



Texas Legislative Study Group

An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

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Part 1 of 2

LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 3RD READING OF HJR 102 - Thursday, May 11, 2023

<p>HB 2843</p> <p>By: Kuempel</p>	<p>Relating to the authorization, licensing, and regulation of casino gaming and sports wagering in this state, to the creation, powers, and duties of the Texas Gaming Commission, to the support of the horse racing industry and reform of horse racing and greyhound racing, and to other provisions related to gambling; imposing and authorizing administrative and civil penalties; imposing taxes; imposing and authorizing fees; requiring occupational licenses; creating criminal offenses.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>9 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2843 establishes destination resorts and authorizes casinos in Texas. In doing so, HB 2843 would legalize casino gaming and sports wagering in the state. HB 2843 is contingent upon passage of corresponding legislation, HJR 155, which authorizes eight casino gaming resorts in metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in Texas. Overall, HB 2843 aims to enhance the state's competitiveness in attracting major conventions and leisure travelers, ultimately contributing to job creation and economic growth. HB 2843 includes necessary language for federally recognized tribes subject to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act to participate.</p> <p>Key provisions of HB 2843 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a regulatory framework for casino gaming and sports wagering, overseen by the newly formed Texas Gaming Commission; • Outlining the process for licensing casinos at destination resorts and specifying the requirements for gaming-related entities, such as operators, manufacturers, and casino service providers; • Regulating casino and sports wagering operations to ensure compliance with relevant laws and gaming industry integrity; • Outlining enforcement measures, penalties, and offenses related to gaming, ensuring that violations are identified and dealt with appropriately; and • Establishing the Problem Gambling and Addiction Grant Fund aimed at prevention, treatment, and increasing public awareness of gambling disorders and addictions. <p><i>Texas Gaming Commission</i></p> <p>HB 2843 creates the Texas Gaming Commission, composed of five members appointed by the governor with senate approval. Additionally, HB 2834 provides qualifications and requirements for appointment to the commission. The Commission is subject to sunset review in 2033 and serves as the primary regulatory authority for gambling authorized in Texas. Its responsibilities include establishing and enforcing rules and regulations, licensing and overseeing gaming-related entities, conducting investigations and audits, and ensuring fair gaming practices.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
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LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 9:00 AM – Thursday, May 11, 2023				
<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 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>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></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> 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</p>	
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			<p>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 2650 By: Howard Guillen Neave Criado</p>	<p>Relating to the continuation and duties of the Sexual Assault Survivors' Task Force and establishment of a mandatory training program for peace officers on responding to reports of child sexual abuse and adult sexual assault.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p> <p>6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The Sexual Assault Survivors' Task Force (SASTF) in the Office of the Governor is responsible for policy recommendations to improve responses to sexual violence with a particular focus on survivor-centered and trauma-informed approaches. Since its creation, it has worked with stakeholders across the state to transform sexual assault policy in Texas. The Law Enforcement Working Group, under SASTF, is to provide recommendations for officer training, resource availability, and investigation of sexual assault and other sex offenses. A recommendation from SASTF, approved by the working group, is to add instruction on a trauma-informed approach to child sexual abuse and adult sexual assault investigations for the basic peace officer course.</p> <p>HB 2650 makes SASTF permanent by removing the provision of SASTF's expiration on September 1, 2023. The bill will also make provisions governing state agency advisory committees inapplicable to the composition of SASTF or the designation of SASTF's presiding officer.</p> <p>HB 2650 requires the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE), in consultation with SASTF, to establish an education and training program on responding to reports of child sexual abuse and adult sexual assault,</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>including best practices and trauma-informed response techniques to recognize, investigate, and document these cases. The program must contain a minimum of eight instructional hours. In addition, TCOLE must include completing the education and training program as a part of the minimum curriculum requirements for officers unless the officer has completed an equivalent to the program as determined by TCOLE. An officer would be required to complete this program by the end of their first full continuing education period after being licensed unless they completed the program during their basic training course.</p> <p>The Texas State Auditor’s Office reported that from 2014 to 2018, as of March 2020, only 42% of sexual assault cases resulted in convictions, while 36% were dismissed. As law enforcement serves a critical role in investigating these offenses, they must be appropriately trained to meet where sexual abuse or sexual assault survivors are. Additionally, a trauma-informed approach while conducting investigations will aid in mitigating the retraumatization of this population.</p>	
LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 10:00 AM – Thursday, May 11, 2023				
<p>HB 4930 By: Craddick</p>	<p>Relating to the adoption of a climate policy in a municipal charter.</p>	<p>State Affairs 8 Ayes, 5 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>In recent years, several cities in Texas have implemented measures to address climate change and its impact, specifically increased extreme weather events and greenhouse gas emissions. For example, Houston adopted a Climate Action Resiliency Plan, Austin adopted a Climate Equity Plan, and Dallas adopted a Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan (CECAP). However, in that cities have not proactively adopted a climate action plan, such as El Paso, constituents have advocated for referendums to adopt climate charter amendments. HB 4930 is a direct response to the efforts of El Paso citizens to vote on the city adopting a climate charter. HB 4930 defines a climate charter as a comprehensive policy, ordinance, or rule that seeks to outline measures to mitigate the impact of climate change regarding energy, water, and emissions.</p> <p>Under HB 4930, home-rule municipalities or charter commissions must obtain approval from the appropriate state agency with jurisdiction over the creation of or an amendment to a climate charter before voting on a municipal charter or charter amendment that creates or modifies a climate charter. In addition, HB 4930 establishes that existing climate charters before the effective date are valid and enforceable until January 1, 2026. However, these cities must comply with the approval requirement by January 1, 2025.</p> <p>HB 4930 creates an extra layer of bureaucracy, reduces the authority of municipalities, and weakens the voice of local constituents. Local governments are accountable to their citizens and are in the best position to develop and implement policies tailored to their communities’ unique needs and priorities.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
<p>HB 1492 By: Ordaz</p>	<p>Relating to the conveyance of property by a municipality for the public purpose of</p>	<p>Urban Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>Local officials in El Paso are interested in expanding their range of economic development tools to enhance the city's competitiveness in attracting businesses. Although state law offers various ways for cities to transfer land for this purpose, these methods often involve lengthy procedures that discourage companies from operating in Texas. Enabling the transfer of property through an economic development agreement within an economic development program would provide the city with an additional tool to foster economic growth and enhance its</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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	economic development.	0 Absent	<p>ability to attract businesses.</p> <p>HB 1492 grants a municipality engaged in an economic development agreement with an entity overseeing an economic development program the ability to transfer real property or an interest in property to that entity for consideration. HB 1492 specifies that this transfer can be considered in the form of an agreement between the parties that requires the entity to use the property in a way that promotes a public purpose of the municipality relating to economic development, and the municipality should be granted sufficient control to accomplish this. HB 1492 prohibits transferring real property or an interest in real property that is owned, held, or claimed as a public square or park for the municipality. Real property acquired by the municipality by eminent domain is also prohibited from being transferred unless the municipality offers and the previous owner cannot be located with reasonable effort or declines the opportunity to repurchase the property at the current market value.</p> <p>Prior to a municipality transferring real property or an interest in real property, they must provide public notice in a newspaper for two days or by another means authorized by local law or ordinance within 10 days before the property is transferred with a description of the property and its location. HB1492 clarifies that this is not expanding eminent domain authority.</p> <p>HB 1492 would provide another economic development tool that would make it easier for conveyance, or the transfer of property, to occur, attracting businesses and promoting economic growth.</p>	
HJR 25 By: Zwiener	Proposing a constitutional amendment to authorize the commissioners court of a county to exempt from ad valorem taxation by each political subdivision that taxes the property the portion of the assessed value of a person's property that is attributable to the installation in or on the property of a	Ways & Means 10 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>HJR 25 is enabling legislation for HB 40.</p> <p>Texas property owners are not incentivized to develop water conservation systems due to the lack of financial benefits and the possibility of being taxed on such systems. Solar panels are exempt from property taxes, but there is no similar tax exemption for water conservation systems, despite the threat of drought in multiple state regions. HJR 25 provides a property tax exemption for rainwater harvesting and graywater reuse systems - systems for wastewater reuse from washing and hygiene.</p> <p>HJR 25 proposes a constitutional amendment to allow the legislature to authorize a county commissioners court to exempt property owners from paying property taxes for the portion of their property's assessed value attributed to the installation of rainwater harvesting or graywater systems. The legislature may set additional criteria for eligibility for the exemption through general law.</p> <p>HJR 25 promotes water conservation and reduces strain on water reserves during droughts.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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	rainwater harvesting or graywater system.			
LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 4:00 PM – Thursday, May 11, 2023				
HB 649 By: Hinojosa	Relating to consideration of education-related income in determining eligibility of applicants for residential tenancies.	Business & Industry 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>According to a study by Temple University, two out of three Texas college students experience basic need insecurities. Which includes more than 55% of Texas college students that have experienced housing insecurity and 16% have experienced homelessness. This is due to the fact that, oftentimes landlords do not take educational related income, such as scholarships and Federal student grants and loans, into account when determining proof of income. Even though Federal grants and loans are able to be utilized for housing. This creates further obstacles for students and leads to additional fees when they have to find cosigners or guarantors. Or leaving students that do not have means of a guarantor left with limited to no options of housing.</p> <p>HB 649 amends the Property Code to rectify this by enabling education-related income to be factored into the calculation of students' current income for the purpose of a landlord's application approval process. Additionally, landlords who fail to comply with these requirements are liable for fees and penalties. If a landlord violates this requirement they must pay a penalty consisting of \$100 plus three times the amount of any application fee or deposit, as well as the reasonable attorney's fees for the applicant.</p> <p>Ultimately, HB 649 allows students who receive college funding intended for the use of housing to have greater housing security.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Thursday, May 11, 2023				
HB 3015 By: Kuempel	Relating to exclusive contracts for municipal solid waste management services.	Environmental Regulation 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>Sometimes, municipalities hire private companies in Texas to handle solid waste, including residential and commercial services. If a municipal contract doesn't cover all services, private providers can offer them in an open market. However, a recent decision by a municipality included commercial accounts previously serviced by private providers in the open market, causing problems and costs for the displaced providers. HB 3015 aims to allow a private solid waste provider affected by an exclusive municipal contract to continue offering services for a short time to remove their assets, but only if the contract was awarded without competitive bidding.</p> <p>HB 3015 requires public agencies that enter into exclusive contracts or renew/amend existing contracts to provide a notice with information on the reason and description of the change and the effect it will have on other providers in the agency's jurisdiction but included in the contract.</p> <p>In addition, HB 3015 requires public agencies to notify privately owned solid waste management service providers about any exclusive contracts they enter into. The notice must be published in a newspaper or on a public website, and any registered or approved providers operating in the jurisdiction must also be notified.</p>	<u>Will of the House</u>

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			<p>HB 3015 provides that the exclusive contract becomes effective once the notice is published. HB 3015 allows a private solid waste management service provider that already has a nonexclusive contract to provide certain services in a jurisdiction to continue offering those services until the end of their existing contract or two years after the agency publishes the notice that grants an exclusive contract to another service provider, whichever comes first.</p> <p>HB 3015 allows a private solid waste management service provider to continue providing services to an individual or business in a public agency's jurisdiction if the provider does not have a contract with the agency but is still providing the services and the agency enters into an exclusive contract with another provider to offer those same services. The private provider can continue to offer services for up to 60 days after the agency publishes the notice.</p> <p>HB 3015 aims to address the issue of private solid waste management service providers being abruptly displaced due to the loss of a municipal contract without a competitive bidding process.</p>	
<p>HB 3931 By: Dutton</p>	<p>Relating to truancy and parental contribution to nonattendance of school; increasing a criminal penalty.</p>	<p>Youth Health and Safety</p> <p>5 Aye 0 Nay 0 PNV 4 Absent</p>	<p>In 2015, the Texas Legislature passed a bill that decriminalized truancy with the understanding that the criminalization of truancy was not effective in solving the problem. However, the issue has persisted and worsened because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some have raised concerns that there are currently insufficient statutory mechanisms to prevent truancy. HB 3931 makes statutory adjustments regarding parents of truant children to remedy this issue.</p> <p>HB 3931 removes the current fine cap regarding truancy and establishes that a parent who contributes to a child's nonattendance commits a Class C misdemeanor. The bill also requires courts to dismiss a charge of a parent contributing to a child's nonattendance if the parent completes a specified agreement within the required period and authorizes the court to extend that period with agreement from the district. HB 3931 allows parents and school districts to enter into a written agreement requiring the parent to complete counseling or training. It entitles the parent to a dismissal of the complaint if they fulfill the agreement terms within a certain period. TEA can adopt rules and materials to implement this.</p> <p>In addition, HB 3931 revises a notice sent to a student's parent, informing the parent when they would be subject to prosecution and when the student would be subject to referral to truancy court. A district or open-enrollment charter school will notify a student's parent at the beginning of the school year if the student is absent without excuse for 10% of the school's required operation and instructional time within a school year, then the parent is subject to prosecution and the child would be sent to truancy court. It also changes the period a district or charter school must refer such a student to a truancy court.</p> <p>HB 3931 requires each district to annually submit a report to TEA that includes the number of students who failed to attend school without an excuse, the number of students for whom the district initiated a truancy</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			<p>prevention measure, the number of students for whom the district made a referral to truancy court, and the number of parents of students against whom a complaint for contributing to a child's nonattendance has been filed.</p> <p>HB 3931 allows a parent convicted of contributing to a child's nonattendance to petition the court for an order of nondisclosure of criminal history record information if they complete an approved program. In addition, the court must issue an order prohibiting criminal justice agencies from disclosing such information to the public. The bill also removes a provision that designates certain courts as truancy courts and requires the county commissioners court to designate one or more justice courts in the county as the truancy courts.</p> <p>HB 3931 makes many adjustments to how the state approaches truancy, some of which increase transparency and support families with truant children. However, some may have concerning consequences, such as criminalizing parents with truant children. These parents are often the most marginalized and socio-economically disadvantaged. Many challenges, like limited transportation, work, or other barriers, may inhibit these from bringing their child to school. Criminalizing behavior born out of a family's struggle only exacerbates that struggle, as a Class C Misdemeanor is likely to worsen any financial or time constraints a family is experiencing. Though the bill does include provisions to avoid criminalization, many of them, such as counseling and training, are incredibly time-consuming. This is concerning when lack of time for these parents is often the root cause of the issue. Truancy necessitates a solution, but as the legislature has already acknowledged that criminalization is ineffective, it is pertinent to explore answers that do not punish.</p>	
<p>HB 1929 By: Leo-Wilson</p>	<p>Relating to the adoption of rules concerning certain on-site sewage disposal systems.</p>	<p>Environmental Regulation</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Constituents living in House District 23 are unhappy that they have to use grinder pumps for new coastal development when an aerobic drip emitter system would be more effective. The rules made by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for aerobic drip emitter systems are outdated and don't take into account that they are safe and clean in areas with very sandy soil. HB 1929 allows residents in certain counties to use aerobic drip emitter systems on properties less than one-half acre.</p> <p>HB 1929 amends the state Health and Safety Code and mandates TCEQ to create specific regulations for a county situated beside the Gulf of Mexico, having a population between 350,000 and 370,000, and adjacent to a county with a population of at least 3.3 million people. These regulations permit installing aerobic drip emitter systems for single-family homes that rely on public drinking water on plots of land under half an acre in size, provided that a licensed engineer or registered sanitarian submits approved site-specific planning materials and the approval of an authorized agent has been received.</p> <p>HB 1929 intends to provide access to aerobic drip emitter systems for constituents living on smaller lots along the Gulf, and it helps ensure that state laws concerning on-site sewage disposal systems are effectively administered with respect to specific coastal Texas counties.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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			<p>Although there is greater suitability for these systems in this region of Texas, concerns regarding their potential to contaminate surface water due to inadequate maintenance or installation still exist. Rainfall events can lead to creeks and streams becoming contaminated with pathogenic bacteria that can cause illnesses if ingested or consumed. Additionally, children playing or swimming in the contaminated water can also get sick. E. coli and fecal coliform bacteria are commonly associated with these types of contaminated water reports.</p>	
<p>HB 3254 By: Burns Plesa</p>	<p>Relating to the purchase of service credit by certain members of the Employees Retirement System of Texas.</p>	<p>Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Under current rules, new state employees must wait for 90 days before they can start contributing to the Employment Retirement System (ERS) and earn service time. However, some members, particularly those in jobs with frequent transfers like Capitol officers, have encountered multiple 90-day waiting or grace periods. As a result, it's unclear whether they can purchase service credit for more than one grace period. HB 3254 aims to clarify this issue and allow ERS members to buy service credit while actively working.</p> <p>HB 3254 grants authorization to ERS members who joined before September 1, 2015, to establish service credit for each month of any 90-day waiting period in which they performed service. It doesn't matter if the member contributed during that waiting period; they can still establish service credit. If a member buys credit for a month before their most recent hiring date, ERS will consider the first day of that month as the starting point for their service credit. Importantly, HB 3254 ensures that calculating the deposit required to establish the service credit does not cause ERS any financial or actuarial loss.</p> <p>By permitting ERS members in jobs with frequent transfers to purchase their credit service during their grace periods, HB 3254 enables them to accumulate credits towards their annuity for retirement purposes.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 651 By: Allison Gervin-Hawkins Lopez, Ray Shine Lujan</p>	<p>Relating to the inclusion of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps and Leadership Officer Training Corps Programs as public school career and technology education programs and the indicator of achievement for military readiness under the public school accountability</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, coursework in Junior Reserve Officer Training (JROTC) and Leadership Officer Training Corps (LOTTC) does not qualify as part of career and technology education (CTE) programs. HB 651 seeks to include JROTC and LOTTC as part of CTE and as indicators of achievement for military readiness.</p> <p>HB 651 requires the state plan for CTE to include courses of study in JROTC and LOTTC offered by public schools. Additionally, HB 651 creates indicators for evaluating the performance of high school campuses and public school districts based on student achievement, which include students who demonstrate military readiness by achieving a passing score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test set by the applicable military branch or by successfully completing a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program.</p> <p>HB 651 entitles a district to an annual allotment equal to the basic allotment or, if applicable, the sum of the basic allotment and the small or mid-sized district allotment, in addition to other career and technology education allotments. The allotment should be multiplied by 1.28 for each student enrolled in an approved Leadership Officer Training Corps program and by 1.47 for each student enrolled in an approved Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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	system.		HB 651 provides an opportunity for students enrolled in these courses to acquire essential skills and knowledge, enabling them to start their careers faster and with greater ease upon graduating high school.	
HB 2692 By: Campos	Relating to the exemption of certain activities from regulation as a structural pest control service.	Agriculture & Livestock 5 Ayes, 2 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>Texas has strict pest control regulations on pest control methods, but little service is available for addressing birds due to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. This federal act protects U.S. native birds from being killed, captured, or harmed. However, certain birds, like grackles, are considered a nuisance as they cause damage, spread diseases, and make excessive noise. HB 2692 seeks to provide a means for Texans and Texas businesses to clear these nuisance birds while not interfering with regulated pest control services.</p> <p>HB 2692 would exempt from the Texas Structural Pest Control Act a person, for compensation, to provide and advertise services to control nuisance birds through laser lights, noise-emitting devices, or recorded sounds operating at a volume that complies with municipal or county regulations. In addition, HB 2692 prohibits methods that harm or kill birds, violate municipal or county noise regulations, or cause harm to people, animals, or the environment.</p> <p>HB 2692 seeks to allow Texans and Texas businesses a means to address nuisance birds. However, concerns were brought by the Texas Department of Agriculture involving the possible contradiction of this bill and federal regulations. Additionally, pest control professionals expressed concerns about potential situations where unlicensed individuals would inadvertently harm birds, thus violating federal regulations. While the proposed methods are to divert individuals from harming nuisance birds, there may be a need to consider additional specifications for people to be permitted or trained to ensure due diligence of preventing harm.</p>	<u>Will of The House</u>
HB 3212 By: Toth	Relating to newborn screening tests.	Public Health 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>Newborn screening programs are essential in detecting disorders or conditions that could cause early death or lifelong disability. In Texas, the newborn screening program is one of the world's most successful, testing every newborn twice for 55 different disorders or conditions. Currently, the NBS lab can process 2,000-3,000 specimens daily, six days a week, and completes most tests within five days. Concerns have been raised about situations where test results are delayed and newborns are released from the hospital without all relevant information, leading to tragic outcomes. HB 3212 seeks to prevent such incidents, increase the volume of testing facilities can handle, and improve the safety of newborns in Texas.</p> <p>HB 3212 requires birthing facilities to orally inform the parent, managing conservator, or guardian of newborns about the risks associated with not performing a screening test and the importance of timely result reviews before discharge. The bill also mandates that facilities conducting newborn screening tests in Texas must operate seven days a week.</p> <p>HB 3212 seeks to improve the safety and well-being of newborns in Texas by mandating timely result reviews and seven-day operation of screening facilities.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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<p>HB 4037 By: Hayes</p>	<p>Relating to the time period for conducting a pretrial hearing after a criminal defendant has been restored to competency.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>In criminal court, if a defendant is found unfit to stand trial, they may be ordered to receive competency restoration services at a state hospital or qualifying mental health facility. This process aims to prepare the defendant to stand trial, but unfortunately, some defendants may become incompetent again while waiting for their pretrial hearing due to court backlogs and delays. To combat this issue, HB 4037 proposes that any pretrial hearing for a defendant who has undergone competency restoration must be conducted within 30 days of the court's determination that the defendant is competent to stand trial.</p> <p>HB 4037 mandates that any pretrial hearing concerning a criminal defendant who has undergone competency restoration services must occur within 30 days of the court's decision that the defendant is competent to stand trial.</p> <p>HB 4037 will help ensure that the courts function as efficiently as possible and that defendants are not stuck in a cycle for months.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 83 By: Zwiener Allen Talarico VanDeaver</p>	<p>Relating to authorizing the use of a writing portfolio assessment to assess writing performance for public school students.</p>	<p>Public Education 9 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, writing in Texas is assessed through the English Language Arts (ELA) Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which is composed of a four-point scale to measure student's writing abilities with a rubric based on criteria encompassing focus and coherence, organization, development of ideas, voice, and conventions. Although it is often claimed that testing is the sole means to demonstrate students' academic proficiency, alternative approaches may more accurately showcase the comprehensiveness and efficacy of their learning, while also giving students greater autonomy. HB 83 seeks to provide alternative ways to assess students' writing by authorizing schools to substitute specific statewide standardized tests with a writing portfolio assessment.</p> <p>HB 82 authorizes a school district to elect the use of a writing portfolio assessment to evaluate students' writing performances instead of administering the reading assessment on statewide standardized exams for grades 3-8 and an English I or II end-of-course test that is not in multiple-choice format.</p> <p>Should a district elect this writing portfolio alternative it must consult with institutions of higher education in designing the assessment and submit the assessment to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for approval. Approval by the TEA is contingent on whether the institution of higher education considered the assessment to be valid and reliable and is designed to assess the following: mastery of the essential knowledge and skills in writing through timed writing samples; improvement of writing skills over the school year; the ability to follow the writing process; and the ability to produce more than one writing style. School districts may adopt a policy allowing the assessment to be scored by a teacher in the same campus as the student who received the assessment. The district may also coordinate with a regional education service center for grading. School districts that adopt this alternative are not required to also administer any assessments or end-of-course tests this portfolio substitutes. The TEA must use any cost savings from not administering the standardized assessments to cover costs incurred from the portfolio assessment.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			Employing diverse forms of assessments allows educators to identify students' strengths and weaknesses by compelling them to apply their knowledge in various ways. Traditional testing measures comprehension at best, and memorization or luck at worst. Additionally, portfolio assessments accommodate different learning styles and provide a long-term overview of student progress and academic achievement.	
