



Texas Legislative Study Group

An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

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LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 9:00 AM – Tuesday, May 2, 2023

<p>HB 3508</p> <p>By: Hernandez</p>	<p>Relating to the operation of public electric vehicle charging stations.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 5 Absent</p>	<p>HB 3508 creates a plan to meet the state's expected demand for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations by encouraging competitive private investment while protecting consumers from high electricity costs. HB 3508 proposes a framework for both ERCOT and non-ERCOT utilities' participation in the public EV charging industry.</p> <p>Inside ERCOT Under the bill, Transmission and Distribution Utilities (TDU) inside ERCOT are prohibited from directly owning, operating, or providing charging services from a public EV charging station. TDUs are also prohibited from rate-basing publicly available EV charging stations. Additionally, TDUs are allowed to own, operate, and lease EV charging stations on their own property only to serve the TDUs' vehicles.</p> <p>TDUs may provide public EV charging services only through affiliation with a subsidiary or third party if the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the affiliate is not subject to PUC regulations but is subject to certain provisions prohibiting market power abuse as described in the Public Utilities Regulatory Act; and it is not located within 50 miles of a public EV charging station that provides EV charging as identified by the US Department of Energy alternative fuels map. <p>TDUs are required to set the same rates, terms, and conditions to the affiliate and other EV charging stations within the TDU's service area and in compliance with certain PURA provisions. A TDU affiliate providing EV charging stations may not be subsidized by rates to consumers in the TDU's service area. In other words, consumers will not bear the price of constructing or maintaining EV charging stations in their monthly electric bills.</p> <p>Outside ERCOT HB 3508 provides guardrails for electric utilities operating outside of ERCOT to own and operate EV charging stations. Under this framework, non-ERCOT electric utilities may directly provide EV charging services to consumers if the utility goes through a right of first refusal process and complies with rate-setting requirements established in the bill.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
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			<p>The right of first refusal (ROFR) process recognizes that there may be areas in the state in which private investment of EV charging stations may be lacking or nonexistent and electric utilities may be better suited to provide EV charging stations. The process establishes criteria that must be met before an electric utility is allowed to directly provide EV charging services, and provides for neutral policies to promote competitive private investment.</p> <p>Non-ERCOT utilities authorized to directly provide EV charging services are allowed to recover reasonable and necessary costs as determined by the PUC. HB 3508 also sets out provisions that authorize a non-ERCOT utility to enter into an agreement with a person or municipality to own or operate an EV charging station in the person or municipality's property.</p> <p>With HB 3508, these necessary safeguards for both ERCOT and non-ERCOT utilities will promote private investment, expand the EV charging industry, protect consumers and lead to a cleaner future.</p>	
<p>HB 4318 By: Walle</p>	<p>Relating to a grant program for crime victim notification systems.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Due to staffing issues in law enforcement and support services like 9-1-1, there are frequent delays in response time and updates for victims enduring active crimes and updates about their cases. A crime victim notification system would provide a central location for victims to file reports online and allow for an opt-in service to automate all relevant responses via email or text message. HB 4318 seeks to provide financial support for law enforcement agencies to adopt such a system that is necessary for increased public safety.</p> <p>HB 4318 directs the criminal justice division to administrative duties concerning the grant program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility criteria for the grant • Grant application procedures • Criteria for evaluating and awarding grant applicants • Create guidelines related to the grant amount • Establishing procedures to monitor the agencies' ability to comply with the condition of the grant <p>Under HB 4318, victims would be provided with access to more resources, simultaneously allowing for law enforcement to be adequately equipped to serve Texans.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 10:00 AM – Tuesday, May 2, 2023</p>				
<p>HB 4857 By: Wilson</p>	<p>Relating to the cosmetology licensure compact.</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures</p> <p>10 Ayes, 0 Nays,</p>	<p>HB 4857 adds Texas to the list of member states participating in the Cosmetology Licensure Compact. The compact will allow licensed cosmetologists who move from one compact state to another to work without long wait times to receive a new state license.</p> <p>HB 4857 would allow cosmetology licensees to move freely between member states for employment. HB 4857 outlines eligibility requirements for states to have continuous participation in the compact, a multistate licensing</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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		<p>0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>program, and requirements for anyone moving to another member state. HB 4857 authorizes the Cosmetology Licensure Compact Commission (CLCC) and a Member State’s Licensing Authority to regulate the cosmetology practice, including carrying out disciplinary measures.</p> <p>HB 4857 states that to utilize the compact, a cosmetologist must have a license in good standing in a member state. HB 4857 also creates a centralized database with information regarding licensure, investigations, and other pertinent information for all licensees in member states. Under HB 4857, all agreements between the CLCC and the member states are binding according to the terms. However, HB 4857 outlines provisions to amend the compact or allow a member state to withdraw.</p> <p>HB 4857 allows lawfully practicing cosmetologists in compact states to work quickly without a hiatus. This is especially helpful for military spouses or family members who may have to move every few years.</p> <p>This bill takes effect on the date the compact is enacted into law in the 10th member state.</p>	
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LSG Floor Report For Major State Calendar – Tuesday, May 2, 2023

<p>HB 1605</p> <p>By: Buckley Dutton Bonnen King, Ken Bell, Keith</p>	<p>Relating to instructional material and technology, the adoption and revision of essential knowledge and skills of the public school foundation curriculum, and creating allotments for the procurement of certain instructional materials under the Foundation School Program; authorizing a fee.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>11 Ayes, 2 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The Teacher Vacancy Task Force (TVTF) was established in 2022 by Governor Abbott to examine teacher recruitment and retention challenges across Texas. TVTF reported that a lack of access to appropriate curricular resources burdens teachers and inadequately prepares students. HB 1605 aims to raise the bar on available curriculum.</p> <p>Teachers HB 1605 seeks to reduce teacher workload by offering optional instructional materials so less time is spent on curriculum building outside of work hours. HB 1605 allows districts to permit teachers to spend their planning and preparation time selecting instructional materials. The bill also states that a contract between a district and a classroom teacher under which a teacher is assigned responsibility for duties unrelated to providing instruction and requires the teacher to work excess hours must explicitly state the teacher's duties unrelated to providing instruction. In adopting materials for a subject in the required curriculum, a district must ensure sufficient time is allocated for teachers and students regarding the state curriculum standards. Teachers may not be penalized for not following the recommended pacing of instructional materials for a subject.</p> <p>Immunity from Disciplinary Proceedings for Classroom Teacher If a teacher used only SBOE-approved material and the instruction was delivered with fidelity, the teacher is immune from disciplinary proceedings for any allegation that the teacher violated certain instructional requirements, the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, or a related state or federal law.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>
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<p><i>Publishers And Manufacturers Of Instructional Materials</i> HB 1605 requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to adopt standard contract terms and conditions for procuring instruction materials from publishers and manufacturers. Each district must report all instructional materials used to TEA annually.</p> <p><i>Parental Access and Request for Review</i> HB 1605 seeks to increase the transparency and involvement of parents by creating the parent portal, access to teacher material, and the ability to request instructional material review. HB 1605 requires TEA to make approved instructional materials available on a parent portal by an entity that supplies instructional materials that must: include access to the material used by their student’s district organized by order of intended use, a “search by keyword” feature, and should any material not be in digital format, it must contain the necessary information for a parent to locate a physical copy of the material. Materials unavailable on the portal or for preview at the school cannot be used. This information must be available to parents 30 days before the start and end of school. Additionally, HB 1605 requires a board of trustees to establish a process for parents to request an instructional material review.</p> <p><i>Instructional Materials Approval Process</i> HB 1605 attempts to ensure that the curriculum is academically appropriate and aligns with the grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards by offering a curriculum reform through material vetted through the TEA and SBOE. The TEKS are curriculum standards that identify what students must know and be able to do at the end of each subject or course. Currently, curriculum and instructional materials are determined by a district or charter.</p> <p><u>Review and Approval</u> HB 1605 changes the governance of the review and approval process for the state review and approval of instructional materials. HB 1605 removes requirements relating to the review and adoption cycle for instructional materials for elementary grade levels by the SBOE. Instead, HB 1605 requires the SBOE to review any instructional material recommended by the TEA through the TEA’s instructional material review process prescribed by the commissioner.</p> <p>The SBOE may adopt criteria for the instructional material's approval but requires the SBOE to determine whether the material is factually correct and suitable for the designated subject and grade level. Full subject tier 1 instructional materials are defined as material designed to provide students mastery of the state curriculum standards adopted by the SBOE without the need for supplementation.</p> <p>HB 1605 requires the SBOE to indicate whether the reviewed material can be accessed from the parent portal. Material approved must be added to a list of approved instruction materials, and any material not approved may</p>
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be added to a list of rejected materials. Before any materials may be removed by the SBOE, each district must be given an updated list by December 1 of the school year before the revision will be in effect.

Educator Certification Requirements for Use of Approved Materials

HB 1605 expands the training requirements for educator certification to include the demonstration of a thorough understanding of the use of the SBOE-approved open education resource instructional materials. TEA must establish a program to assist educator preparation programs (EPP) with implementing the training requirements.

Annual Certification Regarding Approved Instructional Materials

HB 1605 requires districts to annually certify to the SBOE and the commissioner that they only used the money for the instructional material and technology allotment for authorized purposes, and that the district protects students from obscene and harmful content in compliance with the federal Children’s Internet Protection Act.

Instructional Material Review by TEA and Related District Assistance

HB 1605 seeks to ensure instructional material maintains its rigor and full coverage of TEKS by requiring an annual review of materials and engaging with stakeholders to develop standards for reviewing instructional materials in a foundation curriculum course. HB 1605 requires the commissioner to establish, with SBOE approval, an annual process for reviewing instructional materials. After completing a review, the TEA must provide the results and recommendations to the SBOE for approval or rejection of instructional materials for inclusion on the approved-material list.

