.</p> <p>There are concerns that removing the certification for teachers in pre-k partnership classrooms would reduce the quality of classroom instruction in this critical time in children’s lives. Parents who take their children to free pre-k programs often cannot afford private childcare. Therefore, weakening teacher qualifications will likely affect lower and middle class families more than higher wage earners. Additionally, the bill does not lay out specific guidelines for certified supervising teachers. These teachers may have their own classroom to attend to while also taking on additionally supervisory roles. While HB 2729 attempts to increase the usage of pre-k partnerships, it does so by watering down teacher qualifications.</p>	
<p>HB 3492 By: Stucky</p>	<p>Relating to county and municipal authority to impose certain value-based fees and require disclosure of certain information related to subdivision construction.</p>	<p>Land & Resource Management</p> <p>8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>In Texas, if regulatory fees assessed by a municipality are not proportional to program operation costs for which the fees are charged and instead return more than what it costs to run the program, this is considered an unconstitutional occupation tax. There are voiced concerns that Texas municipalities and counties are not basing development inspection fees on the costs to perform the inspections but instead on the cost or estimated value of the improvement.</p> <p>HB 3492 prohibits a municipality and county from considering the cost of constructing or improving a public infrastructure for a subdivision, lot, or related property development to determine an inspection fee. HB 3492 requires municipalities and counties to base their fees on the cost of reviewing construction plans or inspecting infrastructure improvements. HB 3492 also outlines a method for determining these costs. Costs can be calculated based on the fee charged by a third-party entity, the hourly rate of the municipality's employees, or the</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>actual costs assessed by a third-party entity that provides these services, whichever is the lowest. Municipalities and counties must annually publish the fees and hourly rates for performing these services on their website or in a newspaper of general circulation.</p> <p>Under HB 3492, municipalities and counties are also prohibited from requiring disclosure of information related to the cost of constructing or improving a residential dwelling or public infrastructure improvements, except when required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.</p> <p>HB 3492 seeks to create transparency and fairness in inspection fees.</p>	
<p>HB 3600 By: Price Shine Gervin-Hawkins Moody Clardy</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the Texas Multimedia Production Program; providing tax credits; authorizing fees</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation & Tourism 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Texas’ existing multimedia incentive program is reported to be less predictable and less desirable when compared to other states, resulting in many productions not selecting Texas as its filming location. HB 3600 seeks to remedy this by establishing the Texas Multimedia Production Program (TMPP) and creating a transferable tax credit.</p> <p>Texas Multimedia Production Program (TMPP) <i>Tax Credit Program</i> HB 3600 requires the Music, Film, Television, and Multimedia Office to implement and administer TMPP for companies that produce moving image projects in Texas. HB 3600 requires the office to develop a procedure for applying for a certificate of eligibility. The application must include a method to verify an applicant is a Texas resident and to submit a project’s total in-state spending estimate, the project’s shooting script or storyboard, the estimated number of jobs for cast and production crew, and other information required by the office to determine an applicant’s in-state spending.</p> <p><i>Certificate of Eligibility</i> HB 3600 authorizes the office to award certificates of eligibility for verified in-state spending. The office is not required to act on an application and must deny applications they deem obscene. Notice of an application’s denial must be provided within seven days of the determination. Before awarding certificates, the office must review the project’s final script in case of any substantial changes that may make the recipient ineligible. The office must include the tax credit amount on the certificate, and the recipient must provide the certificate to the Texas Comptroller to receive the franchise tax credit.</p> <p><i>Qualification</i> To qualify for a certificate of eligibility, a recipient must meet minimum in-state spending of \$15 million for the project, at least 25% of the project must be filmed in Texas, provide a ledger of expenses of in-state spending including receipts, invoices, pay orders, and other required documentation, and meet certain principal</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>

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			<p>photography requirements. Unless the office determines that a sufficient number of qualified crew, actors, and extras are unavailable when principal photography begins, HB 3600 requires that 25% of those employed as production crew, actors, and extras for the project be Texas residents.</p> <p><i>Calculating the Amount of Tax Credit</i> HB 3600 requires the office to adopt rules prescribing the method to calculate the tax credit amount that will be awarded to recipients. The method used must provide the credit amount is equal to the sum of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% of the recipient’s in-state spending for the project, not including wages. To qualify for this, a recipient must provide promotional materials that can be used to promote Texas economic development and tourism to the office. • 20% of wages paid by the recipient to non-Texas residents that worked in Texas for the project. • 35% of wages paid by the recipient to Texas residents who do not live in underutilized and economically distressed areas, and 38% of wages for Texas residents who live in those areas. • If applicable, 10% of the recipient’s in-state spending for an episodic television series of three or more episodes for which a completed distribution agreement is provided to the office. • 2.5% for the recipient’s in-state spending if the company spends 25% of its filming time in an underutilized and economically distressed area. • 3% of the recipient’s in-state spending for post-production activities. <p>HB 3600 requires a recipient to provide a promotional video that uses an image of Texas in its end credits and outlines other specifications for the video. HB 3600 requires the office to reduce the tax credit amount for a recipient equal to any debt owed by the recipient to Texas.</p> <p>Franchise Tax Credit <i>Eligibility for Credit</i> HB 3600 establishes a franchise tax credit for eligible production companies awarded the credit via TMPP. HB 3600 outlines the required documentation to be submitted to the Comptroller to determine if the recipient qualifies for the credit. Recipients that sell or assign the credit to another entity must provide the required documentation for that entity to receive the credit.</p> <p><i>Amount of Credit Limitations</i> Under HB 3600, the franchise tax credit amount would equal the amount on the awarded certificate of eligibility. HB 3600 establishes a cap of the total tax credit claimed for a report to equal the amount of the franchise tax due for that year’s report and any other applicable tax credits.</p> <p><i>Carryforward</i></p>	