HB 840 By: Gates Bonnen Oliverson Moody Lalani	Relating to the establishment of a bundled-pricing program to reduce certain health care costs in the state employees group benefits program.	Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	Typically, health benefit plans pay providers separately for each service to a patient. For example, one procedure may result in separate bills and charges from a facility. Interested parties contend that this practice may lead to the overprovision of services and increased costs for patients. HB 840 addresses this issue by requiring the board of trustees of the Employees Retirement System (ERS) to develop an elective cost-positive bundle-pricing program for health benefit plans provided under the group benefits program. HB 840 requires the bundle-pricing program to be designed to reduce healthcare costs for the group benefit program by contracting with a healthcare facility, physicians, or healthcare provider at a consolidated rate for an inpatient or outpatient surgery that will be covered under the health benefit plan. A consolidated rate must include all the related fees, such as healthcare facility costs, physicians, anesthesia, prescription drugs, and other fees connected to the procedure. Program participation for providers is optional.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1022 By: Leo-Wilson	Relating to the hours of work of certain county employees.	County Affairs 8 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Currently, only counties that meet a minimum population requirement are authorized to implement uniform rules governing the work hours of certain county employees. Galveston County does not meet this population minimum requirement. HB 1022 seeks to give Galveston County's commissioners court the ability to adopt uniform rules on employee work hours by decreasing the minimum population threshold. HB 1022 decreases the minimum population threshold of a county in which the commissioners court is authorized to adopt and enforce uniform rules on certain employees' work hours from 355,000 to 350,000. These uniform rules would apply to department heads, assistants, deputies, and any other employee whose compensation is determined by the court.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 5177 By: Lopez, Ray Toth	Relating to a defendant's eligibility for reduction or termination of community supervision.	Corrections 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC) are specialized programs for veterans who become involved in the criminal justice system due to trauma related to their military service. As such, VTCs focus on rehabilitation and accountability, offering various therapies, life skills, and support services to help veterans reintegrate into society and avoid further legal issues. However, current rules only allow veterans arrested or charged with an offense to benefit from the VTC, excluding those convicted or placed on community supervision. HB 5177 aims to address this by making veterans on community supervision for specific offenses, such as driving while intoxicated and intoxication assault, eligible for a reduction or termination of their supervision if they successfully complete a VTC program. HB 5177 benefits veterans, their families, and broader communities by expanding access to VTC programs that address the root causes of legal issues and promote reintegration into society.	<u>Favorable</u>

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<p>HB 3921 By: Goldman</p>	<p>Relating to size and density requirements for residential lots in certain municipalities; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>Land & Resource Management 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>In many Texas cities, restrictive municipal ordinances requiring residential lots to be of a minimum size limit potential housing development opportunities, contributing to a reduction in available housing stock. HB 3921 aims to address this issue by prohibiting municipalities from adopting or enforcing regulations that excessively restrict lot sizes, thereby promoting housing development and increasing available housing options for Texans.</p> <p>HB 3921 prohibits municipalities with a population of 85,000 or more, wholly or partly located in a county with a population of one million or more, from adopting or enforcing regulations that require a residential lot to be larger than 2,500 square feet, wider than 16 feet, or deeper than 30 feet. Additionally, density regulations cannot result in fewer than 31.1 units per acre. The bill does not impact sewer or water service requirements.</p> <p>HB 3921 also restricts municipalities from enforcing certain requirements on small lots, such as excessive setbacks, covered or off-site parking, more than one parking space per unit, and more than 30% open space or permeable surface. Small lots are also allowed to have at least three full stories, each not exceeding 10 feet in height, and are not subject to maximum building bulk or wall articulation requirements. Conflicting zoning restrictions are prohibited. Municipalities can, however, require small lots to share driveways or charge equivalent permitting fees for single-family residence use. The bill does not prevent municipalities from imposing consistent restrictions on similar lots or subdivisions or hinder property owners from enforcing homeowners' association rules or private agreements.</p> <p>HB 3921 allows property owners to apply for an exemption, subject to specific approval thresholds depending on the area in question. Municipalities must adopt procedures for providing notice, hearings, and appeals for application decisions. Special exceptions cannot require a property to exceed minimum lot size requirements.</p> <p>HB 3921 also permits property owners to take legal action against a municipality for violations and seek damages or equitable relief. Courts may award reasonable attorney's fees, but exemplary damages cannot be recovered. Municipal governmental immunity from suit and liability is waived to the extent of liability established by this bill.</p> <p>HB 3921 seeks to ease restrictions on residential lot sizes and other related requirements, offering Texans more options for affordable and accessible housing. Critics argue that the bill's one-size-fits-all approach to residential density in Texas could undermine local decision-making, reduce community input, and ignore the unique needs and circumstances of individual communities. The bill could also limit cities' ability to regulate and implement zoning.</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>
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<p>HB 1581</p> <p>By: Thimesch Frazier Lujan Johnson, Julie Cook</p>	<p>Relating to the manufacture or delivery of a controlled substance causing death or serious bodily injury; creating a criminal offense.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Overdosing has become an increasing issue in recent years, reaching a peak of over 100,000 deaths in 2022. The best practices for reducing overdose are naloxone distribution, Medication Assisted Therapy, fentanyl testing strips, and access to mental health services. Drug criminalization has proven to exacerbate overdose rates by reducing good samaritan acts and further stigmatizing drug use. Current law enhances the charges of manufacturing or delivering a controlled substance in the event of death or serious bodily injury to a state jail felony, with the degree of severity determined by the quantity of the drug present at the scene. Prosecutors have expressed that this can make it difficult for prosecutors and investigators, as the drugs have often been removed or used.</p> <p>HB 1581 seeks to solve this issue by creating a stand alone offense for delivery or manufacture of a controlled substance in violation of the Texas Controlled Substances Act, that results in death or serious bodily injury. This offense is a second degree felony for serious bodily injury, a first degree felony for death. These offenses apply regardless of whether the controlled substance was used by itself or with another substance. The bill also prohibits the sentence from running concurrently with other sentences.</p> <p>HB 1581 claims to contend with the overdose crisis, but does not do so through evidence based practices and puts drug users at risk. Often, those who sell drugs are users themselves, who use with and around those to whom they deal. If an individual overdoses in the presence of the person who delivered the drugs to them, that person is more likely to flee to avoid arrest as opposed to calling the authorities or staying to assist the person in distress. This has the potential to increase overdose rates as Texas contends with this specific crisis.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4486</p> <p>By: Bhojani Bowers Dorazio Lujan Collier</p>	<p>Relating to design and use of a model criminal citation.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & public Safety</p> <p>6 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>A citation is a formal document issued by a peace officer that requires individuals to appear in court. Research has demonstrated that modifying the formatting of court summons forms and citations, such as bolding the consequences of missing a court date and repositioning court information, can reduce the rate of non-appearance. HB 4486 aims to establish a standardized model citation for law enforcement agencies in Texas.</p> <p>HB 4486 mandates that the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) develop, adopt, and distribute a model citation to all law enforcement agencies. The model citation should be based on credible research, prominently display essential information, employ clear and concise language, outline consequences of missing court appearances, provide alternative payment options, and incorporate other research-supported practices to achieve the desired outcome.</p> <p>HB 4486 requires TCOLE to collaborate with the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas, court clerks, the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System, judges, public defenders, prosecutors, and all law enforcement agencies in designing the model citation. TCOLE must also allow for public comments before finalizing the design.</p> <p>HB 4486 requires each law enforcement agency to biannually adopt, implement and update their citations</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			according to the disseminated model. In addition, TCOLE must biannually review, modify, or update the model citation. HB 4486 aims to achieve a standardized citation system to increase court appearance rates, reduce costs associated with issuing warrants and pursuing pretrial detention, and enable law enforcement to focus more on urgent and violent crimes.	