The annual process must follow an appropriate timeline so the updated list of state curriculum standards may be known. The process must:

- evaluate requests for review of materials;
- review materials purchased under the instructional materials and technology allotment,
- describe the types of material TEA may review, including partial subject tier one material, open-education resource materials, materials developed by a district and submitted to the TEA for review, and commercially available full subject tier one materials;
- establish procedures for TEA to conduct reviews of materials, including the use of an approved rubric and consultation with classroom teachers and other experts; and
- ensure the procedures for review allow TEA to review at least 200 individual materials each year.

HB 1605 requires TEA, in conducting such a review, to develop and use a rubric developed by TEA and approved by the SBOE. This rubric must include whether the material is factually accurate and satisfies SBOE criteria, the quality of the material, and the state curriculum standard for which the material was developed. The process or rubric established is automatically approved by the SBOE if they do not reject it within 91 days after the agency

<p>submits the item.</p> <p><i>District Assistance and Instructional Material Internet Website</i> HB 1605 requires the TEA to assist a district, upon request, with adopting and using the instructional materials but prohibits the TEA from requiring a district to adopt or use this material. The bill requires TEA to develop and maintain a website with an open education resource instructional materials repository. The bill requires TEA to use funds appropriated for the purposes of reviewing instructional material or available in the state instructional materials and technology fund to implement the website and instructional material review.</p> <p><i>Allotments for Materials</i> HB 1605 incentives the use of the HQIM by creating allotments for state-approved and open-education resource instructional materials. The funds under each established allotment shall be deposited to the district's instructional materials and technology account maintained by the commissioner.</p> <p><u>Allotment for State-Approved Instructional Materials</u> HB 1605 establishes an allotment for state-approved instructional materials under the foundation school program to reimburse the district for costs incurred in acquiring instructional materials. The district is entitled to an allotment equal to \$40, or a greater amount provided by appropriation, for each student enrolled in the district.</p> <p><u>Allotment for Open-Education Resources Instructional Material</u> HB 1605 establishes an allotment for open-education resource instructional material under the foundation school program to reimburse the district for the costs of printing and shipping open-education resource instruction materials. This annual allotment may not exceed \$20 for each student. In order to qualify for this allotment, the district's board must adopt an open-education resource instructional material transition plan to assist teachers who will be using the materials.</p> <p><i>Open Education Resource Instructional Materials</i> During COVID, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) began procuring education resource (OER) instructional materials that could support remote, in-person, and hybrid instruction. These provisions under HB 1605 seek to increase the oversight of Open Education Resources by establishing an open and transparent approval process.</p> <p><u>Advisory Board (SEC. 31.0712)</u> HB 605 requires TEA to establish an open education resource advisory board to ensure that state-developed open education resource instructional materials are high quality, align with state curriculum standards, age-appropriate, objective, accurate, and in compliance with prescribed instructional requirements and prohibitions.</p>
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HB 1605 authorizes TEA to form an advisory committee to comply with statutory provisions relating to instructional material and technology. This committee is not subject to state law governing advisory committees.

Transition Plan and Support Program (SEC. 31.0751 and 31.0752)

A school district’s board of trustees must adopt an open educational resource instructional material transition plan to help teachers using the material for the first time and ensure that the used materials maintain the instructional flexibility of a classroom teacher to address the needs of each student. Schools must have this plan in place to qualify for the allotment. Districts are not required to adopt or use an open-educational resource instructional material and may not be charged for any costs associated with material selection, except any necessary printing costs, which may be covered by the state instructional material and technology fund.

Conclusion

HB 1605 attempts to maximize student performance by establishing a rigorous curriculum vetting process that leads to more academically appropriate materials that align with TEKS standards, and incentivizing and supporting districts in implementing the curriculum. HB 1605 makes valiant efforts to address students below grade level, teacher burnout, and parent transparency.

However, there are some concerns with the bill. Although implementing the instructional material is entirely optional, HB 1605 offers immunity to teachers who use TEA-approved materials. Some view this as an effort to pressure districts to require their teachers to use the materials. An amendment to address this would improve the bill.

Some contend that HB 1605 gives the commissioner too much power in selecting appropriate curricula. However, HB 1605 offers some guardrails for this. Under 1605, the TEA and the SBOE approve a rubric to vet materials. The SBOE would be responsible for approving the list of materials. Furthermore, it is important to note that TEA already offers schools OERs. This bill would add SBOE accountability to the procurement process. At the same time, concerns remain that the bill is an inch towards privatizing education through vendors.

Another concern is that the bill dampens the ability of teachers to design lesson plans according to the unique needs of their students. While this may be true, the bill intends to reduce teacher workload by providing an accessible, high-quality curriculum. Additionally, HB 1605 provides some flexibility in the pacing of instructional materials.

There are also concerns that the \$713.6 million fiscal note could be better allocated elsewhere, like giving teachers a well-deserved pay raise, and that the bill may also overemphasize technology, which may not be developmentally appropriate or necessary in the classroom.

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			While these concerns are valid, providing high-quality instructional material could improve student and teacher performance and help reduce teacher workload. HB 1605 could especially help first-time teachers in a statewide teacher shortage. While there is always the opportunity for vendor mismanagement, HB 1605 attempts to put guardrails in place and involve the SBOE to mitigate this.	
SB 14 Sponsor: Oliverson Klick Metcalf Toth Geren	Relating to prohibitions on the provision to certain children of procedures and treatments for gender transitioning, gender reassignment, or gender dysphoria and on the use of public money or public assistance to provide those procedures and treatments.	Public Health 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>SB 14 is a categorical ban on best-practice treatment for transgender youth, treatment that is fully supported by the American medical establishment. This patient-centered interdisciplinary standards of care includes puberty blockers, hormones, and in rare cases, “top surgery” — all treatments that are also given to non-transgender (cisgender) youth. Best-practice standards constitute treatment that is age-appropriate, includes a rigorous assessment process, and is tailored to each individual and their family. When transgender youth can access best-practice treatment, they thrive. The medicine is clear: this care is life-saving. Hundreds of youth in Texas are alive today because they were able to receive this care.</p> <p>SB 14 bans use of public money from going to any “entity, organization, or individual that provides or facilitates the provision of a procedure or treatment to a child that is prohibited.” This ensures that CHIP and Medicaid will not cover procedures or treatments related to gender transitioning for minors. The implementation of these provisions may be delayed if a federal waiver or authorization is required.</p> <p>SB 14 allows the attorney general to take legal action against those violating the prohibition of providing gender transition healthcare to minors. Additionally, the Texas Medical Board is required to revoke the license of a physician who performs prohibited procedures or treatments and refuse to issue or renew licenses for those who do so. This bill could punish medical providers for following best-practice standards of care, despite having the backing of decades of research and supported by every major medical association representing over 1.3 million U.S. doctors.</p> <p>SB 14 includes provisions for current adolescents receiving gender affirming healthcare to begin to “wean off” prescription drugs. The “wean off” section may open doctors or healthcare providers to claims of sex discrimination against their patients under the Affordable Care Act.</p> <p>SB 14 would impose legal liability on physicians and health care providers who provide medically necessary and life-saving health care based on medical best practices. State laws that require physicians and hospitals to stop providing medically necessary health care to patients based on gender identity and sex assigned at birth conflict with the U.S. Constitution and federal law, which creates legal liability for Texas health care providers.</p> <p>SB 14 unfairly limits transgender and gender-nonconforming Texans' access to crucial healthcare. Instead of blanket statewide legislation, healthcare decisions should be made case-by-case by qualified medical</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>

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			professionals, children, and their parents or guardians. Access to gender-affirming care is essential for reducing depression, anxiety, and suicidality risks. Advocates believe that rather than attacking this vulnerable community, legislators should focus on creating policies that offer a supportive environment, including comprehensive healthcare options, mental health support, and anti-discrimination protections.	
LSG Floor Report For Constitutional Amendments Calendar – Tuesday, May 2, 2023				
HJR 11 By: Thompson, Senfronia	Proposing a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to enact laws providing for a court to terminate the sentence of a person who has successfully served the required number of years on parole.	Corrections 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	HJR 11 proposes a constitutional amendment that would authorize the legislature to enact laws allowing a court to terminate the sentence of a person who has successfully served a specified number of years on parole required by law. HJR 11 is enabling legislation for HB 182.	<u>Favorable</u>
LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Tuesday, May 2, 2023				
HB 410 By: Thompson, Senfronia Cain	Relating to law enforcement policies regarding the issuance of citations for misdemeanors punishable by fine only and to a limitation on the authority to arrest a person for certain fine-only misdemeanors.	Homeland Security & Public Safety 8 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	At present, in Texas, approximately 64,000 individuals are detained each year for minor offenses, such as traffic violations. However, current state law dictates that magistrates cannot impose a prison sentence for traffic violations as they are punishable by fines only. Unfortunately, one of the most well-known examples of such arrests led to a tragic loss of life. Sandra Bland was stopped in 2015 for failing to signal and was arrested, an encounter that ultimately ended in her death. HB 410 is an attempt to address this important issue. Under HB 410, Texas Southern University would be required to work with law enforcement agencies, law enforcement associations, law enforcement training experts, and community organizations related to policy to develop a written model policy. The model would outline procedures for issuing citations for fine-only misdemeanor offenses, such as traffic violations, and provide guidance for peace officers to use when issuing citations. HB 410 would also require every law enforcement agency in Texas to adopt a written policy for the issuance of citations for fine-only misdemeanors. These policies must meet all necessary requirements as set forth in the model policy developed by Texas Southern University, and agencies may adopt the model policy if they so choose.	<u>Favorable</u>