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			<p>HB 3600 would allow entities that receive a franchise tax credit under this program that exceeds the limit of what they can claim in one report to retain that exceeded amount to be used in the following report for a maximum of five consecutive reports.</p> <p><i>Sale or Assignment of Credit</i> HB 3600 authorizes an entity awarded a certificate of eligibility to sell or assign all or a portion of the tax credit to one or more other entities and allows those entities to sell or assign all or a portion of that tax credit to another entity. Under HB 3600, there is no limitation on how many times all of or part of a credit can be sold or assigned, but HB 3600 establishes such a transaction does not increase the total credit amount that can be claimed. HB 3600 outlines the selling or assigning tax credit procedures, including notifying the Comptroller of the transaction within 30 days of the sale or assignment.</p> <p><i>Concerns</i> The creation of TMPP is duplicative of what already exists. Texas has the Texas Moving Image Industry Incentive Program (TMIIP) through the Governor's Office's Economic Development and Tourism Division. This program receives biennial appropriations from the Legislature. Additionally, TMPP requires less from companies to qualify for the credit. With TMIIP, companies must have 70% of the crew and 70% of paid cast members, including extras, to be Texas residents. Whereas, under TMPP, this is reduced to only 25%. With TMIIP, companies must film 60% of their production in Texas, but TMPP would only require a minimum of 25%.</p> <p>HB 3600 does not include reviewing or reporting of efficiency and efficacy of TMPP, including any reporting to the Legislature. The program is not subject to a sunset provision, which would require the Legislature to review the program to implement improvements and determine if it should be extended. Lastly, there is inconclusive evidence of how much film incentives can boost economic activity. Per the recent National Conference of State Legislatures' evaluation of state audits, "despite the positive anecdotal evidence that accompanies big film projects, such programs do not provide a substantial return on investment and, if economic development is the goal, other policy avenues might be more productive."</p> <p>HB 3600 garners support from the acting industry that wish to remain in Texas and make Texas more competitive to attract larger productions. HB 3600 aims to accomplish this goal and be a boon to our state's economy, but there is the question if this is the appropriate method.</p>	
<p>HB 4318 By: Walle</p>	<p>Relating to a grant program for crime victim notification systems.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety 9 Ayes,</p>	<p>Due to staffing issues in law enforcement and support services like 9-1-1, there are frequent delays in response time and updates for victims enduring active crimes and updates about their cases. A crime victim notification system would provide a central location for victims to file reports online and allow for an opt-in service to automate all relevant responses via email or text message. HB 4318 seeks to provide financial support for law enforcement agencies to adopt such a system that is necessary for increased public safety.</p>	<p>Favorable</p>

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		<p>o Nays, o PNV, o Absent</p>	<p>HB 4318 directs the criminal justice division to administrative duties concerning the grant program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility criteria for the grant • Grant application procedures • Criteria for evaluating and awarding grant applicants • Create guidelines related to the grant amount • Establishing procedures to monitor the agencies’ ability to comply with the condition of the grant <p>Under HB 4318, victims would be provided with access to more resources, simultaneously allowing for law enforcement to be adequately equipped to serve Texans.</p>	
<p>HB 4375 By: VanDeaver Kuempel</p>	<p>Relating to instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of an automated external defibrillator in public schools.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The public school curriculum trains students in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). But, it does not provide training for an automated external defibrillator (AED), a medical device that delivers an electrical shock to help reestablish a rhythm. Both of these pieces of training are vital to save lives. HB 4375 seeks to provide students with AED training by requiring instruction for public and open-enrollment charter school students in grades 7 through 12 on how to use an AED.</p> <p>Under HB 4375, the State Board of Education (SBOE) will require instruction on using an AED to be given to students in grades 7 through 12. All requirements and standards for CPR instruction are applied to AED training. HB 4375 authorizes the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to accept donations and for districts to accept donations received by TEA to provide AED instruction. HB 4375 requires the education commissioner, from appropriated funding or other available funding, to develop and award grants to districts and charter schools to provide instruction on CPR and using an AED.</p> <p>CPR and AED training teaches essential skills to address emergency situations and can empower an individual to provide aid when needed.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4053 By: Johnson, Julie</p>	<p>Relating to the contents of the personal financial statement filed by public officers and candidates.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>Texas statute requires officeholders and candidates for certain public offices to file Personal Financial Statements (PFS) to ensure elected officials do not have direct or indirect conflicts of interest. The current statement can be complex, and may require legal assistance if an individual has a significant amount of assets.</p> <p>While it is important for transparency, HB 4503 aims to simplify and streamline the PFS by removing redundancies and eliminating requirements to list amounts or shares for income sources such as dividends, royalties, trust income, mutual funds, and stocks. HB 4503 eliminates requirements for an individual to categorize the amount of certain financial activities, such as net gains or losses from stocks, sales of any beneficial interests in real property, income received as a beneficiary of a trust, and income from interest, royalties, and rents. Additionally, HB 4503 provides an option to “opt-out” for sections that are managed by a</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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			<p>third party with a requirement that the third party sign a sworn statement. Finally, HB 4503 defines asset and liability and limits reporting requirements for positions to board memberships and executive positions.</p> <p>The goal of HB 4503 is to preserve transparency and meaningful disclosure while making the process less confusing and tedious. However, some of the provisions of HB 4503 could easily be exploited to shield conflicts of interests that do exist. With the abundance of possibilities for conflicts of interest, an effort to streamline the PFS could leave room for bad actors to take advantage of exemptions. Additionally, given that this reporting requirement only applies to only public office holders and candidates, the fact that PFS is tedious and exhaustive can easily be seen as a cost of public service, providing constituents with a wide range of information to ensure confidence when voting. Constituents can easily misunderstand a PFS if it is not explicitly clear what actions may directly benefit members.</p>	
<p>HB 3196</p> <p>By: Johnson, Ann</p>	<p>Relating to prompt payment deadlines for health benefit plan claims affected by a catastrophic event.</p>	<p>Insurance</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 3196 seeks to clarify and amend the current rule regarding catastrophic events and claims handling deadlines for health plans and providers. Currently, health plans and providers are required to notify the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) within a total of 15 days for emergency extensions: 5 days after a catastrophic event plus 10 days after resuming business operations. The purpose is to provide applicable entities with relief in the event of a catastrophe that disrupts timely submission and payments of claims.</p> <p>HB 3196 defines a “catastrophic event” as an event beyond the control of the health plan or provider that results in significant disruption of operations such as a natural disaster, act of terrorism, cyber attack, or public health emergency. HB 3196 provides a process for health plans and providers to request an extension on claims submission and payment deadlines beyond that 15-day period in current statute. To receive an extension, entities would need to submit a written request detailing the catastrophic event and the impact on the entity’s ability to comply with deadlines. Additionally, HB 3196 includes penalty and enforcement provisions for health plans and providers who fail to comply with deadlines or make false statements in their extension requests.</p> <p>HB 3196 provides clarity and guidance to health plans and providers during catastrophic events and ensures timely and appropriate payment for services rendered.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3131</p> <p>By: Guerra Anchía Darby </p>	<p>Relating to the authority of the Railroad Commission of Texas to designate certain persons as the operator of an</p>	<p>Energy Resources</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Geothermal operators can use abandoned oil and gas wells by pumping water or fluid inside the well. When electricity demand is high, geopressured water can be released to run turbines, produce electricity, and dispatch it to the power grid.</p> <p>Currently, geothermal companies cannot use old and abandoned oil and gas wells to produce electricity because there is no system in place enabling them to adopt these wells. Adopting orphaned wells will reduce the number of abandoned wells and save money that would have been spent to plug them.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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Morales, Eddie	orphaned oil or gas well.		<p>HB 3131 amends state Natural Resources Code and grants the Railroad Commission the authority to designate certain persons as operators of an orphaned oil or gas well if they make a claim and show proof that they have a right to the minerals or geothermal energy in the ground. The person must have a current lease, deed, or other documentation conveying a fee interest in the geothermal estate.</p> <p>HB 3131 helps convert wells into energy sources which promotes sustainability and reduces the number of abandoned wells.</p>	