HB 3041 By: Thompson, Senfronia	Relating to the manner of executing certain anatomical gift records.	Public Health 8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>In 2009, the Texas Anatomical Gift Act was repealed and replaced with the Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act, but the repealed act was also amended the same year, leading to confusion among practitioners. Additionally, attorneys assisting clients with organ donation paperwork have pointed out inconsistencies in the Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act's treatment of individuals who are physically unable to sign records. To address these issues, HB 3041 seeks to clarify and streamline the organ donation process.</p> <p>HB 3041 repeals the Texas Anatomical Gift Act and amends the Health and Safety Code to authorize donors to make organ donations through an online registry, similar to the provisions in the repealed act. The online registration process is simplified, as it does not require consent from others, witnesses, or a notary public's acknowledgment, making it more accessible for potential donors. The online registration is a legally binding document that remains valid after the donor's death.</p> <p>For individuals who are physically unable to sign records, HB 3041 offers an alternative solution by allowing the record to be acknowledged by a notary public instead of requiring the presence of two adult witnesses. This provides a more flexible approach and reduces barriers for those who want to participate in organ donation but are limited by their physical abilities.</p> <p>HB 3041 seeks to eliminate confusion and inconsistencies in the organ donation process. By streamlining the system and making it more inclusive and accessible, the bill ensures that every Texan has an opportunity to participate in organ donation, ultimately saving lives.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1980 By: Dorazio Swanson Garcia Bucy	Relating to the procedures for the issuance of a personal identification certificate to a person whose driver's license is surrendered.	Elections 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>When individuals surrender their Texas Driver's License and opt for a Texas Identification Certificate as their official state-issued photo identification, they often fail to update their voter registration. This is particularly true for elderly citizens who have been active voters for a long time but can no longer drive.</p> <p>HB 1980 mandates the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to ensure that individuals receiving a personal identification certificate are informed about the requirement to update their voter registration information. This update must include the identification number of the newly issued certificate. Additionally, individuals must be given the chance to update their voter registration information while applying for the certificate, ensuring that the identification number of the newly issued certificate is included.</p> <p>HB 1980 provides more accessibility for elderly Texans to assist in streamlining voters' participation in the electoral process.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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<p>HB 1222 By: Metcalf</p>	<p>Relating to a study on authorizing a passenger car or light truck to be operated with only a rear license plate.</p>	<p>Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Some constituents have raised concerns about the necessity of a license plate on the front of their vehicle, mainly because there is no appropriate place to mount it on certain newly manufactured models. However, proponents of the removal of front plates also point to cost savings for the state. HB 1222 proposes a study to evaluate the potential for cars and light trucks to operate only with a rear plate.</p> <p>HB 1222 requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to coordinate a study on the cost, feasibility, and effect on law enforcement if vehicles were to be operated with only a rear license plate. HB 1222 also requires the study of a windshield sticker replacement for a front plate if a vehicle is not equipped for fastening a front plate, a manner in which a windshield sticker would be applied and displayed, a reasonable fee for such a sticker, and the eligibility documentation necessary. The study will evaluate the creation of a Class C misdemeanor offense and the conditions for its enforcement if proper guidelines are not followed regarding the proposed sticker system. TxDMV and DPS must jointly submit study results to the legislature.</p> <p>HB 1222 may be a useful study for determining how the lack of front license plates will impact law enforcement’s ability to identify vehicles and evaluate the potential for an alternative vehicle identification system in the form of a windshield sticker.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2092 By: Manuel Davis Collier Ordaz Morales, Christina</p>	<p>Relating to the period during which an order for emergency protection remains in effect.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Magistrate’s Orders for Emergency Protection (MOEPs) are often issued for only 31 days, which does not provide enough time for a crime victim to safely seek shelter, reorganize their life, or obtain legal representation. HB 2092 seeks to address this issue by increasing the duration of MOEPs.</p> <p>HB 2092 extends the effective period of an emergency protection order for certain offenses involving family violence. Specifically, the bill increases the duration of Magistrate’s Orders for Emergency Protection (MOEPs) from 31 to 91 days for offenses such as family violence, serious bodily injury, stalking, and sexual assault. For offenses involving the use or exhibition of a deadly weapon, the bill extends the duration of MOEPs from 91 to 121 days.</p> <p>HB 2092 will provide crime victims with more time to seek safety and begin to rebuild. This allows for greater protections for vulnerable Texans and may reduce the likelihood of repeat offenses.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2436 By: Frazier</p>	<p>Relating to the sale of bonds by certain special purpose districts.</p>	<p>Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>Special purpose districts sell bonds through public sales, as known as competitive bids, in which bonds are advertised for sale. The bonds are awarded to the bidder offering the lowest interest rate, which ultimately results in the lowest cost for taxpayers. Other political subdivisions, such as cities, counties, and independent school districts may sell bonds through public sales or private sales, also known as a negotiated sale, in which the terms of the bond are negotiated by the issuer and bond purchaser. If the issuer does not have the knowledge or experience to do so effectively, an independent financial advisor can serve as a third party negotiator.</p> <p>HB 2436 amends the Water Code to allow special purpose districts to utilize private sales in addition to public</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>

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		2 Absent	<p>sales.</p> <p>Some contend that private sales could lead to a lack of transparency and don't actually result in lower interest rates or lower taxes. Because special purpose districts may lack the expertise to privately negotiate bond sells, they will have to hire financial advisors. They argue that HB 2436 benefits larger companies that act as underwriters (broker-dealers) rather than special purpose districts. However, HB 2436 introduces an additional tool that special districts can utilize, putting them on parity with cities, counties, and ISDs.</p>	
<p>HB 4108</p> <p>By: Guillen Gamez</p>	<p>Relating to subdivision plat requirements.</p>	<p>Land & Resource Management</p> <p>7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Property owners in Texas border counties have voiced concerns over difficulties in selling their properties due to subdivision platting requirements. Due to stringent regulations, some individuals possess properties that cannot be legally transferred under current model subdivision rules. The law mandates various steps like hiring an engineer, surveying, and ensuring water/wastewater access before transferring property. Some owners cannot afford requirements to prepare their property for sale, preventing them from selling entirely. HB 4108 aims to address this by altering statutes governing county regulations of subdivisions. However, critics argue that this could undermine Model Subdivision Rules, which have curbed the spread of colonias in border counties since 1995. These rules prevented landowners from selling cheap lots without infrastructure, leading to communities with no basic services and unsanitary living conditions.</p> <p>HB 4108 would allow border counties or municipalities receiving financial aid for water development in economically distressed areas to exempt certain subdivisions from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) model rules on minimum standards for safe water supply and sewer services. Exemptions apply to subdivisions with four or fewer lots that meet specific criteria. The bill also prohibits counties from mandating that landowners prepare a subdivision plat under certain conditions and allows the commissioners court to permit ceasing maintenance of a bond for sewer service facility construction in specific circumstances.</p> <p>HB 4108 also designates that agents or brokers are not considered agents of a seller or subdivider regarding advertising standards or penalties related to the sale of lots in subdivisions that lack legal platting or pose a public health nuisance. There are concerns that this could exempt real estate agents from legal liability for selling lots to unsuspecting buyers. HB 4108 allows courts to dismiss enforcement actions if defendants remedy violations within 45 days and show good cause for dismissal. Some have concerns that this provision is overly broad.</p> <p>While HB 4108 seeks to improve opportunities for property sales in border counties, it could also weaken protections against the growth of substandard colonias, which often target the most vulnerable Texans. However, HB 4108 has multiple safeguards that still allow the counties to ensure that land is subdivided and plotted properly, and that proper disclosures are given.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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<p>HB 2747</p> <p>By: Darby Shine Craddick Gervin-Hawkins Thierry</p>	<p>Relating to a requirement that each appraisal district periodically confirm that recipients of residence homestead exemptions qualify for those exemptions.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Current law requires the chief appraiser to investigate if a homestead exemption is invalid, such as when an owner has multiple exemptions or does not primarily live at the property. If an exemption is erroneously allowed in the past five years, the chief appraiser must remove it and impose taxes on the untaxed value. However, there is no requirement to proactively review existing exemptions for potential errors, meaning that some taxpayers could be getting a homestead exemption they do not qualify for, unfairly pushing the property tax burden onto compliant taxpayers. HB 2747 seeks to address this by introducing proactive reviews of homestead exemptions.</p> <p>HB 2747 requires the chief appraiser of an appraisal district to develop a program for periodic review of each residence homestead exemption granted by the district to ensure that the recipient still qualifies for the exemption. The review must occur at least once every five years and can be conducted in phases.</p> <p>HB 2747 allows for periodic review of homestead exemptions, increasing consistency and ensuring fairness in taxation.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2439</p> <p>By: Thimesch</p>	<p>Relating to the individuals to whom notice and information must be provided after the Department of Family and Protective Services or another agency takes possession of a child.</p>	<p>Human Services</p> <p>7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>In situations where a mother is involved in human trafficking, specifically sex trafficking, and becomes pregnant by her trafficker or client, determining the alleged father’s identity and, by extension, locating his family can be challenging. Likewise, if the alleged father happens to be her trafficker and the mother successfully escapes, notifying him or his family through Department Family and Protective Services (DFPS) about a child under state supervision could jeopardize the safety of both the mother and child. HB 2439 seeks to address this issue by waiving the right to notify the father of any court proceedings regarding the child.</p> <p>HB 2439 authorizes the court to waive written notice at the initial hearing if the court finds that the alleged father of the child committed the offense of human trafficking according to statute, against the child’s mother. Additionally, DFPS is not required to provide information to relatives and other designated caregivers to an individual in a case in which DFPS believes or is aware of a trafficking offense committed by the alleged father against the mother.</p> <p>HB 2439 aims to safeguard women and their children in Texas.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 101</p> <p>By: Ortega Martinez Guillen Canales Ordaz</p>	<p>Relating to the membership of the Texas Transportation Commission.</p>	<p>Transportation</p> <p>10 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) is in charge of transportation projects across the state, and it is mandated to have five members appointed by the governor that reflect the state’s diverse regions and populations. Nonetheless, only four out of 68 commissioners appointed so far have come from the border region, while 27 have been from rural areas, and 37 from urban zones. HB 101 aims to enhance TTC’s border county representation.</p> <p>HB 101 amends the state Transportation Code and requires that at least one member of TTC must reside and be a registered voter in a county that borders the United Mexican States. HB 101 requires that the member appointed</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>to meet the rural county requirement cannot also be the member appointed to meet the border county requirement.</p> <p>These provisions will not affect the current members serving on the commission, but as their terms expire, the governor must appoint or reappoint members who meet the new qualifications outlined in HB 101.</p> <p>HB 101 improves the representation of border counties on the commission and helps ensure that the commission has the firsthand knowledge and experience necessary to address the unique transportation challenges faced by border communities.</p>	
<p>HB 2977 By: Harris, Caroline</p>	<p>Relating to the awarding of contracts by the Texas Department of Transportation for certain materials used in road construction projects.</p>	<p>Transportation</p> <p>12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>It has been reported that certain construction and transportation infrastructure projects, especially those that involve concrete, may take longer to progress as the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and related contractors may use environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria for decisions on road materials. HB 2977 will prioritize road materials that are cost-effective and durable over alternative materials for the same project.</p> <p>HB 2977 amends the state Transportation Code and forbids TxDOT from giving preference to contract bids that suggest using materials based on any ESG criteria for highway projects if those materials are less cost-effective or durable compared to alternatives. Additional criteria to be prohibited from bid preference is that of carbon emissions. HB 2977 seeks to ensure that road materials used for highway projects are affordable but the bill could take the construction industry backward in Texas.</p> <p>Proponents of HB 2977 state that efforts to decarbonize the manufacture of concrete components are useless, and suggest that climate change is not a worthwhile consideration because they cannot significantly alter global average temperatures. This seems to ignore negative impacts that road materials and this industry may put right in our own backyard. Those in opposition to HB 2977 assert that road materials pose significant public health and environmental concerns during their manufacture and after installation. It is illogical to prevent TxDOT from maximizing its budget to meet the state's environmental objectives and communities' self-determined social equity objectives in a state that leads the nation in carbon emissions.</p> <p>HB 2977 does not recognize the importance of using ESG decision-making criteria when evaluating available road materials, an approach that allows for a comprehensive assessment of all available material costs and impacts and enables a more tailored selection process based on varying social and environmental factors throughout Texas.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 4631 By: Longoria</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the Opportunity High School Diploma pilot program.</p>	<p>Higher Education 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Business leaders, employers, and education stakeholders in Texas have expressed concerns about the limited options available to individuals seeking basic education credentials for workforce preparedness, particularly given the high rates of individuals in the state lacking adequate postsecondary credentials or a high school diploma. HB 4631 addresses these concerns by establishing the Opportunity High School Diploma pilot program.</p> <p>HB 4631 establishes the Opportunity High School Diploma pilot program, which aims to provide an alternative means by which adult students enrolled in a workforce education program at a public junior college may earn a high school diploma. The program’s administration is handled by the Texas Education Coordinating Board (THECB).</p> <p>A public junior college may submit an application to the THECB to participate in the pilot program, which must propose an alternative-competency high school diploma program offered for concurrent enrollment in a workforce education program at the college. The program may include a variety of ways for a student to attain knowledge that adequately prepares the student for post-secondary or additional workforce education. The THECB may only approve five colleges for participation in the pilot program and must assess the approval of a college’s participation in the pilot program on if the proposal’s instruction and assessment equips a student for future academic endeavors. THECB and TEA may work jointly on these efforts. Approved public junior colleges may enter into an agreement with another college, school district, or nonprofit organization to offer the program, and the program may be located at any campus of the college or partnering entity. The public junior college may award a high school diploma to a student enrolled in the program offered by the college with satisfactory performance on assessments established by the THECB.</p> <p>THECB and TWC must work together in identifying funding available to public junior colleges and students to encourage participation in the pilot program. Participation in the pilot program entitles public junior colleges to funding from state appropriations under statutory provisions, as determined by THECB rule. THECB must submit a report on the effectiveness of the pilot program to the legislature by December 1, 2026. The report must include recommendations regarding the future of the program. This pilot program expires September 1, 2027.</p> <p>HB 4631 could provide the necessary program to foster an educated workforce in Texas, which is essential to the overall strong economy of the State.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2979 By: Garcia Reynolds Vo Lopez, Ray Bumgarner</p>	<p>Relating to an indication on a voter's voter registration certificate that a voter is a veteran.</p>	<p>Defense & Veterans’ Affairs 6 Ayes, 2 Nay, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>There are over 1.4 million veterans in Texas, yet many lack access to services such as affordable housing, healthcare, and job opportunities. This is due to a lack of knowledge or a means for veteran-serving organizations to identify and reach out to them. HB 2979 aims to solve this problem by allowing veterans to self-identify on their voter registration application, becoming a public record accessible to veteran-service organizations for outreach purposes.</p> <p>HB 2979 includes a section in the required elements on the official voter registration application where veterans</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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		1 Absent	can indicate their status. The bill ensures that this information is publicly available. It also requires voter registration lists to include registered voters who have identified themselves as veterans. HB 2979 provides organizations with a means to connect with veterans and provide them with community services and support.	