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			<p>The bill would make an exception to a peace officer's power to arrest without a warrant if the individual has only committed one or more fine-only misdemeanors on the road. However, if the person has a warrant or has committed offenses outside of Class C misdemeanor, an arrest would still be allowed. Finally, the bill includes all fine-only misdemeanors in the types of violations requiring written notices to appear.</p> <p>HB 410 aims to reduce negative interactions between law enforcement and the communities they serve, helping to save lives.</p>	
<p>HB 2837 By: Schaefer Capriglione Noble</p>	<p>Relating to prohibiting a person or entity from surveilling, reporting, or tracking the purchase of firearms, ammunition, and accessories through the use of certain merchant category codes; imposing a civil penalty.</p>	<p>Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services</p> <p>5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2837 aims to prevent using a new merchant category code for firearm and ammunition merchants, which was approved by the International Organization for Standardization this previous year. In a letter to payment card networks, federal lawmakers stated the new code would be “...the first step towards facilitating the collection of valuable financial data that could help law enforcement in countering the financing of terrorism efforts.” This has been interpreted as a mechanism to interfere with one’s acquisition and ownership of firearms, possibly inhibiting access to their second amendment constitutional rights. HB 2837 is a response to perceived surveillance and unprecedented information sharing to preserve citizens' privacy to purchase firearms and ammunition.</p> <p>HB 2837 prohibits a person or entity facilitating or processing an electronic payment transaction from assigning or requiring a merchant to use a firearm code. A firearm retailer cannot provide a firearm code to a payment card issuer or network for sales of firearms, ammunition, or firearm accessories and may only use a merchant code for general merchandise or sporting goods retailers. Any agreement or contractual provision that violates HB 2837’s provisions would be void. A payment card issuer or network must notify cardholders when a transaction is assigned with a firearms code.</p> <p>HB 2837 requires the Attorney General (AG) to issue a civil investigative demand if the AG has reasonable cause to believe a person or entity engaged in, is engaging in or is about to violate HB 2837’s provisions. The AG can request any information relevant to the investigation and is required to evaluate for compliance with the bill’s provisions. HB 2837 requires the AG to give written notice to a person or entity regarding a violation at least 30 days before a civil penalty action against the person or entity. The notice must identify the specific provision they violated. The AG cannot bring action against a person or entity if the violation is cured within 30 days and a written statement stating the violation was cured and that changes were made to avoid further violations.</p> <p>A person or entity found violating HB 2837’s provisions and did not cure the violation would be liable to a civil penalty of \$10,000 for each violation. Additionally, the AG can bring an action to recover the civil penalty and restrain or enjoin a person or entity the violating person or entity. Along with the AG’s prescribed course of action, a buyer of a firearm, ammunition, or a firearm accessory can bring action against a payment card issuer or</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			<p>network to obtain a declaratory judgment that the issuer or network violated the bill’s provisions. HB 2837 establishes that the AG has the exclusive authority to enforce the bill’s provisions.</p> <p>Concerns HB 2837 has raised concerns about its potential impact on law enforcement agencies. This could hinder investigations into financial fraud, mass shootings, or terrorist threats because law enforcement agencies could not determine the number of firearms, the place of purchase, or the time of purchase in advance once a subpoena is issued.</p> <p>Those opposing HB 2837 argue that using firearm codes on bank statements is not a violation of privacy rights or a creation of a firearms registry. Instead, they contend that banks use firearm codes to organize all purchases of goods and services, including firearms and ammunition, and could also be used for tax purposes when itemizing. Furthermore, no one, including the federal government and law enforcement agencies, can access these codes on bank statements without the consent of the bank owners or an official subpoena with specific requests.</p>	
<p>HB 4082 By: Goldman Tepper</p>	<p>Relating to the purposes for which a municipality or county may issue an anticipation note or certificate of obligation.</p>	<p>Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>At times, local governments like counties and municipalities may issue certificates of obligations (COs) or anticipated notes or bonds for public works without seeking approval from voters. These bonds or COs are backed by property taxes and other local revenues. The existing law allows for the issuance of COs and anticipation notes for public work. However, there is confusion about what "public work" means, and the HB 4082 seeks to clarify this by defining what it is and is not.</p> <p>HB 4082 amends the Local Government and Government code to classify several things as "public work" that counties and municipalities can use the COs for. These include roads, highways, bridges, sidewalks, parking structures, landfills, airports, utility systems, water supply projects, water treatment plants, wastewater treatment plants, wharfs, docks, flood control and drainage projects, public safety facilities, judicial facilities, administrative office buildings, animal shelters, libraries, and parks or recreation facilities that are open to the public and are part of the municipal or county park system.</p> <p>However, the law prohibits professional or semi-professional centers, coliseums, or hotels from being considered "public works."</p> <p>COs are often used as a tool for economic development and generate revenue and jobs in projects like hotels and convention centers. Though specific self-funded revenue may be insufficient, these projects could still happen within the city with the approval of voters in the next election cycle.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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<p>HB 156 By: Moody</p>	<p>Relating to hearings by the Board of Pardons and Paroles regarding clemency matters.</p>	<p>Corrections 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The Board of Pardons and Parole (BPP) cannot conduct clemency recommendation proceedings over video conference calls, requiring them to occur in person. These meetings are not open to the public, and the decisions made from these proceedings are announced without explanation for the decisions or voting breakdown. HB 156 seeks to address the inefficient manner in which BPP meetings are conducted and increase the transparency of BPP decisions from clemency proceedings.</p> <p>HB 156 requires BPP members to perform duties related to clemency matters in a capital case by meeting in person or via telephone conference call or video conference call. HB 156 authorizes an attorney or other person representing the individual seeking clemency and any person representing the victim’s family to appear in person or be present on the call to make a presentation on the clemency matter. In-person clemency hearings must be conducted in the correctional facility where the individuals seeking clemency are confined. HB 156 requires the individual seeking clemency to be present for the hearing in person or by phone or video conference call unless there is an overriding security issue.</p> <p>BPP is authorized to limit the number of people who can make a presentation and prohibit anyone other than a BPP member from being heard during the hearing. BPP is authorized to deliberate privately following a hearing but requires the presiding officer to publicly announce each member’s decision regarding whether to recommend clemency. Each member must sign their name with a written recommendation and reasons for that recommendation.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 387 By: Bell</p>	<p>Relating to the Texas State Guard uniform and insignia fund.</p>	<p>Appropriations 24 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>In many instances, members of the Texas State Guard pay approximately \$300 to purchase their own uniforms. HB 387 seeks to facilitate an appropriation, credit, or transfer to the Texas State Guard Uniform and Insignia Fund by the legislature.</p> <p>The state should take responsibility by appropriating money to the Texas State Guard Uniform and Insignia Fund to make sure members of the guard are not burdened with the cost of this necessary item for their job.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1225 By: Metcalf Harris, Cody Hefner Dean</p>	<p>Relating to the administration of certain required assessment instruments in paper format.</p>	<p>Public Education 12 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, there is no way for the parent, guardian, or teacher of a student to request a test be administered on paper instead of online. The electronic administration of standardized tests poses the risk of technical difficulties, as the 2021 STAAR-test was canceled across the state due to such issues. HB 1225 seeks to provide a paper alternative for online tests upon request of the parent, guardian, or teacher.</p> <p>HB 1225 authorizes a school district to administer a standardized or end-of-course test in paper format upon request of the student’s parent, guardian, or teacher. The request must be submitted to the school district by December 1 of the school year the test will be administered and the amount of students able to utilize this paper format is capped at 3% of the student population, which may require some districts to leave students out. The results from the paper tests may not be considered in evaluating school district or campus performance.</p> <p>According to the American Institutes for Research, taking a test online rather than on paper may hurt a student’s</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			test score. Students who would benefit from this alternative deserve to have the option if they are more comfortable, confident, and less distracted with a paper test.	
HB 823 By: Allen	Relating to the eligibility of an inmate for certain occupational licenses and the practice of certain occupations by an inmate of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.	Corrections 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>Every occupational license renewal or application is subject to a criminal background check. This can lead to denied applications for individuals with a criminal history. Many individuals who have been incarcerated use their time in prison to learn skills related to such licensing and leave prison with highly marketable and specific skills. Because of their records, many are ineligible for licensing upon their release despite their experience. HB 823 seeks to remove barriers to certain occupational licensing for individuals with a criminal history.</p> <p>HB 823 would allow individuals incarcerated with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to perform air conditioning and refrigeration-related work, electrical work, or barbering or cosmetology work without licensure if the work was performed as a part of a reentry program or under supervision acceptable to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. Additionally, the bill authorizes the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation to adopt policies authorizing the issuance of an air conditioning and refrigeration license, an electrician license, or a barber and cosmetology license to individuals incarcerated with TDCJ.</p> <p>Previously incarcerated individuals deserve the opportunity to obtain employment and rebuild their lives. HB 823 would provide them with opportunities to do so.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 671 By: González, Mary Lopez, Ray Garcia	Relating to a veterans suicide prevention campaign.	Defense & Veterans' Affairs 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>Suicide rates among military veterans are disproportionately high. In Texas, death by suicide for veterans averaged 1.4 per day in 2020, with 75% of these deaths involving firearms. There is a need to make suicide prevention education accessible to Texas veterans and their families.</p> <p>HB 671 requires the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) conduct a suicide prevention campaign to provide veterans with information about suicide prevention. TVC is required to establish a website to provide information about suicide prevention and safe firearm storage. TVC is required to collaborate with community-based non-profit or private organizations, and is authorized to contract with these types of entities. TVC is authorized to solicit and accept gifts and grants for the campaign.</p> <p>HB 671 provides a campaign to provide lifesaving information to veterans and is conducted by a source that veterans can trust.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1010 By: Turner	Relating to the insurable interest of certain persons providing care to individuals with disabilities in the life of those individuals.	Human Services 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>The death of Leroy Anderson, a 49-year-old man diagnosed with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and diabetes, revealed a gap in the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) policy regarding employees avoiding conflicts of interest with their clients. In this case, Mr. Anderson was living and receiving care in a group home. Following his death, it was revealed that his life insurance policy beneficiary was changed from his uncle to his caregiver, who was not of blood relation and did not share any familial connection with Mr. Anderson. HB 1010 aims to address this type of conflict of interest by specifying a caregiver of an individual with a disability in certain facilities cannot have an insurable interest in the life of an individual under their care unless they are</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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			<p>related.</p> <p>For a life insurance policy, HB 1010 would provide a specification that a person providing care to an individual with a disability at a state-supported living center, assisted living facility, intermediate care facility, or group home will not have an insurable interest in the life of an individual unless the person was a relative.</p> <p>HB 1010 aims to protect IDD individuals and their families by removing a potential conflict of interest.</p>	
<p>HB 1283</p> <p>By: Oliverson Raymond Harless Jetton</p>	<p>Relating to prescription drug formularies applicable to the Medicaid managed care program.</p>	<p>Health Care Reform, Select</p> <p>9 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Texas law outlines what should be included in a managed care contract, requiring that managed care organizations (MCOs) in the state's Medicaid program follow the statewide drug formulary, preferred drug list, and prior authorization procedures. These rules are set to end on August 31, 2023, which would allow each MCO to create their own drug lists and policies. Using a single statewide drug formulary and preferred drug list is best for Medicaid due to its transparency, predictable budget, standardized patient access and protection, and use of the lowest net cost drugs.</p> <p>HB 1283 repeals the provision to make certain requirements for the outpatient pharmacy benefit plan in Medicaid managed care contracts inapplicable and unenforceable after August 31, 2023. This includes using the state's Medicaid vendor drug program formulary, adhering to the preferred drug list adopted by the Health and Human Services Commission, and following prior authorization procedures under state law for the vendor drug program. HB 1283 modifies the Government Code and postpones implementing any provisions needing federal approval until the required waiver or authorization is obtained.</p> <p>HB 1283 ensures that Texans on Medicaid have continuous and consistent access to the therapies they need to stay healthy, irrespective of their managed care plan.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1383</p> <p>By: Rose</p>	<p>Relating to procedures in a criminal case after a defendant is found competent to stand trial and to consequences arising from certain violations of those procedures.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>In Texas, when a patient is deemed unfit to stand trial, they are enrolled in a competency restoration program with the aim of restoring their competency so that the trial can proceed. However, due to recent backlogs and overcrowding in restoration facilities, there are cases where individuals either cannot receive the necessary care to regain their competency or are forced to wait longer in jail than their original offense warranted, due to the lack of a trial date. In such instances, these individuals must undergo the competency restoration process again. Consequently, this has resulted in severe overcrowding and an extensive waitlist of unconvicted individuals being held in jail. HB 1383 seeks to remedy this by establishing trial deadlines and new guidelines for counsel in these circumstances.</p> <p>HB 1383 establishes that a trial date must be set no later than thirty days after the defendant is found competent. The bill also authorizes a court to replace the defendant's counsel if it is found that the current counsel fails to meet with the defendant in a timely manner following a competency finding. Additionally, the bill authorizes most courts to remove an attorney from consideration of counsel if they repeatedly violate the aforementioned</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>requirement.</p> <p>HB 1383 allows the presiding judge or the director of the managed assigned counsel (MAC) program to deny payment for services performed by an attorney who failed to meet the aforementioned requirements. If the appointed counsel then complies with the requirements, they may be compensated. Additionally, HB 1383 makes the following files public: a complaint alleging a judge failed to notify either attorney of a defendant's return and a complaint alleging a judge failed to timely set a trial date for a case as required by the bill.</p> <p>The overcrowding of jails has become an increasingly severe problem that impedes the rights of Texans and permanently changes the lives of those it affects. HB 1383 is one step towards addressing this issue and ensuring the efficiency of our justice system.</p>	