<p>HB 3056 By: Bonnen</p>	<p>Relating to the cash balance benefit under the Employees Retirement System of Texas.</p>	<p>Pensions, Investment, and Financial Services</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The 87th Legislature enacted legislation to reform the Employees Retirement System (ERS) pension fund and created a new cash balance benefit structure within ERS. Unfortunately, ERS has identified technical issues, and HB 3056 was created to amend language and is seen as a clean-up bill to implement it.</p> <p>HB 3056 clarifies certain provisions for new members of the ERS who are hired or taken office on or after Sept. 1, 2022. The bill requires ERS board of trustees to adopt a rule that complies with the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 regarding how a cash balance group member may establish as a military service credit.</p> <p>Military Service Credit The state shall contribute for military service in the same amount and ratio as the member’s contribution. The state’s contribution must be paid from the fund that the member had received compensation at the time of the military service or wherever they held the most recent position.</p> <p>Optional Cash Balance Benefits HB 3056 would provide the option for the retiree in the cash balance benefit group to elect to receive an optional cash balance annuity instead of the standard annuity.</p> <p>The bill authorizes eligible persons to select one of five options for beneficiaries: a lifetime annuity or an annuity for a guaranteed period. It establishes that a member is eligible for a certain enhanced annuity from the law enforcement and custodial officer supplemental retirement fund.</p> <p>Change in Optical Cash Balance Annuity HB 3056 permits a retired member who originally selected an optional lifetime cash balance annuity the option to change to a standard cash retirement annuity selection. For this to happen, according to the bill, there needs to be a court order for the change pursuant to a divorce decree. The retiree has to file a request with ERS about the change in annuity selection.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>If all the conditions met that were set in the legislation, HB 3056 requires ERS to recompute the annuity as a standard cash balance annuity if the retiree files that request.</p> <p>Partial Lump-Sum Cash Balance Option Hb 3056 authorizes a member to select a standard cash balance annuity or an optional cash balance annuity with a partial lump-sum distribution. Through this provision, the bill caps the distribution amount equal to the sum of 36 months of a standard cash balance annuity. It authorizes the board of trustees to adopt a policy that implements the lump-sum option and authorizes using a death benefit annuity for the lump-sum. In addition, this bill clarifies that the lump-sum option is inapplicable to a disability retirement annuity.</p> <p>Gain-Sharing Interest HB 3056 has amended certain provisions regarding gain-sharing interest adjustments for annuitants of a cash balance benefit. It removes the requirement that the interest rate ERS computes does not have to be the same rate as the following year. It specifies that the amount balance used from the end of the preceding fiscal year will be used to calculate the member’s gain sharing interest from the account balance. HB 3056 clarifies the requirement to deposit gain-sharing interest and the recalculation of the cash balance annuity payment formula.</p> <p>HB 3056 requires a provision of payments of segregated amounts to a domestic relations order on or after the bill’s effective date. HB 3056 does not affect the structure of the cash balance benefit or those in the group. It is a clean-up bill to regulate and properly implement in ERS without any further delays or technical issues.</p>	
<p>HB 2984 By: Herrero Anchía Hefner</p>	<p>Relating to creating the criminal offense of tampering with an electronic monitoring device.</p>	<p>Corrections 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2984 is a response to several instances in which justice-involved individuals committed crimes in Texas while on parole or community supervision after removing their ankle monitors. Tampering with or destroying an electronic monitoring device is currently considered a technical violation of parole in which individuals may face administrative sanctions such as rearrest, but there is no specific criminal charge for this behavior.</p> <p>HB 2984 HB 2984 creates a criminal offense for tampering with, destroying, or knowingly removing an electronic monitoring device issued as a condition of community supervision, parole, or bail. HB 2984 would make this offense a state jail felony, punishable by up to two years of confinement in a state jail facility and a maximum fine of \$10,000. For individuals in the super-intensive supervision program, this new offense is enhanced to a third degree felony which carries a sentence of imprisonment of two to ten years and a maximum fine of \$10,000.</p> <p>SB 1004 – Companion HB 2984 is expected to be swapped out for SB 1004, the senate companion. SB 1004 has several notable differences. Most importantly, it allows judges the discretion to order the sentence for this offense be served concurrently or consecutively with the sentence that led to the individual being released on parole. This measure</p>	<p><u>HB 2984</u> <u>Favorable with</u> <u>Concerns</u></p> <p><u>SB 1004</u> <u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>provides guardrails that could stave an influx of individuals into state correctional facilities for tampering with electronic monitoring devices. Additionally, SB 1004 includes an exemption for medically necessary removal of a device, allowing healthcare practitioners to remove a device when needed without violating the created offense.</p> <p>Impact HB 2984 and its senate companion, SB 1004, would impact far more people than those who perpetuate violent crimes. Electronic monitoring devices may be used for misdemeanor offenses and increasingly as a pre-trial measure. This means that individuals who have not been convicted or have only been convicted of a misdemeanor offense could face a state jail felony charge for tampering with their ankle monitor, regardless of the severity of their original offense. However, some contend that a penalty ladder is not a sufficient deterrent. If a person is being monitored electronically as part of their sentencing, then removes the device and is remanded to TDCJ custody to serve out their original sentence, it may not seem like a true consequence.</p> <p>SB 1004 is an improvement compared to HB 2984. While there should be appropriate repercussions for removing an ankle monitor and violating parole, the severity of the original offense that landed the individual in community supervision should also be considered. SB 1004 allows judges the discretion on whether the sentence will be concurrent or stacked. Additionally, SB 1004 takes exceptions for medical emergencies into account while HB 2984 does not. It is concerning that electronic monitoring has increased throughout the country for pre-trial individuals and some see it as an expansion of the carceral system known as “e-jail” that perpetuates the disproportionate impact of incarceration on marginalized communities. However, this bill does nothing to increase the use of or expand conditions for electronic monitoring.</p>	