HB 5131 By: Bell, Cecil	Relating to the randomized audits of elections in certain counties.	Elections 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>After the uniform election date in November of an even-numbered year, the Secretary of State (SOS) must conduct randomized audits of the elections held in four counties during the previous two years — two counties with populations less than 300,000 and two counties with 300,000 or more.</p> <p>HB 5131 requires the SOS to complete an additional audit on a random county with a population less than 300,000 if the SOS completes the four-county audit currently required by law before the end of the two-year period.</p> <p>An additional audit for no apparent reason is unnecessary. Randomized audits are employed as an efficiency mechanism because the costs associated with auditing all 254 counties is not worth the benefit. HB 5131 will only further burden the SOS.</p> <p><i>SB 1933 – Companion</i> SB 1933 started out as an audit bill, but has been changed to become a vehicle for the SOS to take over county elections.</p> <p><i>SOS Administrative Oversight of County Elections</i> The bill authorizes the implementation of “administrative oversight” of a county election, if an administrative complaint is filed with the SOS and the SOS has good cause to believe that there is a recurring pattern of problems with election administration or voter registration in the county, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● malfunction of voting system equipment; ● unfair distribution of election supplies; ● errors in tabulation of results; ● delays in reporting election returns; ● discovery of voted ballots after the polls close; and ● failure to conduct maintenance activities on the lists of registered voters as required under this code. ● <p>SB 1933 gives the SOS the authority to conduct in-person observations of voter registration, election preparation, early voting, election day, and post-election day procedures. If the SOS determines administrative oversight is necessary, the SOS must provide written notice to the county judge and county election official with authority over election administration or voter registration. The SOS must provide county election officials with a quarterly report on the activities of the administrative oversight personnel. The oversight authority will continue until at least December 31 of the first even-numbered year following the initial notice, or just under two years at the least. After this, the SOS will issue a report to the county commissioners court with any remediation actions taken by</p>	<p><u>HB 5131</u> <u>Unfavorable</u></p> <p><u>SB 1933</u> <u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			<p>the SOS and a recommendation for the termination or extension of oversight.</p> <p>SOS Takeover If the SOS determines an extension of oversight is necessary and administrative oversight will not remedy the county’s issues, the Secretary of State will appoint a conservator to oversee elections in the county.</p> <p>However, SB 1933 states that administrative oversight is not a precursor to conservatorship, and the SOS may immediately appoint a conservator if the SOS has good cause to determine that (1) a recurring pattern of problems with election administration or voter registration exists and substantially impedes the free exercise of a citizen’s voting rights, and (2) the immediate appointment of a conservator is necessary to remediate the problems. The conservator would serve until the first uniform election date after the SOS determines that the problems have been rectified.</p>	
<p>HB 3246</p> <p>By: Manuel Reynolds Rose González, Jessica Longoria</p>	<p>Relating to inquiries about and the consideration of criminal history record information regarding applicants for employment.</p>	<p>Business & Industry</p> <p>6 Ayes, 3 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The ability to secure gainful employment is a crucial determinant of an individual's success and freedom. Often individuals that have been incarcerated must check a box on an application that limits their ability to reintegrate into society. Public sector jobs often provide stable income, and this bill will benefit both employees and employers.</p> <p>HB 3246 seeks to eliminate discrimination based on a box checked on a job application and instead evaluate candidates based on their skills and qualifications. HB 3246 only prohibits an employer from asking job candidates prior to deciding if they have decided you are a good fit for the job.</p> <p>HB 3246 does not compromise public safety as HB 3246 doesn't apply if the law requires the employer to ask about your criminal record for that specific job, such as protecting vulnerable populations.</p> <p>Overall, HB 3246 provides formerly incarcerated individuals the ability to have a fresh start and fighting chance at changing direction and learning from their mistakes.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3385</p> <p>By: Leo-Wilson Morrison Vasut Lozano Garcia</p>	<p>Relating to establishing the oyster advisory committee of the Parks and Wildlife Department.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation & Tourism</p> <p>6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>HB 3385 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to enact an Oyster Advisory Committee. This committee will give advice to the government about how to manage oysters in the state. The committee will be made up of people who are nominated by the public, and meet at least twice a year. Additionally, the committee will provide a report annually with recommendations, and useful information on management of oysters in the state.</p> <p>The committee will be subject to sunset review after a few years to determine if it is still needed.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 3397 By: Kitzman</p>	<p>Relating to the regulation of veterinary chiropractic.</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock 5 Ayes, 2 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Animal owners must receive a referral from a veterinarian for animal chiropractic care.</p> <p>In addition to a veterinarian, HB 3397 allows animal chiropractic treatment by a licensed animal chiropractor under Chapter 201 who is either certified by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association or is acting under the supervision of a veterinarian.</p> <p>HB 3397 ensures there is no delay in chiropractic treatment for animals.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3401 By: Orr</p>	<p>Relating to the certification of documents by county clerks, district clerks, and joint county and district clerks.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Historically county clerks have had minimum requirements regarding the format to produce a certified copy of a court record. It is important to have a uniform method for certifying copies of court records in order to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of these important documents. HB 3401 seeks to achieve this by creating a standard that all county and district clerks can follow when certifying copies of court records.</p> <p>HB 3401 establishes a uniform standard for creating certified copies of original documents on file in a district clerk's office and in a joint clerk's office. Requirements for creating a certified copy for either include ensuring that the district court seal and the clerk's signature or initials are on each page of the copy, ensuring that the clerk's attestation be on the final page of the copy which certifies that the copy is a true and correct copy of the original document filed in the clerk's office, and the number of pages copied as well as the date the copy was issued.</p> <p>Lastly, HB 3401 specifies the requirements for creating certified copies of original documents on file in a county clerk's office. The section requires that a certified copy made from an original document must include the clerk's signature or initials on each page of the copy, the commissioners court seal on a copy of a document that is not a court document or the court seal on a copy of a court document, the clerk's attestation on the final page of the copy which certifies that the copy is a true and correct copy of the original document filed in the clerk's office, and the number of pages copied as well as the date the copy was issued.</p> <p>By requiring these elements to be present in certified copies, HB 3401 aims to create a uniform standard for county clerks to follow when certifying copies of original documents. The various requirements help to ensure accuracy and an additional level of authenticity to the copy. This standardization would have several benefits, including making it easier for other entities to identify fraudulent or altered documents. Having a standardized method for certifying copies of court records would also improve consistency and efficiency within the court system. By establishing a clear and consistent process, clerks would be able to certify copies of court records more quickly and accurately, which could help to streamline court proceedings and reduce errors.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 1918 By: Lopez, Janie Neave Criado Jones, Jolanda Rosenthal</p>	<p>Relatings to publication by the attorney general of a contingent fee contract for legal services for political subdivisions and related information.</p>	<p>County Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, political subdivisions that enter into a contingent fee contract for legal services must file the contract with the attorney general for approval. These contracts are available through the comptroller's office. However, they are not required to be made accessible to the public through the Internet. HB 1918 requires the attorney general to publish these contracts and related information on the attorney general's website.</p> <p>By making these contracts available for public access, HB 1918 could promote transparency and enhance trust between the public and the Office of the Attorney General, as individuals can go on the website and see where their taxpayer dollars are going in the county or state.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4701 By: DeAyala</p>	<p>Relating to the review of ballot proposition language for certain elections held by home-rule municipalities.</p>	<p>Elections 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 4701 requires municipalities to submit ballot proposition language regarding an election for a charter amendment or a voter-initiated initiative or referendum through a petition and a statement of purpose to the Attorney General. The Attorney General reviews the language and approves it if it complies with state law. If not, the language is disapproved and cannot be used on the ballot. If the Attorney General does not act within 40 days, the proposition is approved. Alternate language can be submitted if disapproved, but not within 120 days of the election. This section takes precedence over conflicting laws, and the Attorney General can establish implementation rules.</p> <p>These proposed changes give the Attorney General's office too much power. Under this bill, the Attorney General could use this inappropriate power to affect the outcome of a local election or undermine the right of local voters to petition for and vote on ballot measures. There are concerns that if the Attorney General disapproves of proposed language, they could create an alternative and implement it as they see fit.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 888 By: Slawson Leach Shaheen Noble Troxclair</p>	<p>Relating to the statute of limitations on a health care liability claim involving certain gender modification drugs provided to and procedures performed on a minor.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>This session has seen numerous attacks on the transgender community. Widespread misconceptions and misinformation about gender-affirming care have led to bills targeting problems that do not exist.</p> <p>Current law allows a two year statute of limitation for medical malpractice cases and this law specifies that minors under 12 years of age have until their 14th birthday to file or have this claim filed on their behalf. The statute of repose allows 10 years after the date of the act to file a claim. However, the Texas Supreme Court ruling in Weiner v. Wasson allowed minors until age 20 to file suit for medical malpractice, citing that the pre-existing medical malpractice statute unconstitutionally barred minors from filing suit before they were adults. This case protects minors if they do need to file a cause of action for medical malpractice that occurred when they were minors. HB 888 seeks to provide a cause of action that is unnecessary and inconsistent with the statute of limitations and repose for other medical malpractice cases.</p> <p>HB 888 changes the statute of limitations and repose on health care liability claims to allow one particular type of claim to follow different rules. HB 888 allows claimants to bring health care liability claims no later than their 25th birthday if the claimant is a minor at the time the cause of action accrues and if the basis for the claim is malpractice in the provision of a puberty suppression drug, cross-sex hormones, or the performance of surgery or</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			<p>another medical procedure on the minor for the purpose of gender transitioning or reassignment.</p> <p>HB 888 specifically targets gender-affirming care, which is recognized as best practice for those with gender dysphoria by the Texas Pediatric Society, Texas Psychological Association, and the majority of medical organizations. It also does not extend this cause of action to intersex individuals, who are often subject to surgeries without their consent as a minor, making this bill only relevant to one specific population. This could cause undue hesitation in the medical community in regards to providing this life-saving treatment, as these treatments will be susceptible to a longer window for malpractice claims to occur, potentially increasing the cost of insurance for these doctors. Additionally, it is unclear how many lawsuits will ensue based on these cases, as the rate of regret and detransition is low for the transgender population. HB 888 is also redundant, as the Texas Supreme Court already protects the ability for minors to file a lawsuit for any medical malpractice that occurred as a minor until the age of 20, adequately protecting these individuals and others. No other exceptions currently exist for the statute of limitations and repose on health care liability claims, making HB 888 the only exception to this rule. HB 888 is a harmful, unnecessary, discriminatory piece of legislation that causes further harm to an already marginalized community.</p>	