<p>HB 1495 By: Guerra</p>	<p>Relating to a study on leasing state property for private use.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>Civic groups and performing artists struggle to afford meeting spaces, studios, and venues due to high costs. State-owned facilities, such as universities, have unused spaces that could potentially be leased to these groups and artists while also generating revenue for the state.</p> <p>HB 1495 instructs the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Texas Facilities Commission (TFC) each to conduct a study in collaboration with the Texas Commission on the Arts on the feasibility of leasing available spaces in state agency buildings or public higher education institutions to artists for practicing and performing their arts. The studies must consider certain factors and identify criteria for determining the feasibility of leasing available spaces, measures to prevent viewpoint bias or other biases in selecting lease holders, authorized uses of lease income to benefit agencies or institutions offering space, and reasons for declining to lease space at an agency or institution.</p> <p>HB 1495 aims to study the potential for leasing spaces in state agencies or public higher education institutions to artists for practicing and performing their arts.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1885 By: Canales</p>	<p>Relating to the authority of the Texas Transportation Commission to establish variable speed limits.</p>	<p>Transportation</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas Transportation Commission cannot change speed limits situationally, like during adverse weather conditions, traffic congestion or accidents, or construction work. Reduced speed limits during these conditions could increase road safety and decrease fatalities. HB 1885 would allow the Texas Transportation Commission to have the authority to create variable speed limits, i.e., temporarily reducing speed limits in response to weather, traffic, or other certain conditions.</p> <p>HB 1885 authorizes the Texas Transportation Commission to establish variable speed limits to temporarily lower speed limits due to inclement weather conditions, traffic congestion or accidents, road construction work, or any other condition impacting traffic safety and orderly movement on a roadway under the commission's authority. The commission may use stationary or portable message signs to notify drivers. The new speed limit would be</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>based on a thorough engineering and traffic investigation of the road's conditions and cannot be decreased more than 10 miles per hour below the original speed limit. HB 1885 outlines specific requirements for how the new speed limit must be posted to be effective.</p> <p>Failure to variably adjust speed is a cause of many traffic fatalities. The use of variable speed limits under HB 1885 can make a positive impact on improving road safety.</p>	
<p>HB 1979 By: Raney Plesa Bumgarner Lopez, Ray</p>	<p>Relating to the powers and duties of the Texas Workforce Commission and local workforce development boards regarding the provision of child care.</p>	<p>International Relations & Economic Development</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) manages substantial federal funds for child care, financial aid for working parents, and early childhood education quality enhancement. Texas' 28 Local Workforce Development Boards implement these funds using innovative local strategies to serve eligible families and programs. However, state policies must evolve to improve outcomes since basic services for families often vary based on location and workplace.</p> <p>HB 1979 aims to improve child care services by standardizing data on state investment effectiveness, including waitlist and enrollment trends. On their websites, boards must display contact information, quality-rated local child care providers, and Texas Rising Star Program details. HB 1979 removes the requirement that at least one board member has expertise in child care or early childhood education. Instead, the bill would include persons with child care or early childhood education expertise among a board's non-private sector membership representatives.</p> <p>HB 1979 mandates quarterly public reports from boards on child care waitlists, enrollment, and provider data, including changes in Texas Rising Star Program ratings. The TWC must develop suitable training for local workforce development boards and contractors regarding the subsidized child care program and set reasonable timelines for implementing rule changes.</p> <p>Finally, the bill instructs the commission to establish child care performance targets considering cost differentials related to various populations, the number of children served, provider types, and other data-driven factors. These performance targets and funding must be reviewed at least once every six months, with adjustments based on cost differentials.</p> <p>HB 1979 aims to improve Texas child care services for working families and child care programs while enhancing the tracking of taxpayer investments.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1972 By: Campos </p>	<p>Relating to policies and procedures regarding children placed by the</p>	<p>Youth Health and Safety</p> <p>7 Ayes,</p>	<p>Following a directive made by the 87th Legislature, the Supreme Court of Texas Children's Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), established a work group to conduct a study regarding residential treatment center (RTC) placements for foster children. RTC placements are a type of out-of-home care provided to children in the foster care system who have complex emotional, behavioral, or</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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Garcia	Department of Family and Protective Services in a residential treatment center or program.	0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>mental health needs that cannot be addressed in a foster home or group home setting. The study resulted in a report that recommended that the legislature implement a requirement for the court to review whether the placement meets the needs of a child placed in an RTC. HB 1972 seeks to implement the recommendations made.</p> <p>HB 1972 requires the court, regarding a child awaiting placement in an RTC, to determine if the child’s needs can be met in a family setting, if the recommended or current setting is the least restrictive environment consistent with the child’s needs and can address those specific needs, and if the placement is in congruence with the child’s current permanency plan. The court may consider a child’s current treatment plan, medical, legal, and behavioral incidents, any psychological assessments, and other various factors in making a determination. Additionally, HB 1972 requires the court to make findings during status and permanency hearings related to the placement of a child in an RTC to determine whether continued placement in an RTC is in the best interest of the child.</p> <p>Texas houses more children in RTC’s than any other state, and some children have reported that these facilities feel more like jail than foster care. Other reports detail abuse, sexually inappropriate behavior by staff, and filthy living conditions. In 2019, the State received more than 2,000 reports detailing this abuse. These children cannot remain invisible to the state, and absolutely must be prioritized. HB 1972 is a step towards ensuring true visibility for these children, who deserve the care they need to thrive.</p>	
<p>HB 2470</p> <p>By: Kuempel</p>	Relating to prohibited adverse employment action against certain first responders based on mental illness.	State Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	<p>HB 2470 prohibits an employer from suspending, terminating, or taking negative action against a peace officer, fire protection personnel, or emergency medical services personnel solely because the employer knows or believes the first responder has a mental illness unless it is necessary to ensure public safety. If an employer violates the prohibitions outlined in HB 2470, a first responder may file a legal claim against the employer and seek compensation for damages, legal fees, and any other appropriate financial relief. As such, HB 2470 removes sovereign immunity to the extent of liability created by the provisions.</p> <p>HB 2470 ensures that employers may not act unlawfully against first responders for mental illness.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
<p>HB 2427</p> <p>By: Kuempel</p>	Relating to the regulation of appraisers and the duties of the Texas Appraiser Licensing Board.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	<p>One commonly identified barrier to entering the appraisal industry is the requirement for an applicant to find a supervisory appraiser to gain practical experience according to current statute. The Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board (TALCB) currently accepts modern methods to meet these experience requirements. HB 2427 seeks to align current statute with modern methods accepted by the board, and remove barriers to entering the appraisal industry.</p> <p>HB 2427 clarifies current statute by authorizing an unlicensed individual to gain experience in performing appraisals as approved by the AQB while obtaining their certificate or license. HB 2427 also removes the requirement that an applicant has to gain experience as a real estate mortgage lending officer or real estate broker as a qualification for acceptable appraisal experience when obtaining certification or licensure.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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			<p>HB 2427 allows the presiding officer of the TACLB in conjunction with the advice and consent of the executive committee of the board to appoint an investigative committee. The investigative committee will consist of two members, and the presiding officer of the investigative committee must be a board member. Under HB 2427, the investigative committee is to review and determine the facts of a complaint and submit the written report regarding the complaint to the board in a timely manner.</p> <p>HB 2427 aims to increase efficiency in the process of obtaining licensure and certification to become an appraiser, while also allowing for more transparency in investigations throughout the industry.</p>	
<p>HB 2351 By: Vo Bucy</p>	<p>Relating to renewal of an appointment as a volunteer deputy registrar.</p>	<p>Elections 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Every even-numbered year on December 31, volunteer deputy registrars' (VDRs) certificates expire. Current law requires VDRs to complete training following the end of their certification term, which can reduce the amount of active VDRs in Texas.</p> <p>HB 2351 addresses this issue by requiring voter registrars to notify county VDRs via mail or e-mail by November 30 of each even-numbered year that their appointment term will expire on December 31. Under HB 2351, the notice must be delivered with a renewal application and any pertinent information relating to changes in the election law that are relevant to an individual's role as a VDR.</p> <p>Upon signature of the renewal application and an affidavit affirming the VDR's understanding of any changes in election laws, the VDR will be automatically reinstated for a new term beginning on January 1 without having to complete training to become recertified.</p> <p>HB 2351 increases efficiency for continuing VDRs which helps facilitate better voter registration processes for Texans.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2271 By: Kacal</p>	<p>Relating to the protection of aquaculture operations.</p>	<p>Agriculture & Livestock 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Aquaculture is the cultivation of aquatic organisms in controlled aquatic environments for any commercial, recreational, or public purpose. Aquaculture has been an established agricultural industry in Texas for 50 years, but there is ambiguity about its classification in certain areas of state statutes.</p> <p>HB 2271 requires the state's agricultural policy to recognize aquaculture is a type of agriculture and must be awarded the same rights, privileges, and protections as any other agricultural operation. HB 2271 includes aquatic plants raised under conditions where at least part of their life cycle is controlled by an aquaculturist as a cultured species for aquaculture regulations. Aquaculture is included as an agricultural operation for the purpose of statutory provisions relating to the effect of nuisance action or governmental requirements on a pre-existing agricultural operation.</p> <p>HB 2271 allows for the consistent application of relevant code for aquaculture.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 2022 By: Leach Patterson</p>	<p>Relating to residential construction liability.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>5 Ayes, 4 Nays, o PNV, o Absent</p>	<p>The Residential Construction Liability Act (RCLA) provides a framework for resolving disputes between homeowners and builders, allowing parties to settle disputes before litigation occurs. HB 2022 seeks to provide clarifications and limitations on a contractor’s liability to decrease lawsuits and encourage builders to address defective conditions with reasonable offers of repair.</p> <p>HB 2022 specifies that a contractor is only liable to the extent a defective condition causes actual physical damage to the residence, an actual failure or lack of capability of a building component to perform its intended function or purpose, or a verifiable danger to the safety of the occupants of the residence. Contractors are already not liable for the negligence of a person other than the contractor, or their “reasonable action” to mitigate damages or maintain the residence. The bill adds that contractors are not liable for failure of a person other than the contractor, agent, employee, or subcontractor to notify the contractor of a construction defect in a timely manner. The bill also strikes “reasonable action” from the aforementioned provisions and exempts contractors from liability for normal cracking due to the drying or settlement of construction components within building standards. HB 2022 also exempts contractors from liability if information obtained from government records was modified. Currently, the exemption applies for false or inaccurate information.</p> <p>HB 2022 adds that to maintain a claim of breach of warranty of habitability, a claimant must establish that a construction defect was latent at the time the residence was completed or title was conveyed to the original purchaser <i>and</i> that this defect has rendered the residence unsuitable for living. It also adds that contractors must be given the opportunity to conduct up to three inspections during the 35-day period after a contractor receives notice of an action and during any extension of that inspection period provided by law or agreed to by parties. HB 2022 changes it from 45 days to 60 days after the contractor receives notice for them to make a written offer of settlement to the claimant. Offers must include an agreement by the contractor to partially or totally repair damages at the contractor's expense or at a reduced rate and the time for completion of repairs if it is more than 60 days. Repairs must not be made later than the 60th day instead of the 45th day after the contractor receives notice of acceptance of the settlement offer.</p> <p>HB 2022 adds that claimants may recover reasonable and necessary arbitration filing fees and the claimant’s share of arbitrator compensation for these claims. Additionally, the court of arbitration tribunal can order that an offer made by a contractor after 60 days is considered timely if the contractor is prejudiced in their opportunity to inspect or make an offer because the claimant failed to provided the contractor evidence in the claimant’s possession, custody, or control at the time of original notice, amended a claim to add a new alleged defect, or events beyond the contractor's control occurred.</p> <p>HB 2022 adds that in an action to recover damages claimants must prove that the construction defect existed at the time of completion of the construction, alteration, or repair. It also specifies that the submission of an action subject to arbitration has the same effect on the running of a limitations period as a filing in a court in this state.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
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			<p>Any contract that tries to waive the provisions of this chapter is void.</p> <p>HB 2022 repeals Property Code sections that address the notice and offer of settlement, conditional sale to a builder, and the requirement for disclosure statements. HB 2022 also updates definitions of terms and removes outdated references.</p> <p>Concerns HB 2022 makes some changes and updates to this section of Property Code, including giving builders an extra 15 days to resolve construction defects and three opportunities to inspect. However, as the bill is currently written, it benefits builders more than homeowners. When the RCLA was originally passed, it required the homeowner to give notice, an opportunity to inspect, and an opportunity for the builder to make an offer. If the builder failed to make a reasonable offer, the homeowner would be allowed to recover attorney fees and expenses at trial or arbitration so the homeowner could be made whole. However, a court case, the <i>Mitchell</i> case, determined that if a homeowner proved the defect was caused by negligence, as opposed to breach of contract or the Deceptive Trade Practices Act (DTPA), the homeowner could not recover attorney fees and expenses. This added an extra barrier for homeowners to file a lawsuit to be made whole, as they cannot recover the full cost of damages, even if the homeowner proves there was a construction defect and the builder’s offer of repair was not reasonable.</p> <p>If an amendment to return the statute to its original intent and allow homeowners to recover the full cost of damages for negligence is presented, the LSG’s rating will change to Favorable.</p>	