<p>HB 2839 By: Smithee</p>	<p>Relating to a liquidity stress test for certain insurance companies.</p>	<p>Insurance 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2839 is a biennial recommendation from the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) that requires TDI to adopt an assets liquidity stress test framework in order to address the potential liquidity challenges faced by life insurers that issue long-term cash buildup products—insurance that allows policyholders to accumulate cash over time along with the benefits provided by the policy itself. The framework will apply to large life insurers that write a significant amount of policies that could generate a large consumer demand for payout. By design the stress test would capture the effects of large-scale asset sales to meet this demand on broader financial markets and prevent a liquidity issue. HB 2839 requires the TDI commissioner to adopt the stress test including scope criteria and reporting templates; it also requires insurers to file results of biennial liquidity stress tests performed using the framework.</p> <p>HB 2839 enhances monitoring of life insurers that are more vulnerable to liquidity stress and ensures the state is aware of potential risks to Texans and the economy.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 2893 By: Clardy</p>	<p>Relating to the procedures for transferring certain cases and proceedings between courts.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Last session, the omnibus court legislation standardized the methods for transferring civil and family cases. There have been requests to do the same for probate and guardianship matters.</p> <p>HB 2893 amends the Estates Code and Government Code to allow the transfer of probate and guardianship proceeding records between courts. The bill specifies which documents must be transferred using the statewide electronic filing system, including a transfer certificate and index of transferred documents from the Office of Court Administration (OCA), a copy of each final order, a copy of the order of transfer signed by the transferring court, a copy of the original papers filed in the transferring court, and a bill of any costs in the transferring court. The clerk of the transferring court is required to keep a copy of the transferred documents, and the clerk who receives the documents must follow procedures. OCA must adopt rules and develop and make a standardized transfer certificate and index of transferred document forms to transfer guardianship and probate proceedings.</p> <p>HB 2893 standardizes the court document transfer procedure and maintains the integrity of these documents.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2806 By: Canales</p>	<p>Relating to the relocation, adjustment, and ownership of commercial signs.</p>	<p>Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, commercial signs on state and federal highways in cities are permitted by both the Texas Department of Transportation and municipal governments. However, if a public infrastructure project affects the sign's location, sign owners may be unable to move their signs even if TxDOT approved in response to municipalities not approving to move the sign.</p> <p>HB 2806 authorizes commercial sign owners to relocate the use, structure, or permit of their commercial signs if they can no longer be used in their current location due to highway construction, public infrastructure projects, or public improvement projects by public improvement districts. If a sign owner wants to relocate their sign, the municipality where the sign is located must make a special exception to any relevant ordinances to allow for the relocation.</p> <p>HB 2806 allows sign owners to relocate their signs if the view or readability of the sign is obstructed by noise abatement or safety measures, changes in a road's rise or drop in a given distance, vegetation, construction, aesthetic improvements by state agencies, or directional signs. However, the sign owner is responsible for all costs associated with relocating the sign and is not entitled to compensation.</p> <p>HB 2806 establishes that the rights associated with a commercial sign that was legally erected but no longer complies with current laws and regulations related to highway beautification, outdoor signs on rural roads, and municipal regulation of signs, belong to the owner of the commercial sign.</p> <p>HB 2806 aims to help commercial sign owners who are inconvenienced, by no fault of their own, to continue their advertising in another appropriate location.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 3338 By: Cole</p>	<p>Relating to measures to prevent and respond to opioid-related drug overdoses, including policies and training regarding the use of opioid antagonists, at student residences on campuses of public institutions of higher education; providing immunity</p>	<p>Higher Education 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, state law does not require that resident advisors (RA) in dorms be provided with naloxone or other opioid antagonists to prevent fentanyl overdose in colleges.</p> <p>HB 3338 requires institutions of higher education to adopt and implement policies and procedures for the availability of opioid antagonists at each dorm on campus, including training on proper use of these devices. An institution may accept gifts, grants, donations, and federal funds for implementation.</p> <p>Training The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) must consult with the commissioner of state health services to adopt rules regarding the proper procedures of antagonists in a dorm on a college campus. The rules must establish a process for inventory and the amount of necessary training for the administration of the antagonist. The supply must be stored in a secure location and easily accessible to those equipped to administer the antagonists. The training must include information on recognizing the signs and symptoms of overdose, administration of the antagonist, emergency procedures, alerting medical services, and proper disposal of used or expired antagonists. The training must be done annually and may be conducted in person or online.</p> <p>HB 3338 grants a person acting in good faith immunity from civil or criminal liability and ensures that no disciplinary action by the institution can be taken against a student who, in good faith, reports or requests emergency medical assistance for a person believed to be experiencing an opioid-related overdose. An institution is immune from suit resulting from an act, or failure to act of any person.</p> <p>Physicians Authority A physician may prescribe a standing order of the antagonists in the name of an institution. The order must contain the physician’s name and signature, the name of the institution, the amount of antagonists being obtained, and the issuance date. The physician must periodically review the order and be available through direct telecommunication as needed.</p> <p>Mandatory Reporting Each higher education institution must require all resident advisors to be authorized and trained to administer opioid antagonists and include the policy in the student handbook and the institution’s website. Should the trained personnel administer an antagonist to an individual in crisis, THECB must submit a report to the physician who prescribed the antagonist within 10 business days of the occurrence. The report must include the age of the opioid antagonist recipient, the person’s affiliation with the university, the location of the administration, the number of doses, the title of the person who administered the antagonist, and any other information required by the commissioner of higher education.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
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			<p>Conclusion HB 3338 could help mitigate the harm caused by opioid overdose by equipping and authorizing the RAs in college dorms to utilize opioid antagonists to save the life of a college student in crisis.</p>	