<p>HB 3481 By: Leach</p>	<p>Relating to the exemption of certain personal property from seizure under a court order to collect a judgment on a consumer debt.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The 87th Legislature passed HB 3774, which instructed the Texas Supreme Court to establish regulations for a more accessible and transparent process for Texans seeking exemptions or disputing wrongful seizures. HB 3481 seeks to further these efforts by establishing that a court order for the collection of consumer debt must exempt \$3,000 from freezing and turnover.</p> <p>HB 3481 mandates that a court order for the retrieval of consumer debt must provide a \$3,000 exemption for basic necessities. This exemption cannot be frozen or seized, and the judgment creditor or receiver must first apply the exemption to funds in a demand deposit account, and if necessary, any other applicable account thereafter. If the judgment debtor has more than one demand deposit account, the exemption must be applied from the largest to smallest account. The exemption also covers any federal benefits safeguarded from garnishment by federal regulations and does not restrict the amounts secured by other exemptions beyond the specified limit, but does not apply to any court-ordered alimony, child support, or spousal maintenance payments.</p> <p>In instances in which the account is held by a financial institution on behalf of the judgment debtor, these court orders must direct the judgment's creditor to send a levy letter accompanied by a separate form provided by the Texas Supreme Court in order that establishes a simple process for financial institutions to implement the bill's exemptions. The financial institution may rely on the form when requested to turn over judgment debtor's assets or financial information to a judgment creditor or receiver. The Texas Supreme Court must publicly declare and regulate a form that establishes the process for a financial institution to implement the exemption by May 1, 2024.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>Providing this \$3,000 exemption ensures one will be able to meet their basic needs while addressing a debt collection issue. Thirty-eight states have some protection of funds in a bank account to ensure people can cover basic cost of living. Texas will also become part of the nationwide effort to modernize wage garnishment protections and ensure people in these circumstances will have the financial means necessary to sustain themselves.</p>	
<p>HB 3505 By: Spiller</p>	<p>Relating to motor vehicle safety inspections; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p> <p>5 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Some claim the Texas motor vehicle inspection industry faces considerable challenges, including rising costs, inflation, and labor shortages. HB 3505 seeks to address this by allowing inspection stations more flexibility in setting their service fees.</p> <p>HB 3505 prohibits the Department of Public Safety (DPS) from adopting rules that prevent vehicle inspection stations from refusing to inspect vehicles. HB 3505 also removes provisions allowing DPS to set fixed fees for different inspection types, such as \$12.50 for a noncommercial motor vehicle and \$5.75 for a moped. By eliminating these fixed fees, HB 3505 allows inspection stations to set fees that cover their operating costs.</p> <p>While HB 3505 provides financial relief for inspection station owners, it raises concerns for Texas consumers. With inspection stations having the freedom to set prices, there's potential for unfair pricing, particularly in rural areas where consumers may have limited inspection options. Furthermore, the bill might shift focus from safety to price comparison. Finally, given that vehicle inspections are legally mandated, a state agency should ideally set the fees for vehicle inspections to ensure fairness and prevent exploitation.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3555 By: Plesa Leach Landgraf Thierry</p>	<p>Relating to the dissemination of certain school district ad valorem tax-related information.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p> <p>9 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>When districts collect M&O taxes that are in excess of the district's entitlement, these funds go toward other school districts throughout the state that receive limited funding due to surrounding property tax values. Recapture allows schools with lower and higher property tax values to have equal funding, ensuring every child in Texas has equitable access to school resources. Wealthy property owners, however, are concerned that they are overpaying taxes that do not go to their own school districts, sending their money outside of their communities. HB 3555 aims to bring more transparency to the recapture process by posting this information on county websites to show how much money in the district goes towards recapture.</p> <p>HB 3555 requires the county assessor-collector to post information on the county's website for each district on recapture. Specifically, HB 3555 requires the county assessor-collector to post online information on the percentage of maintenance and operations (M&O) taxes imposed by the district for the current tax year that the district is and is not required to pay under the agreement to purchase average daily attendance credits for the school district for districts who have local revenue in excess of entitlement and who have taken steps to reduce the district's revenue level. For districts that do not have this, the county assessor-collector must post the percentage of the district's M&O revenue for the school year beginning in both the preceding and current tax year that was or is derived from M&O taxes imposed by the district for the current or preceding tax year and the percentage of the district's M&O revenue for the school year that was or is derived from state funds distributed to the district.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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			<p>There are concerns that HB 3555 provides no context on recapture and only shows the money leaving or coming into school districts. For example, HB 3555 does not explain that the district will get its entitlement regardless of recapture. Recapture is an important mechanism to ensure equitable school funding in Texas. While HB 3555 does add transparency to the school finance system, it also could cause widespread criticism on recapture without context on its importance and take the focus off of adequately funding all schools.</p>	
<p>HB 3570</p> <p>By: Schatzline Thierry Schaefer Johnson, Ann</p>	<p>Relating to restricting access to sexual material harmful to minors on an Internet website.</p>	<p>Youth Health and Safety</p> <p>7 Ayes 0 Nay 0 PNV 2 Absent</p>	<p>Concerns have been raised regarding the easy access minors may have to websites containing sexually explicit materials, which can lead to negative mental and physical health consequences. HB 3570 seeks to prevent minors from accessing such material online by requiring commercial entities publishing or distributing this material to implement age verification technology, as well as introducing other guardrails and enforcement mechanisms.</p> <p>HB 3570 requires commercial entities that publish or distribute sexually explicit material on a website to use reasonable age verification methods to verify that individuals attempting to access the material are 18 years of age or older. The bill provides that commercial entities may perform age verification themselves or through a third party, using digital identification or a commercially reasonable method that verifies age using government-issued identification or public or private data.</p> <p>HB 3570 defines a commercial entity as any legally recognized business entity, such as a corporation or partnership, that knowingly and intentionally publishes or distributes sexual material harmful to minors on a website or social media platform. The bill defines “sexual material harmful to minors” as material that is designed to appeal to the prurient interest, is patently offensive with respect to minors, and lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.</p> <p>HB 3570 prohibits a commercial entity or a third party conducting age verification from keeping any individual identifying information after access has been granted to the material, and makes a commercial entity or third party that is found to have retained that information liable to the individual for damages resulting from retaining the identifying information. However, the bill exempts from its provisions news or public interest broadcast, website video, report, or event and establishes that its provisions may not be construed to affect the rights of a news-gathering organization. The bill also prohibits an Internet service provider (ISP), or its affiliates or subsidiaries, a search engine, or a cloud service provider from being held in violation of the bill’s provisions solely for providing access or connection to or from a website that may contain sexual material harmful to minors.</p> <p>Overall, HB 3570 aims to protect minors from accessing harmful sexual material online while also balancing the interests of commercial entities and free speech rights.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 3671 By: Jones, Jolanda</p>	<p>Relating to justice court security in certain counties.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Justice courts across Texas face dangerous conditions, despite the integral services they provide for the state. Currently, there are no laws specifying or mandating any security measures for justice courts to safeguard the well-being of their justices of the peace, personnel, and visitors. HB 3671 seeks to increase safety measures in justice courts by placing minimum security requirements.</p> <p>HB 3671 requires the commissioners court of a county with a population of 3.3 million or more to provide each justice court with a metal detection device and a constable, deputy constable, or deputy sheriff at each door open to the public. The commissioners court must first use money in the courthouse security fund, and if necessary, the general revenue fund of the county.</p> <p>Acts of violence against public servants in justice courts are rising due to the lack of adequate security measures compared to other courts, putting justices of the peace in precarious situations and rendering them unable to perform their duties. These increased measures could help safeguard these employees and the general public.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 5284 By: Kitzman</p>	<p>Relating to emergency response protocols and safety and security audits developed by the Texas School Safety Center and Health and Human Services Commission for day-care centers.</p>	<p>Youth Health and Safety 5 Ayes 1 Nay 0 PNV 3 Absent</p>	<p>In response to several tragic incidents involving schools, the Texas Legislature has prioritized school safety in recent years. However, less attention has been given to ensuring the safety of children in facilities where they spend significant time outside of school, such as daycare facilities. While current statutes do provide some safety response standards for these facilities, they are less comprehensive and lack provisions for safety audits or monitoring mechanisms. To bridge this gap, HB 5248 has been proposed to mandate security procedures and audits for child-care centers.</p> <p>HB 5248 requires that the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) collaborate with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to research and disseminate best practices related to emergency preparedness for day-care centers. To achieve this, the TxSSC is mandated to create safety and security audit procedures for day-care centers that specify the required frequency of audits and the manner in which audit results should be reported to the TxSSC. Additionally, the TxSSC is also required to develop and publish guidelines for standard emergency response protocol requirements for day-care centers and provide them with safety and standard emergency response protocol training and technical assistance.</p> <p>HB 5284 also mandates that each day-care center in Texas must follow the standard emergency response protocol guidelines developed by the TxSSC in collaboration with the HHSC. Furthermore, the day-care centers are also required to conduct safety and security audits using the procedures developed by the TxSSC in collaboration with the HHSC, and report the audit results to the TxSSC in accordance with the required audit procedures. There are concerns that this requirement could impose an unknown, unfunded mandate for private day care centers.</p> <p>HB 5284 helps to improve the emergency preparedness and safety of day-care centers in Texas by providing them with guidelines, training, and technical assistance, standard emergency response protocols, and safety audits.</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>

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			Concerns have been raised however, regarding the fact that HB 5284 provisions don't come with funding, which could effectively make the bill an unfunded mandate. Daycares are private entities that already must meet numerous standards and likely do not have the funding to fully establish the provisions of the bill, as many are already struggling to cover basic needs and the salaries of their employees.	