<p>HB 2771</p> <p>By: Smithee King, Tracy O. Ashby Anderson Dean</p>	<p>Relating to disbursements from the universal service fund for certain small and rural companies.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 PNV, 5 Absent</p>	<p>The 85th Texas Legislature implemented a program to ensure that small and rural communication providers in Texas were receiving the appropriate amount of funding. This program was given an expiration date of September 1, 2023, to allow the legislature to review and potentially revise the program. The program currently enables the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) to assess the financial standing of small providers annually and adjust their funding accordingly. If the program ends, the PUC would no longer have the authority to oversee small providers, leading to a loss of funding for these companies. Consequently, small providers would need to file individual rate cases with the PUC to receive the correct funding, which would be expensive and time-consuming. HB 2771 aims to extend the program to prevent these issues from occurring.</p> <p>HB 2771 amends the state Utilities Code to extend the expiration of provisions related to disbursements from the Texas Universal Service Fund (TUSF) to support small and rural local exchange companies or cooperatives. Instead of expiring on September 1, 2023, the new date of expiration would be September 1, 2033.</p> <p>Under HB 2771, small providers seeking TUSF support must submit an annual report to the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) with detailed information about their operations regulated by the PUC, including total operating revenues, expenses, tax expenses, rate of return, invested capital, and network access revenue. The</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>additional report must be filed using the PUC's public filing system, and the information in the report will not be considered confidential or exempt from public disclosure.</p> <p>HB 2771 helps ensure small providers continue receiving the funding they need to provide their services, which is especially important for Texans living in rural or remote areas. Additionally, the requirement for providers to file detailed annual reports may increase transparency and accountability in the use of these funds.</p>	
<p>HB 2668 By: Johnson, Ann</p>	<p>Relating to the rights of victims of sexual assault and to certain procedures and reimbursements occurring with respect to a sexual assault or other sex offense.</p>	<p>Homeland Security and Public Safety</p> <p>8 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The Sexual Assault Survivors' Task Force (SASTF) in the Office of the Governor in Texas proposed policy recommendations to develop survivor-centered and trauma-informed responses to sexual violence, which were all passed by the 87th Texas Legislature. HB 2668 is a bill that aims to strengthen the rights of sexual assault survivors concerning forensic medical examinations.</p> <p>HB 2668 seeks to increase accessibility to forensic medical examinations, improve survivors' compensation eligibility and reimbursement, and allow for survivor-centered assault kit notification procedures. It consolidates all statutory approaches for all sexual assault victims and repeals provisions that distinguish between victims who report or do not report sexual assault.</p> <p>Subchapter F within in the chapter pertaining to Rights of Crime Victims refers to only victims of sexual assault who have reported through a form which have in the past restricted and denied victims by law enforcement to not receive a forensic medical examination after an assault. HB 2668 repeals Subchapter F, as the form is hindering medical access and treatment for survivors and not a crucial requirement for law enforcement to pursue the offense.</p> <p>For minors, the HB 2668 requires law enforcement agencies to refer victims of sexual assault to a forensic medical examination regardless of when the assault was reported. For adults, the bill requires law enforcement agencies to refer victims to a forensic medical examination within 120 hours after the reported assault. If it's after the 120-hour period, a referral must be made by a physician, sexual assault examiner, or nurse examiner who has conducted a preliminary medical evaluation to make the necessary determination.</p> <p>HB 2668 broadens the provision for reimbursement of a health care provider, sexual assault examiner, or nurse examiner who conducted the examination for the cost of the forensic portion of the examination, other medical care provided during the examination, and any other medical care provided to the victim during the 30-day period post examination, including medication and medical testing. The bill also requires the office of the attorney general to make a payment to victims of sexual assault or on their behalf of the reasonable costs from all testing and medical care, replacing the costs according to the Health and Safety Code provisions on emergency services. Additionally, the bill:</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires the attorney general to make a payment according to medical fee guidelines by the Texas Workers' Compensation Act; • Limits the payment amount to \$25,000; • Authorizes the attorney general to deny or reduce a payment if the reimbursement was recouped from a collateral source; and • Establishes that the attorney general nor the victim is responsible for medical care costs that were not medically necessary or exceeds the fee guidelines. <p>HB 2668 establishes that a victim who receives a forensic medical examination that provided sufficient evidence constitutes sufficient evidence, meaning that they cooperated with the investigation to be eligible for an award payable under the state's crime victims' compensation program. It also retains and amends the provision that the law enforcement agency or state's attorney pay all costs related to the testimony of a licensed healthcare professional in a criminal proceeding regarding the results of a forensic medical examination regardless of whether the victim reported the assault.</p> <p>The bill removes the requirement to provide a written notice to the victim regarding the agency's intention to destroy the evidence and replaces it with written notification through the statewide sexual assault evidence electronic tracking system before destroying the evidence. The bill also requires the preservation and transfer of evidence to comply with the current Government Code for law enforcement agencies regarding the analysis and release of evidence of sexual assault or another sex offense.</p> <p>Overall, HB 2668 strengthens survivors' rights before, during, and after receiving forensic medical examinations, including receiving their sexual assault kit notification. SASTF ensures that all recommended policies are survivor-centered and provide a more transparent and consistent collaboration between victims of sexual assault and law enforcement agencies.</p>	
<p>HB 3025 By: Vasut</p>	<p>Relating to the prosecution of the criminal offenses of aggravated kidnapping, kidnapping, and interference with child custody.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The current statute of limitations for the offense of kidnapping in Texas is five years. Additionally, some countries do not consider interfering with child custody an extraditable offense. In combination, these two aspects of the law led to a tragic situation in which a 20-month-old child was taken by her father to Mexico in violation of a court-ordered custody agreement. Her mother searched for her for 16 years, and when the child was finally located, prosecutors could not charge the father with kidnapping because the statute of limitations had passed and were unable to have him extradited back to the U.S. under his charges regarding violating the custody agreement. HB 3025 seeks to prevent a similar tragedy from repeating.</p> <p>HB 3025 would eliminate the statute of limitations for interference with child custody if a child under 18 years old is taken outside the United States with the intention of depriving the individual with custody access to the</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>child. The bill would also extend the statute of limitations period for kidnapping to 20 years from the 18th birthday of the victim if the victim was under 17 years of age when the offense occurred.</p> <p>HB 3025 establishes further guardrails to ensure that children are safe with their guardians.</p>	
<p>HB 4437 By: Kuempel</p>	<p>Relating to the confidentiality of student records held by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.</p>	<p>Higher Education 9 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>The federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and state public information law protects any data universities collect on their students, however, this protection is not established for data collected by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Currently, THECB has a digital platform to provide technology-enabled college and career planning to students, which lets students create profiles and personally connect with universities and advisors for guidance. HB 4437 seeks to establish the confidentiality of student information collected by the THECB.</p> <p>HB 4437 requires student profile information obtained, received, or held by the THECB when assisting with post-secondary education to be confidential. This information may only be released in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4142 By: Thompson, Ed</p>	<p>Relating to the award of attorney's fees in an action to enforce a motor vehicle mortgagee's lien.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Motor vehicle lien-holders have reported losses after insurance companies fail to include them on settlement checks for smaller claims. If a lien-holder, sometimes a small used car dealership owner, wants to file a lawsuit to recover damages, they cannot currently do so without having to pay attorney's fees.</p> <p>HB 4142 allows a motor vehicle lien-holder to recover reasonable attorney's fees the same way a direct insurer claim would be able to. HB 4142 allows car dealerships to feel comfortable enough to pursue a cause of action for any money they would lose in pursuing a court case. This would hold insurance companies accountable and enforce the inclusion of a lien-holder on settlement checks.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4358 By: Allison</p>	<p>Relating to including digital teaching in the micro-credential certification program for public school educator continuing education.</p>	<p>Public Education 10 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Education is not one-size-fits-all, specifically as it pertains to equipping educators with the skills necessary for success in virtual learning. A report made by the Texas Virtual School Commission concluded that merely copying in-person tactics and applying them to virtual learning does not produce satisfactory results. HB 4358 seeks to build educators' skills in virtual learning by creating an optional digital teaching micro-credential.</p> <p>HB 4358 expands the opportunities for educators to fulfill continuing education requirements by including a micro-credential related to digital teaching.</p> <p>It is important to equip teachers with a wide array of qualifications, knowledge, and capabilities. HB 4358 could help to foster a highly-skilled teaching workforce as it pertains to virtual learning.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 4085 By: Spiller Allison</p>	<p>Relating to the payment by the state or a county of costs for certain mental health hearings or proceedings.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, when private mental health facilities like hospitals go through the process to obtain a court-order for emergency detention, they generally are charged for these services regardless of whether or not they get paid by the patient or insurance company. Additionally, the low reimbursement rate from Medicaid makes it even more difficult for facilities to absorb these costs.</p> <p>HB 4085 aims to provide support for private mental health facilities by requiring the judge of a court conducting an emergency detention proceeding to order the clerk to reimburse the court costs paid if the facility signs an affidavit. The affidavit must include that the facility has received no compensation or reimbursement for treatment of the person, treatment was provided under a contract with a local mental health authority (LMHA), or they only received reimbursement under Medicaid for that person.</p> <p>HB 4085 would provide some relief to private mental health facilities who provide essential services to individuals.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3712 By: Hernandez</p>	<p>Relating to authorizing a holder of a distributor's license to provide samples of malt beverages to retailers.</p>	<p>Licensing & Administrative Procedures 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The 86th Legislature passed the Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission (TABC) sunset bill that unintentionally repealed malt beverage distributors' ability to give samples to owners or general managers of retail accounts. This was a provision that was in place for decades before; therefore, HB 3712 seeks to reinstate this provision.</p> <p>HB 3712 allows malt beverage distributors to offer samples to retail permit or license holders who have not yet purchased that brand from the wholesaler permit or distributor license. The samples are limited to 750 milliliters for any distilled spirits brand, 3 liters for wine, and 72 ounces for any malt beverage brand. Under HB 3712, permit or license holders and their employees may only sample malt beverages on their licensed premises if the wholesaler's permit or license holder, or their employee is present.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3260 By: Herrero</p>	<p>Relating to the expunction of arrest records and files by a statutory county c</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, county courts are excluded from the types of courts that are authorized to offer expunction relief. Because county courts cannot grant expunction relief, individuals who have been acquitted or granted relief or pardoned based on actual innocence in their courts must petition at the district court level and pay filing fees. This process is inefficient and hasn't been updated since Chapter 55 of the Criminal Code of Procedure was codified fifty years ago. HB 3260 seeks to modernize this code to include county courts and streamline the expunction process.</p> <p>HB 3260 establishes that a statutory county court and a district court both have jurisdiction over expunction proceedings for offenses that are subject to a statutory county court, allowing either court to hear the case. Additionally, the bill allows an individual entitled to an expunction record to file an ex parte petition for the expunction in the statutory county court in which they were arrested or the offense was alleged to have occurred.</p> <p>HB 3260 is a sensible update to Chapter 55 that will ensure efficiency in the expunction process for both citizens and the courts.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 3199 By: Noble Cook</p>	<p>Relating to requiring certain information before being employed by a child-care facility.</p>	<p>Human Services 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Although both private and public schools utilize a pre-employment affidavit, child-care facilities are not required to. This pre-employment affidavit requires applicants to answer questions related to being charged with, adjudicated for, or convicted of having an inappropriate relationship with a minor. HB 3199 seeks to require child-care facilities to use these affidavits as a part of their hiring process.</p> <p>HB 3199 requires any child-care facility applicant to submit a pre-employment affidavit disclosing if the applicant has ever been charged with, adjudicated for, or convicted of having an inappropriate relationship with a minor. An applicant who answers affirmatively regarding an inappropriate relationship with a minor must disclose all facts relating to the charge, the adjudication, and the conviction, including if it was determined to be true or false.</p> <p>HB 3199 establishes an applicant is not precluded from being employed based on the disclosed charge, if the employer determines that the charge was false based on the information provided in the affidavit. Additionally, withholding information required to be disclosed by an applicant is immediate grounds for termination.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3615 By: Lambert</p>	<p>Relating to surcharges imposed for the use of a credit card.</p>	<p>Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>In 2018, the federal district court ruling in <i>Rowell v. Paxton</i> found that Texas' law prohibiting credit card surcharges violates commercial free speech rights under the First Amendment. This means that merchants should have the option to impose a surcharge. HB 3615 aims to clarify this issue in Texas statute by stating that surcharges are not mandatory, and the responsibility to pay them falls on the cardholder, not the merchant or seller.</p> <p>Under the current law, non-governmental sellers are prohibited from charging a surcharge on a credit card transaction. HB 3615 repeals this provision and allows merchants to impose a surcharge on buyers who pay with a credit card. However, the bill requires the merchant to disclose that the payment of a credit card surcharge is the cardholder's responsibility.</p> <p>Some larger corporations take advantage of small businesses by imposing surcharges that eat into their profits. HB 3615 permits merchants the freedom to make their own decision on whether to impose a surcharge, and it makes it clear that the responsibility to pay that surcharge falls on the cardholder, who can choose to pay with a different method if they prefer.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3928 By: Toth Meyer Anderson Burrows</p>	<p>Relating to the screening of students for dyslexia and related disorders and a student's eligibility for special education services provided by</p>	<p>Public Education 10 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>As many as 1 in 5 children might have dyslexia, but never get diagnosed or receive the diagnosis in adulthood. Children who are not properly identified as having dyslexia or a related disorder are not given the resources they need to most effectively learn and risk falling behind academically. HB 3928 seeks to assist these students in obtaining the education resources they need by providing full individual and initial evaluations (FIIE) for students of dyslexia and related disorders and making those students eligible to participate in a special education program.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