<p>HB 5010 By: Schofield</p>	<p>Relating to the classification of a grievance filed with the State Bar of Texas.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>There have been concerns that the State Bar is overwhelmed by frivolous complaints, which burden state resources and attorneys in the complaint process. The State Bar, however, is capable of handling these complaints and has an adequate grievance review process. The grievance process considers complaints as requiring a full investigation and disposition, and inquiries as not needing the same level of investigation.</p> <p>HB 5010 seeks to reduce the number of grievances that become complaints by limiting grievances that can be considered complaints to those made by someone who has a cognizable interest or who is tied to the legal matter or facts alleged in the grievance. All other grievances are considered an inquiry. This means that any grievance filed by someone unconnected with a legal matter regarding an attorney cannot be considered for an investigation, limiting the ability of the State Bar to determine if a grievance is worth investigation. HB 5010 also adds the stipulation that an attorney against whom a grievance is filed may appeal the classification as an inquiry to the Board of Disciplinary Appeals, giving them special privileges to attempt to resolve grievances filed against them.</p> <p>HB 5010 would make it so that grievances that are filed by someone who may have a valid complaint are reduced to inquiries, preventing the State Bar from investigating. It also gives attorneys extra privileges to resolve grievances filed against them. A report to the Supreme Court of Texas by the Grievance Oversight Committee at the State Bar cited that the State Bar does not want to lower the standard of professional ethics by making it more difficult for clients to make complaints against attorneys. The State Bar already has a process to sort through complaints and is perfectly capable of handing their grievance caseload.</p> <p>Concerns Advocates are concerned that this effort to streamline the process may prevent legitimate grievances from being investigated. This could allow for misconduct to be repeated and more clients being hurt before intervention can take place.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4990 By: Bonnen Frank Oliverson</p>	<p>Relating to the Texas Pharmaceutical Initiative; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Health Care Reform, Select</p> <p>10 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Rising healthcare costs are largely driven by prescription drug pricing and anticompetitive practices by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). HB 4990 creates the Texas Pharmaceutical Initiative, which appoints a statewide PBM for price transparency and savings. This initiative fosters manufacturing partnerships for generic and specialty drugs, improving affordability and accessibility. It also invests in healthcare cost and claims analytics services and establishes the Texas Pharmaceutical Initiative Fund to secure public and private resources for implementation and ongoing support. State entities can decide if they want to provide access to prescription drugs and medical supplies under this initiative.</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>

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			<p>The Board HB 4990 establishes a board to govern the Texas Pharmaceutical Initiative. The seven-member board consists of various officials and appointees, with the chancellor of The University of Texas System serving ex-officio.</p> <p>Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) Under HB 4990, the PBM must offer pricing transparency, pass-through all rebates and fees, and provide fair and equitable pricing to participating pharmacies. Furthermore, the PBM is required to contract with appropriate parties to deliver evidence-based benefit design, prior authorization processes, new drug review processes, and partner with suppliers, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and group purchasing organizations for competitive acquisition of prescription drugs and medical supplies.</p> <p>Service Center HB 4990 also requires the board to establish a central service center with satellite distribution facilities to provide prescription drugs and medical supplies to eligible individuals for participating state entities. It will include a mail order pharmacy and specialty pharmacy.</p> <p>Advanced Preparation HB 4990 directs the board to establish a pharmaceutical advanced preparation facility in compliance with the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. This facility will manufacture and provide compounded drugs, offer chimeric antigen receptor T-cell treatment and other gene therapies, and maintain advanced laboratories for quality control. This facility will be operated by a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization established by the board and may charge fees to cover operational costs, including overhead and margin.</p> <p>Generics Under HB 4990, the board can work with a provider to create a facility that manufactures generic biological products and generic drugs, adhering to federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements. The board must prioritize cost savings and access to affordable medications when entering the agreement.</p> <p>Additional Provisions & Reporting Information received by the board, a program or entity created under this chapter, a state entity participating in the initiative, or a contractor or agent of the board that could compromise the financial, competitive, or proprietary nature of the information if disclosed, is considered confidential.</p> <p>Concerns</p>	
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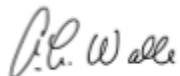
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			<p>Some critics express concerns from Health Plans that the bill could create a “mega-PBM” without proper safeguards or clear objectives. Others fear it may separate the prescription drug program from Medicaid managed care, leading to a fragmented fee-for-service system.</p> <p>Conclusion Overall, HB 4990 aims to provide cost-effective access to prescription drugs and medical supplies for various groups, with state entities having the option to participate.</p>	
<p>HB 4843 By: Holland</p>	<p>Relating to increasing the criminal penalty for the offense of unlawful possession of a firearm by a person convicted of a felony.</p>	<p>Community Safety-Select</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>There has been an increase in violent crime in Texas. Persons convicted of a felony may possess a firearm in their residence after five years of their completion date of incarceration or parole. Before this, a convicted felon may be charged with unlawful possession of a firearm which is a third-degree felony and a possible minimum sentence of two years. HB 4843 intends to increase the severity of unlawful possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and to create a mandatory minimum sentence for the offense.</p> <p>HB 4843 increases the severity of unlawful possession of a firearm by a convicted felon from a third-degree felony to a second-degree felony and creates a ten-year minimum imprisonment sentence for the offense.</p> <p>The bill aims to protect Texans and reduce repeated violent offenders by increasing the penalty for unlawful possession of a firearm. There is a need for caution with this kind of penalty increase - especially without guardrails of who this particularly impacts. If the intent is to reduce violent crime, then there needs to be a specification that this is targeting people that have committed violent offenses. Not all justice-involved people who commit felonies are violent offenders but could be significantly impacted by this change. There are also the documented trends of how our criminal justice system disproportionately impacts people of color and people of lower socioeconomic status. Lastly, having a mandatory minimum sentence removes discretion from the courts to respond to individual needs or circumstances. Overall, a sweeping change with no consideration of varying factors can have drastic unintended negative impact.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4906 By: Hefner</p>	<p>Relating to the installation and use of tracking equipment and access to certain communications by certain peace officers.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Current law does not authorize school or university police officers to apply for or be issued a search warrant for the collection of electronic evidence, social media accounts, direct messaging, and text records, which may result in any collected evidence being suppressed in court. This gap appears to be an oversight, as there is no explicit reason that these officers would be excluded from these warrant provisions. As school safety concerns continue to grow, many parties have expressed a need for school officers to have access to this information.</p> <p>HB 4906 seeks to remedy this by expanding the definition of “authorized peace officer” relating to statutory provisions regarding the installation and use of tracking equipment and access to certain communications to include a school or university peace officer.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			HB 4906 will help ensure that school and university police officers have access to the tools necessary to keep students and staff safe.	