HB 4115 By: Thompson, Senfronia Bell, Cecil	Relating to eligibility for membership on and the regulation of horse racing by the Texas Racing Commission and a prohibition on the conduct of greyhound or other dog racing as live events in this state; creating a criminal offense; authorizing a fee.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>The Sunset Advisory Commission released a report in the summer of 2021 that outlined recommendations to update the current statute regarding the Texas Racing Commission (TRC), and removing redundancies in their regulations. HB 4115 addresses these recommendations by updating current statute related to TRC practices.</p> <p>HB 4115 introduces multiple changes to the TRC and regulations governing horse racing. It prohibits the conduct of live greyhound or dog racing events in Texas and establishes new provisions for the commission's membership eligibility and regulation authority. The bill grants immunity to individuals contracted by the racing commission in carrying out their duties and extends conflict of interest protections to contractors. It also removes certain disqualifications for serving on the racing commission and adjusts the term of members affected by these changes.</p> <p>Additionally, HB 4115 repeals licensing requirements related to moral character and subjective morality-based standards, and it extends the duration of racetrack associations' temporary licenses. It also includes provisions for emergency management activities, modifies the submission of annual reports, adjusts the cap on unappropriated funds, and expands the authority of the executive director to issue cease and desist orders. It also establishes new accounts and councils related to equine education and research.</p> <p>Furthermore, HB 4115 amends provisions concerning racing offenses, modifies licensing regulations, removes certain restrictions on automobile racing facilities, and repeals greyhound racing provisions. It addresses the transfer and allocation of greyhound purse funds and updates references to reflect the prohibition on live dog racing events.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 4138 By: Schatzline Noble Spiller Klick Bonnen	Relating to the establishment of the Texas Adoption Assistance Program.	Human Services 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>HB 4138 establishes the Texas Adoption Assistance Program. This program provides grants to eligible parents, both from the private sector and public assistance, to help cover adoption-related expenses. Certified organizations, selected and approved by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), can solicit donations and award adoption assistance grants. These organizations must meet specific eligibility requirements, including the ability to distribute program money as specified and undergo independent audits to be submitted to HHSC. Additionally, of the amount of money received from donations made by donors to provide adoption assistance, at least 97% must be used for adoption assistance grants and the remaining 3% for organizational operations.</p> <p>Under HB 4138, eligible parents must reside in Texas, have an adoption order for a child under 18 years old, and meet the income criteria of an annual gross household income that does not exceed \$400,000. The maximum</p>	<u>Will of the House</u>

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			<p>amount of the adoption assistance grant varies based on the household's gross yearly income, covering a portion of the adoption-related expenses incurred by the parents. For example, if the household income is not over \$320,000, the maximum amount a recipient can receive is equal to 50% of any adoption-related expenses. This drops to 40% for household incomes between \$320,000 and \$340,000 and continues to drop until the maximum threshold of \$400,000. These expenses may include legal fees, counseling, medical expenses, and case management.</p> <p>HB 4138 authorizes HHSC to revoke certification if an organization fails to comply with program requirements. Each state fiscal year, certified organizations must award as many one-time adoption assistance grants to eligible parents based on available funds. In addition, the commission may provide state-matching funds to certified organizations. HHSC is responsible for adopting rules, procedures, and enforcement measures.</p> <p>Incentives for adopting families help encourage adoption and address the number of children in foster care. The bill allows very high-income families to access state and private funding assistance. Higher-income families may already have more resources than lower-income families wishing to adopt. While it is incredible that all families adopt children needing families, help covering costs from state resources should be reserved for lower-income families.</p>	
<p>HB 4207</p> <p>By: Troxclair Dean Goldman Hefner</p>	<p>Relating to municipally owned utility vegetation management.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>12 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 4207 requires municipally-owned utilities (MOU) to submit annual reports to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) detailing their vegetation management plans and restricts the transfer of MOU revenue to a city's general fund based on the PUC's assessment of the submitted vegetation plan.</p> <p>The provisions of HB 4207 limit local control of MOUs, local autonomy to manage the budget, increase the bureaucratic burden and apply a one-size-fits-all approach ignoring the unique circumstances different utilities face.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3381</p> <p>By: Cook Goldman Capriglione Schatzline</p>	<p>Relating to creating the criminal offense of misrepresenting medical history to obtain unnecessary medical treatment for a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>6 Ayes 2 Nay 0 PNV 1 Absent</p>	<p>Concerns have been raised regarding situations in which a guardian will elicit unnecessary medical care for an individual in their care through falsifying or misrepresenting medical records. This is sometimes called Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy or Factitious Disorder by Proxy. This behavior is medical child abuse and accounts for roughly 1-2% of child abuses cases in the US. Concerns have been raised that medical professionals and other experts involved in child welfare are ill-equipped to identify this behavior because of a lack of training, leading to less individuals being held accountable for the abuse. HB 3381 seeks to remedy this by increasing penalties for such behavior.</p> <p>HB 3381 creates a third degree felony for the act of intentionally misrepresenting the medical history of a vulnerable individual such as a child, elderly person, or disabled person to a healthcare institution or provider. The intent behind the offense must be to obtain medical treatment that is not required for the individual's condition, and the unnecessary medical treatment obtained through the misrepresentation must result in bodily</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			<p>injury or mental impairment or injury to the said individual.</p> <p>HB 3831 aims to protect vulnerable victims but may carry with it some unintended consequences. Guardians that care for those with long lasting medical concerns are often overwhelmed and unable to track all medical communications. This bill may allow for the arrest or conviction of a caregiver for simply miscommunicating the records of someone in their care. Additionally, privacy concerns have been raised regarding a court's ability to subpoena medical records just at the suspicion of a crime. These records are not always completely accurate, as they are entirely under the control of each doctor, and the family may have nothing to do with changes or omissions. As the concern of the bill is that professionals struggle to identify this type of abuse, training for professionals may be a better fit to prevent this behavior, and doesn't risk the punishment of caregivers who are doing their best.</p>	
<p>HB 4208</p> <p>By: Troclair Dean Patterson Goldman Hefner</p>	<p>Relating to the management and control of certain municipal electric utility systems.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>9 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 4208 is a direct attempt to shift control of Austin Energy away from the City of Austin and its residents to consumers served outside of Austin city limits, such as Westlake.</p> <p>HB 4208 transfers municipally owned utilities (MOU) governance from their current unique structure to a seven-member board of trustees. Appointments are determined by the municipality's governing body, with eligibility requiring a minimum of 10 years of relevant experience. Trustees serve staggered five-year terms, with a maximum of two terms. The municipality can delineate the board's powers and duties, and in the absence of explicit guidelines, the board adheres to applicable laws and regulations.</p> <p>HB 4208 claims to ensure utilities are supervised by experienced professionals, optimizing service provision to communities; but it is really an attempt to reduce local control by having the legislature define the governance structure of MOUs rather than allowing each municipality the autonomy to continue implement a self-selected structure of their choice.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4636</p> <p>By: Orr</p>	<p>Relating to the eligibility of political party candidates or officers and certain procedures of the county executive committee.</p>	<p>Elections</p> <p>8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 4636 outlines certain qualifications to serve as an officer of a political party. First, the individual should not currently hold or be a candidate for an elected office at the federal, state, or county level, unless specified otherwise. Additionally, if the position is that of a county or precinct chair, the person must be a qualified voter of the county. Furthermore, they should not have any felony convictions that have not been pardoned or resulted in the removal of associated disabilities.</p> <p>Under HB 4636, if a chair fails to meet these eligibility requirements, they are automatically removed from their office. The county chair, who holds a significant role, possesses the authority to appoint non-voting members to aid the county executive committee in its operations. They are responsible for filling any vacancies within the committee through appointments, following procedures that may be established by the state executive committee. The county chair is also in charge of scheduling meetings and setting the agenda for each gathering.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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			Moreover, HB 4636 authorizes the county chair to assume the role of the administrator for all party accounts and contracts. This entails overseeing the management and organization of party funds, as well as ensuring the proper execution of contractual agreements. This responsibility underscores the significance of the county chair's role in maintaining the financial and operational integrity of the political party.	
HB 4671 By: Hayes	Relating to the qualifications and summoning of grand jurors.	Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>District clerks are responsible for preparing and mailing jury summons for petit and grand juries, but the law is unclear on who is allowed to summon a grand jury. To comply with state law, summons for a grand jury are often mailed by the county sheriff, even though the district clerk handles the administrative duties of preparing the jury summons. HB 4761 aims to clarify this by making adjustments as to who may fulfill certain duties relating to jury summons.</p> <p>HB 4671 expands the list of individuals who can be directed by the district court to summon grand jurors, specifically adding district clerks to the list. The bill also outlines the responsibilities of the district clerk, which include not summoning persons who are ineligible to serve as grand jurors, and summoning additional prospective grand jurors when necessary.</p> <p>In addition, HB 4671 mandates that the district clerk prepares a list of individuals who were disqualified from serving as grand jurors in the preceding month. The district clerk is required to send a copy of this list to the secretary of state on the third business day of each month.</p> <p>HB 4671 would allow district clerks to fulfill a natural next step to their current duties, ensuring that there is no ambiguity in the process.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 2770 By: DeAyala	Relating to exemption of certain civil actions from being subject to a motion to dismiss on the basis of involving the exercise of certain constitutional rights.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>HB 2770 aims to exempt suits brought to enforce Election Code from the Texas Citizen Participation ACT (TCPA), adding the Election Code as the thirteenth exception to TCPA or Anti-SLAPP (strategic lawsuits against public participation) statute would not apply. The TCPA or Anti-SLAPP was created to encourage and safeguard citizens' constitutional rights to petition, speak freely, and associate freely, without fear of retaliatory lawsuits intended to restrict their ability to exercise their first amendment rights.</p> <p>HB 2770 specifies that certain procedures for a quick dismissal of civil lawsuits that involve constitutional rights will not be applicable to legal actions that are filed under or to enforce provisions of the Election Code. However, this exemption only applies to provisions of the Election Code that do not regulate political funds and campaigns. This means that legal actions brought to enforce Election Code provisions related to political funds and campaigns will still be subject to the expedited dismissal procedures for civil actions involving constitutional rights.</p> <p>A citizen registering to vote or casting a ballot is engaging in free speech, a fundamental right entitled to full protection under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution; therefore, it is concerning that HB 2770 would add the Election code as the thirteenth exception that TCPA would not apply to. Each exemption you make</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>

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			to the TCPA only further hinders the free speech rights of Texans. Furthermore, the passing of HB 2770 may dissuade potential whistleblowers from pursuing legal action, as their case could be dismissed or settled far too easily. This could result in a decrease in First Amendment safeguards by discouraging individuals from bringing defamation cases.	