	<p>a school district, including services for dyslexia and related disorders.</p>	<p><i>Evaluation of Dyslexia and Related Disorders and Intervention Services</i></p> <p>A school must provide screening and testing for dyslexia and related disorders. If the district has reason to suspect or identifies dyslexia or related disorders in a student, the district must request consent from the parent to evaluate the student for dyslexia or related disorders. The FIIE must consider other academic difficulties that regularly affect students with dyslexia and related disorders, and assess a student for dyslexia and related disorders using both the practice standards of the International Dyslexia Association for identification and the process outlined in the Texas Dyslexia Handbook. During an FIIE, a school district must ensure that the student continues to receive academically appropriate reading instruction and is provided with appropriate tiered interventions.</p> <p>A school district may not delay the FIIE of a student, regardless of another intervention process for the student. Evaluations for the student identified as at risk for dyslexia or a related disorder may be conducted by a multidisciplinary team that must include at least one licensed dyslexia therapist, holding the most advanced dyslexia-related certification by an association accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council. Should a person meeting these qualifications be unavailable, then a person who meets the applicable training requirements under the commissioner's rule is acceptable. If the student received a diagnosis of dyslexia from an appropriate, licensed expert outside the school, they may participate with the multidisciplinary team in the FIIE.</p> <p>HB 3928 requires a school district's board of trustees to create a system to address complaints regarding a violation of the right to screenings and intervention services for dyslexia and other related disorders, or the implementation of the Texas Dyslexia Handbook. These policies may not interfere with parents' due process rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.</p> <p>A school district must employ the necessary experts to provide dyslexia intervention services to students. This employee must be fully trained in the district's instructional materials for students with dyslexia. The employee is not required to hold a certificate or permit in special education and completion of a literacy academy is not considered full training in the instructional materials for dyslexia. If a student with dyslexia or a related disorder is determined to need additional instruction to meet their academic goals, the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee must develop an individualized education program (IEP) for the student and ensure the IEP aligns with the processes established in the Texas Dyslexia Handbook.</p> <p>If the parent denies consent to the FIIE or IEP, the district must document that they informed the parent of the rights they have chosen to waive and that interventions and accommodations for dyslexia offered are available under an IEP. The commissioner must adopt rules that include a process for the school district to submit the documentation of the parent's declining of consent for student FIIE or IEP to the Texas Education Agency, and requirements for annual training and signed affidavits to ensure hearing officers and the board of trustees are</p>	
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			<p>aware and understand changes of law, ruling from the commissioner, and updated guidelines from the State Board of Education regarding dyslexia or a related disorder.</p> <p>HB 3928 expands eligibility for a student to participate in a school district’s special education program to include dyslexia or a related disorder.</p> <p>Conclusion By providing students with dyslexia a multidisciplinary team to help identify and intervene with science-backed strategies that align with accredited associations' standards, these students can be given greater opportunity to develop self-efficacy about their academic skills, succeed in the classroom, and harness their potential, and dismantle stigmas that hold them back.</p>	
<p>HB 3990 By: Kacal Price Lalani</p>	<p>Relating to a study of existing surface water and groundwater interaction data and analyses.</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>While state law treats groundwater and surface water as distinctly different, there is a dynamic interaction between them in Texas. HB 3990 aims to understand this interaction further and to identify areas of significant interactions and areas lacking data or sufficient modeling to reflect their interaction accurately.</p> <p>HB 3990 requires the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), to study the connection between these water sources and improve our understanding of this relationship. TWDB and TCEQ are authorized to coordinate with groundwater conservation districts, river authorities, higher education institutions, and governmental entities to compile and review existing data and analyze the interactions between surface water and groundwater in Texas. The study will identify which areas have a strong interaction between surface water and groundwater and which areas lack data or inadequate models on that interaction. Areas with strong surface water and groundwater interaction but insufficient data or models will be prioritized for increased data collection or updating or improving models. TWDB and TCEQ must report their findings and recommendations to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the House of Representatives, and each legislator.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 5217 By: Bell, Cecil Metcalf Schofield Bell, Keith Tepper</p>	<p>Relating to release of an area from and limitations on the expansion of a municipality's extraterritorial jurisdiction.</p>	<p>Land & Resource Management</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Some Texas residents and property owners subject to the municipal regulatory authority in an extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) have no vote or voice in the municipalities that regulate them. Some claim that municipalities have too much control over areas outside of municipal corporate boundaries, which can cause property owners in those areas to be subject to regulations and restrictions that may not necessarily be in their best interests.</p> <p>HB 5217 seeks to address this issue by providing for releasing an area from a municipality's extraterritorial jurisdiction by petition or election. This does not apply to areas within five miles of an active federal military base, in designated industrial districts, or under a strategic partnership agreement between a city and specific conservation and reclamation districts. However, there are concerns that removing areas from ETJs could negatively impact water quality, flood mitigation, and housing costs.</p> <p><i>Release by Petition</i></p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