HB 4692 By: Morrison Martinez Flores	Relating to the unlawful sale or purchase of shark fins or shark fin products; creating a criminal offense.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	<p>There has been an increase in the illegal sale, purchase, or possession of shark fins. Many of these cases have yet to be prosecuted in response to concerns about current statutes that local game wardens and prosecutors have raised. HB 4692 seeks to address these concerns by clarifying prohibited actions related to the sale and purchase of shark fins, clarifying requirements to process them, and granting Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) rulemaking authority to address additional needs or concerns about this.</p> <p>HB 4692 establishes that a person can process a shark carcass into steaks or filets in a restaurant or place of business only if the steaks or filets do not contain any portion of the fin and each of the shark's fins is destroyed and discarded immediately upon removal as prescribed by TPWD. A person is subject to a Class B Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor if the person fails to comply with the requirement. This offense is enhanced to a Class A Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor if it is found that the person has a prior conviction of the offense within five years of the presenting offense.</p> <p>HB 4692 establishes that proof a person possessed a shark fin, other than one that was destroyed, in a place of business, a restaurant, or a commercial vessel on Texas waters, then this is evidence that the person possessed shark fin for sale. HB 4692 also establishes that proof a person advertised for sale a shark fin, a product containing shark fin, or a product represented to be or contain shark fin as evidence that the person offered a shark fin for sale.</p> <p>HB 4692 exempts a person who possesses, transports, sells, or purchases a shark fin under a TPWD permit for scientific research from being considered a violation of its provisions. HB 4692 establishes that each fin a person purchases or possesses in violation of its provisions is considered a separate offense.</p> <p>HB 4692 authorizes TPWD to adopt as needed to administer provisions relating to the offense of unlawful sale or purchase of shark fins or shark fin products and make it an offense to violate a proclamation or rule adopted under these provisions. HB 4692 proposes required changes to address increased violations of possessing or selling shark fins.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 4696 By: Noble	Relating to the reporting and investigation of certain allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, the making and	Human Services 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	During the 84th Legislative session, SB 200 passed and shifted the responsibility of investigating cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation in long-term care facilities from the Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS) to the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). However, the legislation only transferred the intake, prioritization, and assignment of the investigations for some long-term providers. HB 4696 aims to complete the transfer of authority and responsibility to the HHSC to receive and investigate reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation in certain long-term care facilities.	<u>Favorable</u>

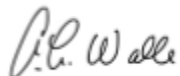
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	<p>investigation of complaints alleging violations of certain health facility licensing requirements, and the content of the employee misconduct registry.</p>		<p>HB 4696, across the Family Code, Health and Safety Code, and Human Resources Code, transfers from DPFS to HHSC functions relating to investigations of reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an individual receiving services from certain long-term care providers or from officers, employees, agents, contractors, or subcontractors of these providers.</p> <p>HB 4696 requires HHSC to receive and investigate reports of an elderly person or a person with a disability who lives in or is in the care of a residential child-care facility. HB 4696 specifies that HHSC is the receiving agency for reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an individual receiving services from a home and community services agency, an intermediate care facility for individuals with an intellectual disability (ICF/IID), or a provider under the home and community-based services (HCS) waiver program or the Texas home living (TxHml) waiver program. HB 4696 requires DPFS to immediately notify HHSC about a report alleging abuse or neglect of a child with an intellectual disability receiving services in state supported living centers or the ICF/IID component of the Rio Grande State Center.</p> <p>HB 4696 allows a mandatory report of a resident's abuse, neglect, or exploitation in certain long-term care facilities to be made electronically or orally. The applicable facility or service provider must submit the report to HHSC within five days of it being made. HB 4696 requires investigators to make unannounced visits to facilities to conduct investigations of abuse or neglect. For complainants alleging abuse, neglect, or exploitation, HB 4696 requires HHSC to perform an inspection as soon as possible but no later than 14 days after receiving the complaint unless it is determined to be frivolous.</p> <p>HB 4696 requires the DFPS commissioner to transfer to HHSC any DFPS funds and resources, including information technology, documents, and personnel allocated to investigate reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities receiving care from certain providers. HB 4696 allows for delayed implementation should a federal waiver or authorization be required.</p> <p>HB 4696 will complete the necessary transfer of duties and responsibilities to HHSC so they can fully receive and investigate these cases.</p>	
<p>HB 5125 By: Metcalf</p>	<p>Relating to the organization and operation of the legislative branch of state government.</p>	<p>House Administration 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 5125 is the biennial legislative housekeeping bill that updates and revises certain provisions regarding the organization and operation of the legislative branch of state government.</p> <p>HB 5125 codifies the administrative operations of the Legislature and legislative service agencies in statute. HB 1521 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the statutory authorization for each house’s administration committees; • the formal designation of the administrative heads of the House, Senate, and legislative agencies for applicable laws; • clarification that internship programs are not covered by the contribution moratorium; 	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>

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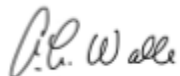
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the sunset date for the administrative committees at the beginning of the next regular legislative session; • the repeal of certain dormant oversight committees; • clarification that each house may pay the expenses of any public members on interim committees as is done for members; • the establishment that information held by a General Investigating Committee is not subject to requests under the state public information law; • changes to reflect the responsibilities of the State Preservation Board (SPB) for facilities management services; and • changes to reflect the responsibilities of the Legislative Council regarding services to legislative agencies, support for new member orientation, and administrative support to certain executive agencies. <p>Interested parties have raised concerns over the potential impacts of the provision requiring uncompensated internships be conducted through a program approved by House Administration and receiving court credit. This may reduce opportunities, particularly for interns in unorganized programs or are not receiving academic credit.</p>	
<p>HB 2088 By: Bucy Talarico</p>	<p>Relating to the regulation of the practice of pharmacy.</p>	<p>Public Health 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The 87th Legislature authorized pharmacists to provide a 30-day emergency supply of insulin and related items, up from a 3-day supply. Insulin doses vary, causing some prepackaged pens or cartridges to exceed 30 days for some individuals. This creates a risk of not reimbursing pharmacies for emergency prescriptions exceeding 30 days. HB 2088 is cleanup legislation to address this situation and to clarify the Texas Board of Pharmacy’s (TSBP) authority over violations for pharmacy technicians and trainees.</p> <p>HB 2088 establishes an exception to the 30-day cap on the quantity of emergency insulin refills for when the smallest commercially available insulin package exceeds 30 days. HB 2088 sets the cap for the quantity of an emergency refill of insulin-related equipment or supplies at the small commercially available package necessary for a 30-day supply. Pharmacists may distribute multiple insulin packages in emergency refills, provided the total is within a 30-day supply.</p> <p>HB 2088 authorizes TSBP to take disciplinary action against an applicant or holder of a current or expired pharmacy technician or pharmacy technician trainee registration if the applicant or registrant engaged in fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in their occupation. HB 2088 removes TSBP’s authority to take disciplinary action against an applicant, license holder, or registrant for committing a Class B misdemeanor offense of selling an abusable volatile chemical without a permit. HB 2088 makes conforming changes to address an accidental broadening of TSBP’s authority.