HB 4762 By: Lalani Klick Howard Bonnen Oliverson	Relating to liability of hospital personnel for certain uses of force while on duty.	Criminal Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>Recently, the rate of violence against hospital personnel has steadily increased, and was worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the rate of injuries from attacks against healthcare professionals grows, hospital personnel may find themselves in situations where they need to use force to protect themselves from harm. However, such situations can result in the health care professional being held liable for any injuries or harm caused to the patient. HB 4762 aims to protect hospital personnel from such liability when using force against a patient while on duty and in self-defense.</p> <p>HB 4762 exempts hospital personnel from liability for injuries to patients resulting from the use of force while on duty. The bill requires that the use of force by hospital personnel must be reasonable and necessary under the circumstances in order to be exempt from liability. This includes situations where hospital personnel use force in self-defense or to defend others, and where the individual’s use of force would be excluded from criminal responsibility under state law.</p> <p>HB 4762 addresses a growing concern regarding the safety of health care professionals, who are increasingly subject to physical assaults in the workplace. By protecting hospital personnel from liability for the use of force in self-defense, the bill seeks to encourage health care professionals to continue providing critical care to patients without fear of legal repercussions.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 4903 By: Dorazio Capriglione Raymond Harris, Cody Stucky	Relating to the issuance of gold and silver specie and the establishment of a digital currency based on gold and silver; authorizing a fee.	State Affairs 7 Ayes, 6 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>HB 4903 aims to make the Texas Bullion Depository more accessible by introducing gold and silver-backed digital currency. HB 4903 requires the comptroller to establish and issue gold and silver specie (coins) and a digital currency based on gold and silver, provided its feasible and constitutional. The digital currency must be usable as legal tender and easily transferable. The Texas Bullion Depository will be the state’s sole issuer of gold and silver coins. A pooled depository account will hold gold and silver in trust for digital currency holders. The comptroller can charge fees for issuing or redeeming digital currency to cover costs and individuals can obtain digital currency by paying the comptroller or transferring gold or silver from their account with the Texas Bullion Depository. Digital currency holders can redeem their currency for U.S. dollars or gold and silver specie or bullion. Finally, HB 4903 requires the comptroller to adopt rules for implementing its provisions, ensuring security and preventing fraud.</p> <p>While HB 4903 aims to make gold and silver-backed digital currency more accessible but it has potential drawbacks. The value of gold and silver can be volatile, impacting the digital currency's stability. Moreover, setting up a new digital currency system can be complex and resource-intensive. Its adoption might be limited, as people may prefer traditional currency or other digital payment options. Additionally, it may face competition</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>

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			<p>from established cryptocurrencies and face legal and regulatory challenges. Lastly, there is a risk of misuse, such as money laundering, necessitating additional oversight and security measures.</p>	
<p>HB 4946 By: Flores</p>	<p>Relating to prohibited disqualification of and peremptory challenges to certain prospective jurors.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, ○ PNV, ○ Absent</p>	<p>Although federal law prohibits specific forms of discrimination during jury selection, it solely pertains to federal courts and does not encompass discrimination relating to a person's real or perceived gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability status. As a result of these limitations in federal and state laws, certain Texans have no safeguards against discriminatory practices during jury selection. HB 4946 aims to stop unfair practices during jury selection by ensuring potential jurors cannot be removed based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or economic status.</p> <p>HB 4946 amends the Civil Practice Remedies Code by prohibiting the use of peremptory challenges, which are a defendant's or lawyer's objections to a proposed juror made without needing to give a reason. Under HB 4946, an attorney may not exclude jurors based on their race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, national origin, economic status, or religious affiliation. If a party believes that the other party's attorney has used peremptory challenges in a discriminatory manner, they can ask the court to dismiss the current pool of jurors and call a new one. The court will grant this request if it finds evidence of discrimination, and the burden of proof then shifts to the other party's lawyer to provide a non-discriminatory explanation for their use of peremptory challenges. If the court finds that either party's lawyer used discriminatory challenges, a new pool of jurors will be called.</p> <p>HB 4946 also amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to allow either party in a case to request the court to dismiss and call a new jury array after the jury lists have been delivered to the court clerk but before the court has impaneled the jury. The court is required to grant a motion for dismissal of the array if it determines that the opposing party's attorney exercised peremptory challenges to exclude certain classes of individuals, such as based on race, gender identity, or religion, and the complaining party has provided evidence to support this claim. The burden then shifts to the opposing party's attorney to provide a neutral explanation for the challenges. The bill removes the determination that the defendant is a member of an identified racial group and replaces it with a determination that the opposing party's attorney exercised peremptory challenges based on actual or perceived characteristics of the jurors.</p> <p>The goal of HB 4946 is to create a more fair and unbiased jury selection process. Texans of all backgrounds deserve the right to serve their state without worry of discrimination.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 5018 By: Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to certain payment recovery efforts by managed care organizations under Medicaid or the child health plan program.</p>	<p>Human Services 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Proposed regulations by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services aim to establish clear guidelines regarding the impact of prior authorization or pre-service approval. According to these guidelines, if a managed care organization (MCO) grants approval for a covered item or service through prior authorization or pre-service determination, they cannot later refuse coverage by citing lack of medical necessity, unless there are valid reasons to revisit the decision, such as good cause, fraud, or similar issues. Notably, some MCOs are opting to waive authorization requirements in situations where the attending physician or clinician has already deemed the medical necessity of the treatment. Current law surrounding prior authorization is excessively demanding and causes significant delays in obtaining essential medical care. HB 5018 seeks to address this issue.</p> <p>HB 5018 mandates the Health and Human Services (HHSC's) executive commissioner to establish fair procedures to protect providers' rights. Under these procedures, managed care organizations or contracted entities that try to recover overpayments must give written notice to providers who use electronic visit verification. The notice informs them of the intention to recoup the overpayments. Moreover, providers have a minimum of 60 days after exhausting all their appeal rights to correct any issues with their claims. They can do so by submitting the necessary documentation, and only after this period can the organization start collecting the overpayments.</p> <p>HB 5018 also includes specific provisions for audits or reviews of claims that received prior authorization. In such cases, managed care organizations or contracted entities involved in payment recovery cannot reevaluate the determination of medical necessity. Additionally, they cannot scrutinize claim documentation errors if those errors were not made by the provider. These measures ensure a fair process for providers during payment recovery efforts.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 5110 By: Bhojani Johnson, Julie Leach Flores Lujan</p>	<p>Relating to prohibited disqualifications for service as a juror.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>All Texans should have the right to serve on jury duty. HB 5110 adds a new section prohibiting the disqualification of potential jurors based on certain characteristics. Specifically, a person may not be disqualified from jury duty based on their age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, economic status, religious affiliation, or political belief.</p> <p>HB 5110 aims to promote a fair and impartial jury selection process by ensuring that potential jurors are not excluded based on irrelevant factors that have no bearing on their ability to serve as fair and impartial jurors. By prohibiting such disqualifications, this bill seeks to promote diversity and inclusivity in the jury selection process and prevent discrimination against certain groups.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 186</p> <p>By: Johnson, Julie</p>	<p>Relating to the county in which an application for court-ordered mental health services must be filed.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Some county courts do not allow hospitals to request orders of protective custody (OPCs) from the county where they are located, forcing them to seek OPCs from neighboring counties where patients were apprehended by law enforcement. Currently, the law allows the application to be filed in the county where the patient resides, is found, or is receiving court-ordered mental health services. Although most jurisdictions interpret this to include the hospital's location, some do not.</p> <p>HB 186, aims to clarify the existing law by specifying the locations where clinicians can request OPCs for their patients. The bill specifies that an application to initiate involuntary mental health services must be filed with the county clerk if the proposed patient resides in the county and if the proposed patient is receiving mental health services by court order. To these requirements, HB 186 adds that an application must also be filed if the proposed patient is physically located in the county at the time the application is filed and if the proposed patient was apprehended by emergency detention.</p> <p>The bill's changes would enable hospitals to file applications in their own county, thus avoiding the need to travel to a neighboring county, which can add costs and time to the process. This change is expected to expedite treatment for patients.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 423</p> <p>By: Lopez, Ray Raney Turner Wu</p>	<p>Relating to a study regarding the cost of child care in this state in comparison to family income.</p>	<p>Human Services</p> <p>5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>According to the Economic Policy Institute, child care is unaffordable for most Texan families. Using the average median family income of \$59,440 and annual infant costs, families are spending almost 16% of this income on child care.</p> <p>HB 423 directs the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to perform a study to examine past, present, and projected trends of childcare costs in comparison to their respective wages. Additionally, the study would examine the expansion and stabilization of social services. TWC must report and submit the findings to the governor, lieutenant governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each legislative standing committee with jurisdiction over child-care facilities by December 15, 2024.</p> <p>HB 423 could lead to possible solutions to the overbearing childcare costs for Texas families. These solutions could then lead to more equitable opportunities for lower income families.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 585</p> <p>By: Raymond</p>	<p>Relating to a study by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality regarding the</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays,</p>	<p>Winter Storm Uri resulted in power outages that caused multiple water treatment plants in Texas to close down, causing a severe water crisis that affected millions of Texans. HB 585 creates a study to help mitigate the potential of system failure in the future.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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	protection of certain water facilities from catastrophes.	<p>0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 585 mandates the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to investigate strategies to protect public drinking water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities regulated by TCEQ from different causes that could potentially disrupt water service, including power outages, severe weather events, criminal activities, climate change, and other potential disruptions. HB 585 requires TCEQ to work with other state agencies or interested parties to conduct the study and present a report that includes the findings, recommendations, and possible actions to safeguard these facilities. The report must be submitted to the governor and legislature by September 1, 2024.</p> <p>HB 585 aims to strengthen the dependability of water treatment facilities against potential service disruptions.</p>	
<p>HB 2094</p> <p>By: Manuel Plesa Davis Hull Howard</p>	<p>Relating to a court order for the exclusive occupancy of the primary residence by a spouse during the pendency of a suit for dissolution of a marriage.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice and Family Issues</p> <p>7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, during a divorce proceeding, both parties have equal rights to community property, including the home. This has led to situations in which even if one party in the divorce is an abuse victim at the hands of the other party, both have equal right to the house. This can put victims in further danger. HB 2094 seeks to address this by automatically granting a victim of certain crimes exclusive rights to the home during divorce proceedings.</p> <p>HB 2094 allows for an order awarding exclusive occupancy of the primary residence to one spouse while a divorce is pending if the other party has a history of family violence. Specifically, the bill requires the court to award exclusive occupancy of the residence if the other party has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for a felony classified as an offense that involved family violence against the other individual or their family. The order applies to both the primary residence and other residential property. The bill also allows a party to file a motion to vacate the order at any time during the pendency of the suit.</p> <p>HB 2094 aims to assist in the separation of the victim from the offender in domestic violence cases whenever the parties are related by marriage and share residency, allowing the victim to have a place of stability during this time of duress.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>