HB 5217 allows a resident or an owner or owners of the majority in value of an area within a municipality's ETJ to file a petition to remove their area from the ETJ. The petition must follow certain Election Code provisions and be signed by either over 50% of the registered voters or a majority in value of land title holders in the area, according to the central appraisal district's tax rolls.

Petitioners have 180 days to collect signatures, and the petition should include a map and a description of the land's boundaries. The municipal secretary or another authorized person must verify the petition. The municipality must then notify the area's residents and landowners of the petition's outcome, which can be done by notifying the person who filed the petition.

If the required number of signatures is obtained, the municipality must immediately release the area from its ETJ. If a municipality fails to release the area either within 45 days of receiving the petition or by the next governing body meeting after the 30th day of receiving the petition, the area is automatically released. The released area won't join another municipality's ETJ unless the owners request it.

Release by Election
 HB 5217 allows residents of an area in a municipality's ETJ to request an election for releasing the area from the ETJ by submitting a petition with signatures from at least 5% of the registered voters. The petition must include a map and land boundaries description. A new election for the same area cannot be requested any sooner than two years after the last petition.

The municipality must order an election within 90 days of receiving the petition, which will be held like a general election, with costs covered by the municipality. The election results will be canvassed according to the Election Code, and residents must be informed of the results within 48 hours. If the majority votes for the release, the municipality must release the area immediately. The release occurs automatically if not done by the next governing body meeting or within 15 days after the election canvass. The municipality can also voluntarily release the area before the election date instead of holding the election. The released area won't join another municipality's ETJ unless the owners request it.

Additional Provisions
 HB 5217 also states that starting January 1, 2023, a municipality's control over ETJs won't automatically expand when new areas are annexed. This expansion can only happen if the owner(s) of the new area specifically ask to be included in the municipality's ETJ during the annexation process. The bill also requires the municipality to release any control acquired from annexations after this date if it doesn't comply with the new rules.