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 1890 By: Jetton</p>	<p>Relating to the operation of a hospital at home program by certain hospitals; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>Public Health 9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services granted waivers for hospital at home programs to treat specific patients at home, expanding hospital capacity, reducing administrative costs, and maintaining positive patient outcomes. Over 250 hospitals in 37 states, including 27 in Texas, are approved for these programs. These waivers are set to expire with the public health emergency.</p> <p>HB 1890 provides changes for the operation and regulation of the “Hospital At Home” programs, enabling hospitals to continue providing acute care services at home. Hospitals must obtain approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), otherwise they are prohibited from operating a hospital at home program. The bill details the application process, including fees and allows HHSC to request additional information from an applicant. The HHSC executive commissioner is responsible for establishing the minimum standards, which must be at least as stringent as CMS standards. The HHSC may waive or modify requirements if deemed beneficial to patients and program implementation.</p> <p>HB 1890 ensures Texans have access to acute care services at home.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1632 By: Paul Morales, Eddie</p>	<p>Relating to standardized training for election officers.</p>	<p>Elections 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Election workers across the state do not have consistent or standardized training. HB 1632 aims to better equip these workers to assist in the electoral process.</p> <p>HB 1632 requires the Texas Secretary of State to develop and make available online a standardized curriculum and training program at no cost for: election judges; members of an early voting ballot board; members of a signature verification committee; and members of a central counting station. Completion of the training program would require the passage of an exam with the certificate of completion being valid for a year.</p> <p>HB 1632 specifies that completion of the standardized training program is not a prerequisite to serve in an election for a county election official; a presiding or alternate election judge; an election clerk; a member of an early voting ballot board; a member of a signature verification committee; or a central counting station officer.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1651 By: Cook Spiller Johnson, Ann Bhojani</p>	<p>Relating to the eligibility for custodial officer service in the Employees Retirement System of Texas of juvenile justice officers employed by the Texas Juvenile</p>	<p>Pension, Investment, and Financial Service 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas Juveniles Justice Department (TJJD) is experiencing the highest turnover rates, with juvenile correctional officers experiencing the highest rate of 70 percent. In a report exit survey, the top reason for leaving the agency in 2022 was for better pay and benefits. HB 1651 seeks to increase recruitment and retention of their employees by providing an opportunity to be included in the law enforcement and custodial officer supplement fund on top of the state employee retirement fund. The supplemental retirement fund is for high-risk, hazardous, and potential high-turnover positions. HB 1651 aims to provide a full benefits package for these highly stressed-level positions and receive early retirement.</p> <p>HB 1651 authorizes the board of trustees of the Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) to adopt an alternative definition of “custodial officer” to include juvenile justice officer employers as a participant of the</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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	Justice Department.		<p>Law Enforcement and Custodial Officer Supplemental Retirement Fund. The board could add TJJD employees once it is determined that the amortization period for unfunded actuarial liabilities of ERS does not exceed 30 years and that the approval of juvenile justice officers for participation does not negatively affect the current ERS members' benefits and the fund.</p> <p>The board must consult with the Texas Juvenile Justice Board to adopt standards to determine the eligibility of a juvenile justice officer for a service credit as a custodial officer, which can be used towards early retirement, and it prohibits an employee from appealing the outcome. In addition, HB 1651 requires the board to notify TJJD concerning the adoption of the rule. Upon notification, TJJD shall provide the names of each person's juvenile justice officer and other information to ERS to determine credit service and financial benefits. After the ERS provides notice, TJJD can begin making deductions and collecting contributions for the fund during the first pay period.</p> <p>HB 1651 stipulates that the board will ensure the service credit by the juvenile justice officer before the adoption date of the rule to be considered as credit as a custodial officer, which assists in the eligibility under the fund. HB 1651 provides an opportunity for early retirement and to be opted-in ERS for TJJD officers to reduce an already hostile and low retention agency. Juvenile justice correctional officers could receive supplemental retirement funds and benefits from the ERS. This supplement fund will allow the officers to retire after 20 years with full benefits instead of 30-40 years later under ERS.</p>	
<p>HB 667</p> <p>By: Johnson, Ann Jetton Plesa Lopez, Ray</p>	<p>Relating to the licensing and regulation of music therapists; requiring an occupational license; authorizing fees.</p>	<p>Public Health</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Music therapy is a form of care that uses music to help people cope with trauma. In music therapy, therapists use evidence-based techniques, such as improvisation or songwriting, to help clients achieve specific goals in a therapeutic relationship. Therapists work with other professionals to create personalized treatment plans and monitor progress. Music therapy does not involve diagnosing or assessing physical, mental, or communication disorders.</p> <p>It's crucial to regulate music therapists to ensure patients receive safe and effective care. Improper treatment can cause harm, such as seizures, anxiety, or increased self-harming behaviors. By requiring a license, HB 667 ensures that music therapists receive proper training and prioritize patient health, protecting patients from harm caused by untrained therapists.</p> <p>The bill defines music therapy as the clinical and evidence-based use of various music interventions to help clients achieve specific goals within a therapeutic relationship, excluding diagnosing or assessing disorders. HB 667 prohibits unlicensed individuals from using designations that imply they are music therapists. Applicants for a license must submit an application and fees to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) and provide proof of a successful state-approved criminal background check. Certain individuals, such as certified practitioners using music within their scope, supervised students, and federal employees, do not apply to the</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>bill's provisions. Out-of-state therapists can provide services for up to 20 days in a calendar year, given certain conditions are met.</p> <p>HB 667 allows music therapists to offer consultation, evaluation, preventative care, wellness care, education, and specialized support without a referral from a healthcare professional. The music therapist must collaborate with applicable healthcare providers for clients with diagnosed health-related needs and review the client's diagnosis, treatment needs, and treatment plan.</p> <p>HB 667 establishes the Music Therapist Advisory Board to advise the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (TCLR) and TDLR on technical matters, performance standards, license eligibility, examination content, and other issues affecting music therapy. The board, appointed by TCLR's presiding officer and approved by TCLR, consists of four licensed music therapists, one physician or health professional authorized to refer patients for music therapy services, and two public representatives who are either former recipients of music therapy services or parents/guardians of current or former recipients.</p> <p>HB 667 requires the TCLR to adopt rules for administering and enforcing the bill's provisions, including establishing standards of ethical practice and adopting a code of ethics. The TDLR is responsible for administering and enforcing the provisions, evaluating license applicants, issuing licenses, and investigating violations. HB 667 instructs TCLR to establish reasonable and necessary fees to cover the expenses of administering and enforcing the bill's provisions.</p> <p>HB 667 seeks to require an occupational license for music therapists and create a regulatory framework for the industry to ensure that each patient receives the same standard of safety and care.</p>	
<p>HB 621 By: Shaheen</p>	<p>Relating to creating a temporary educator certification for certain military service members.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>9 Ayes, 3 Nays, 1 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The teacher shortage is a massive issue in the Texas education system. HB 621 seeks to combat teacher workforce shortages in Texas by creating a temporary educator certification for certain military service members.</p> <p>Under HB 621, temporary certification is eligible to be issued for those who served in the armed forces and were honorably discharged, retired, or released from active duty; these service members must also meet all other eligibility for teacher certification under current law; except that HB 621 allows a person to substitute a requirement if the person holds an associate degree from an accredited institution of higher education with 48 months of active duty military service or; a bachelor's degree with 60 credit hours with a 2.5 grade-point average from an accredited institution of higher education. The public school district must require a new employee who holds a temporary certificate to obtain at least 20 hours of classroom management training unless they were instructors or trainers during military service.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			<p>These temporary teacher certifications are valid for up to five years, limited to a one-time issuance per person, and may not be renewed. Should the service member continue in their career as an educator, they would need to follow the proper procedure in obtaining standard educator certification. HB 621 also requires a school to assign a mentor teacher to a veteran with a temporary certification for at least two years.</p> <p>Although HB 621 aims to help combat the teacher shortages across the state, the teaching profession takes training and specific certifications; military experience, alone, is not comparable. Teachers must possess a bachelor’s degree, complete an approved educator preparation program, and pass a certification exam. This allows teachers to gain valuable expertise such as synthesizing material, developing curriculums, and understanding how to manage classroom behavior at an age-appropriate level. While veterans gain many skills during their service, they simply would not hold the same qualifications needed to provide high-quality education.</p>	
<p>HB 78</p> <p>By: Ortega Ordaz González, Mary Morales, Eddie</p>	<p>Relating to the authorization by referendum of an optional county fee on vehicle registration in certain counties.</p>	<p>Transportation</p> <p>10 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Several counties can charge a \$10 vehicle registration fee for transportation projects and require voter approval to increase the fee to \$20. El Paso County requires statutory permission to increase the fee by \$10. HB 78 will let El Paso County ask voters to approve the fee increase. This money would go towards transportation projects the El Paso County metropolitan planning organization approved.</p> <p>HB 78 authorizes the commissioners court of a county that borders the United Mexican States and contains a municipality that unilaterally created a regional mobility authority to impose an optional additional vehicle registration capped at \$10 if approved by a referendum election held by the commissioners court. HB 78 exempts vehicles that can be registered without paying vehicle registration fees and outlines the effect, removal, and collection of the fee. Fee revenue would be given to a regional mobility authority in the county to pay for approved transportation projects by the metropolitan planning organization that serves the county. The Department of Transportation would be required to adopt rules necessary to administer registration for a vehicle being registered in a county imposing this fee.</p> <p>HB 78 would allow residents of applicable counties to elect to increase vehicle registration fees to fund transportation projects for their county’s benefit.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1524</p> <p>By: Sherman, Sr. Oliverson Herrero Jetton </p>	<p>Relating to the use of body worn cameras by correctional officers.</p>	<p>Corrections</p> <p>7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>A body-worn camera initiative for police officers is being implemented all over Texas. Constituents raised concerns about Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) correctional officer accountability, who are not required to wear body-worn cameras. Body-worn cameras can provide valuable evidence in cases of alleged abuse or misconduct by officers and can serve as a deterrent for inappropriate behavior. HB 1524 seeks to require TDCJ correctional officers to be equipped with active body-worn cameras while performing their duties, ensuring consistent accountability and reducing time to investigate abuse complaints.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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Leo-Wilson			<p>HB 1524 requires TDCJ to adopt a policy that requires using body-worn cameras by correctional officers at facilities operated by or under contract with TDCJ. Each correctional officer must be equipped with a body-worn camera during their shift and keep the camera on during their duties.</p> <p>HB 1524 will help to ensure transparency and encourage de-escalation inside TDCJ facilities.</p>	
HB 875 By: Harrison	Relating to a campus of the Texas State Technical College System located in Ellis County.	Higher Education 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>Texas State Technical College (TSTC) operates a campus in Red Oak, Texas, and offers a variety of skilled-trade programs. Workforce demand has grown in the region, leading to schools and businesses in Midlothian and Waxahachie wanting to have TSTC operate additional sites close to their locations in Ellis County. TSTC is only authorized to operate its North Texas campus in Red Oak.</p> <p>HB 875 expands TSTC’s authorization to operate a campus in Ellis County from only a system campus in Red Oak to a campus that operates as a collective unit of one or more locations in Ellis County.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 2134 By: Thimesch	Relating to regulation of massage therapists and massage establishments by political subdivisions.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures 9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>HB 2134 aims to grant more authority to political subdivisions, like local authorities in their efforts to combat human trafficking. HB 2134 also establishes that massage therapists and establishments cannot be subject to stricter regulations than other healthcare professionals and establishments, unless they fulfill the criteria specified in the law related to sexually oriented businesses.</p> <p>Additionally, HB 2134 would clarify that massage establishments could be met with stringent regulations related to hours of operation if they are located, owned, or operating where three or more arrests or citations in lieu of arrests regarding prostitution or related crimes occurred. This also applies to massage establishments that are located, owned, or operating where convictions for human trafficking or money laundering offenses have taken place, or where previous owners or massage businesses have been sanctioned for human trafficking-related offenses.</p> <p>HB 2134 aims to reduce illicit massage establishments by granting more authority to political subdivisions to regulate them.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1884 By: Bhojani Lujan Moody Talarico Leach	Relating to persons authorized to conduct a marriage ceremony.	Juvenile Justice and Family Issues 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>Current law has created confusion regarding which religious leaders are authorized to perform a marriage ceremony, making some hesitant to conduct such ceremonies. HB 1884 seeks to address this by ensuring that everyone can be married according to their faith by their trusted religious leader.</p> <p>HB 1884 authorizes the following individuals to conduct a marriage ceremony; a Buddhist monk or priest, a Hindu pundit, a Muslim imam, a Sikh granthi; and any other individual authorized by a religious institution to conduct a marriage ceremony.</p> <p>HB 1884 will ensure that those of all faiths may be married by their religious leaders.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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<p>HB 4381 By: DeAyala</p>	<p>Relating to the suspension of a money judgment pending appeal in a civil action.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, superseding money judgments require a cash bond of 50% of a business’s net worth, which can be difficult for small businesses who have assets that primarily consist of non-liquid assets, such as real estate or personal property. Taking working capital from non-liquid business operations could be harmful to the business while waiting for appeal of a judgment. Small business owners have requested reforms to the laws on these superseding money judgments to help them maintain their rights to appeal without liquidating their income producing assets.</p> <p>HB 4381 seeks to resolve this issue by allowing judgment debtors with a net worth of less than \$10 million to post alternative security that meets the value needed to secure the judgment if they would otherwise have to substantially liquidate their interests in real or personal property. During the appeal process, the judgment debtor can continue to manage, use, and receive earnings from interests in real or personal property in business operations. Judgment debtors are entitled to a redetermination of the amount of security required to suspend enforcement of a judgment if an appellate court reduces the amount that the trial court used to set security.</p> <p>HB 4381 helps small business owners continue to run their businesses while waiting for a resolution to their case. There are concerns that \$10 million in net worth may be too high of a threshold to target support to truly small businesses.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>
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