Under HB 5217, if an area with an agreement between a municipality and a county regarding who can regulate

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			<p>subdivisions and approve permits is removed from the ETJ, then that agreement ends. In this scenario, the county becomes responsible for regulating subdivisions in the area removed from the municipality's control.</p> <p>Concerns The primary concern with separating ETJs from municipal control is the severance from regulations that municipalities comply with, like road construction or other infrastructure. While ETJs may save money by not having to abide by these standards initially, insufficient initial practices may lead to more expensive issues. An example would be practices related to preventing floods and other drainage practices, like the limiting use of impervious cover. Older areas of Austin exemplify this as it was constructed before current, science-informed practices resulting in flooding and water quality issues. Programs to cover new infrastructure and stricter redevelopment rules were implemented to remedy this situation, making the area less affordable to residents and developers. This is one example out of other standards addressing flooding, water quality, and energy consumption.</p> <p>HB 5217 aims to provide Texas residents and the majority of property owners with a method to withdraw an area from a municipality's ETJ. However, this move can negatively impact Texans and their properties by increasing operating costs, reducing water quality, creating hazardous conditions for citizens and wildlife, and elevating flood risks.</p>	
<p>HB 5214 By: Spiller</p>	<p>Relating to actions brought by the attorney general on behalf of certain persons under the Texas Free Enterprise and Antitrust Act of 1983.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas Attorney General (AG) currently cannot recover economic damages from antitrust violators who do not directly sell to customers due to the court case Illinois vs. Illinois Brick (1977), which ruled that only entities that purchase directly from antitrust violators are allowed to recover damages. This ruling has harmed consumers because direct purchasers may pass their injury onto consumers in the form of lower quality goods or higher prices, exempting the multiple layers of intermediaries, distributors, wholesalers, and other entities in the middle of this process from lawsuits for anticompetitive conduct.</p> <p>HB 5214 allows the AG to bring a civil action against a person on behalf of an individual or governmental entity whose business or property has been injured by the person's violation of the Texas Free Enterprise and Antitrust Act of 1983. Actions may be brought in district court in Travis County or any other county in Texas where a defendant resides, does business, or maintains an office or where the individual or governmental entity resides when the cause of action occurs. HB 5214 also requires the AG to recover damages sustained by individuals or entities in these cases, along with interest and legal fees. The recovery can be tripled if the unlawful conduct is willful or flagrant. The bill also requires the court to prevent duplicative recovery from a defendant.</p> <p>HB 5214 allows the AG to sue for economic damages on behalf of consumers who had damages due to an intermediary in the process. HB 5214 holds the intermediaries for different industries, including pharmaceutical, healthcare, technology, and others accountable for breaching antitrust laws, protecting consumers from injury.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 5232 By: Spiller</p>	<p>Relating to civil penalties imposed for violations of the Texas Free Enterprise and Antitrust Act of 1983.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas Free Enterprise and Antitrust Act of 1983 promotes competition in Texas by prohibiting anticompetitive practices such as monopolies and conspiracies. This Act protects consumers, other businesses, and the economy. Currently, the civil penalties and damages for violations of this act are \$1 million for corporations and \$100,000 for any other person. These low penalties have not been adjusted for inflation and make the Antitrust Act ineffective at deterring these violations.</p> <p>HB 5232 modernizes the fines in the Antitrust Act by increasing individual fines to \$300,000 and sets specific fines for different levels of businesses, including a \$3 million penalty if the lesser of the person’s assets or market capitalization is less than \$100 million, \$20 million if the lesser of the person’s assets or market capitalization is between \$100 million to \$500 million, or 10% of the of the person’s assets or market capitalization if the lesser of the person’s assets or market capitalization is more than \$500 million.</p> <p>HB 5232 increases the penalties for violating the Texas Free Enterprise and Antitrust Act, helping to protect consumers from harm. It also differentiates between businesses and provides fees that are commensurate with business worth and assets.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 353 By: Johnson, Jarvis</p>	<p>Relating to parole determinations and individual treatment plans for inmates.</p>	<p>Corrections 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Certain individuals incarcerated with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) cannot enroll in required treatment programming until they have been approved for release on parole. However, they then must remain incarcerated until their required programming is completed, thus prolonging their release on parole. HB 353 seeks to address inefficiencies and barriers to parole.</p> <p>HB 353 revises the duties of TDCJ regarding individual treatment plans and risk and needs assessments for incarcerated individuals. HB 353 also revises the duties of parole panels and the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP).</p> <p>HB 353 changes the deadline by which TDCJ obtains pertinent information of an incarcerated individual for their treatment plan to the 45th day after their admission date. HB 353 includes that TDCJ is to complete an evaluation of the individual’s educational, rehabilitative, and vocational needs and the results of a permitted risk and needs assessment for their individual treatment plan. The treatment plan must be established and provided to the individual within 60 days of TDCJ receiving the information to complete the plan. During an annual review of an individual treatment plan, an individual’s risk and needs assessment score is to be revised as needed, reflecting the completion of programming required by the plan.</p> <p>HB 353 changes the deadline for the BPP’s initial interview with an incarcerated individual eligible for parole to 90 days after the individual’s admission date. HB 353 specifies that it is the BPP’s duty to identify the required programming an individual must complete before their parole eligibility date. TDCJ must make this programming available to the individual before that date.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>HB 353 establishes that for each denial of an incarcerated individual’s release on parole made by a parole panel, the panel must provide the required actions the individual must take to address the factors that contributed to the denial of parole. This information is to be provided to the rehabilitation programs division of TDCJ. HB 353 allows BPP to update its guidelines to account for an incarcerated individual’s progress or risk level based on their treatment plan. BPP must include in its annual report the application of their guideline on accounting for an incarcerated individual’s progress on their treatment plan and how they used these to make their determinations.</p>	
<p>HB 246 By: Swanson Smith</p>	<p>Relating to establishing a pilot program for recording ballot counting activity.</p>	<p>Elections 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>During the second called Special Session of the 87th Legislature, SB 1 passed, which, among other things, required counties with a population of 100,000 or more to livestream and retain video surveillance of all areas in which ballots are being counted. Some have raised concerns that current practices inhibit a clear view of the process.</p> <p>HB 246 establishes a pilot program in six counties to record ballot counting and processing activity. The recording device must record all areas containing voted ballots, ballot counting and activity performed by the early voting ballot board after the polls close on Election Day including mail-in, cured, and provisional ballots.</p> <p>Under HB 246, the SOS will select six counties to be a part of the pilot program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two counties with populations between 100,000 and 500,000; • Two counties with populations between 50,000 and 100,000; and • Two counties with populations of 5,000 or less. <p>The SOS has the authority to adopt and implement necessary procedures to determine participating counties. The pilot program shall be in operation until January 1, 2025.</p> <p>HB 246 requires the SOS to submit a report to the Legislature outlining the counties that participated, number of precincts and central counting stations that recorded video, best practices for video recording, the cost and availability of broadband internet connectivity required for program implementation, and any other recommendations or necessary information.</p> <p>It is important that the public trusts the electoral process. At the same time, the logistics and costs of video surveillance may be difficult for counties, especially in smaller more rural areas. The fiscal note for HB 246 states that SOS would not be responsible for purchasing any software or hardware requirements for the pilot program, leaving counties to foot the bill. Furthermore, because video surveillance is already being implemented in counties with a population of over 100,000, a pilot program is unnecessary. The SOS could consider lessons learned from the 40 or so participating counties.</p> <p>This bill takes effect immediately if it receives a 2/3 vote in each chamber, or September 1st.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 191 By: Bernal</p>	<p>Relating to the system by which an application for a low income housing tax credit is scored.</p>	<p>Urban Affairs 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Most Texans living in low-income housing are vulnerable populations, including the elderly, young children, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. Many of these older public, government, and tax credit housing units across the state are not equipped with air conditioning units. High temperatures in Texas make living in these facilities unbearable and unacceptable.</p> <p>HB 191 requires that an application for a low-income housing tax credit include a disclosure of whether all units presently owned by the applicant are equipped with air conditioning at the time the application is submitted. If all units in an applicant’s facility contain air conditioning, their application will be awarded positive points. However, if these units are not equipped with air conditioning, their application will be awarded negative points.</p> <p>HB 191 also clarifies that if an applicant requests in writing a statement of support from the state representative who represents the district containing the proposed development site, the request from the applicant must include information disclosing the percentage of units owned by the applicant that are equipped with air conditioning.</p> <p>People should not have to live in housing without air conditioning, and HB 191 is a step towards ensuring that applicants for low-income housing tax credits provide adequate air conditioning for tenants.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 181 By: Johnson, Jarvis Klick Collier</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the sickle cell disease registry.</p>	<p>Public Health 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Texans with sickle cell disease (SCD) often receive inadequate care due to limited knowledge about their condition. Despite the National Institutes of Health recommendation, Texas has made little progress in implementing a monitoring system for SCD patients. Further, restricted access to specialized SCD clinics where clinical data is collected and unreliable administrative data feeds into the incomplete understanding of SCD, resulting in poor health outcomes.</p> <p>Additionally, there is no comprehensive data collection system for SCD, making it difficult to determine the number of affected individuals. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) lacks a proper monitoring system for SCD patients transitioning from adolescence to adulthood. In 2022, the Sickle Cell Task Force advised Texas to implement statewide SCD surveillance, improve existing monitoring frameworks, and focus on the critical pediatric-to-adult care transition period. The task force encouraged Texas to share data with key agencies and organizations to enhance national SCD surveillance research.</p> <p>HB 181 aims to address these concerns by requiring DSHS to establish and maintain a sickle cell registry containing accurate and complete records of all cases of sickle cell disease in Texas, as well as any other information that the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) executive commissioner considers necessary and appropriate for the cure or treatment of the disease.</p> <p>HB 181 mandates that healthcare facilities, including hospitals, providing diagnostic or treatment services for SCD must give the department data related to SCD cases. The department may execute contracts, receive data,</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>and publish studies derived from the data. The HHSC executive commissioner must adopt guidelines to obtain information, protect confidentiality, and comply with applicable laws and regulations governing the disclosure of health information. The department must submit an annual report to the legislature and can collaborate with other SCD reporting organizations and research institutions.</p> <p>HB 181 establishes a centralized database of accurate and complete records of sickle cell disease cases in Texas to aid in understanding, curing, and treating the disease and improve health outcomes.</p>	
<p>HB 613 By: Vasut</p>	<p>Relating to the imposition of charges by a governmental body for providing copies of public information under the public information law.</p>	<p>State Affairs 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HB 613 prohibits government entities from charging fees for copies of campaign finance reports, unless the reports are available to the public online. Additionally, HB 613 authorizes the attorney general to reduce or cancel fees if the governmental body does not comply with provisions of this bill or has not maintained the requested information in accordance with standard recordkeeping practices</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 715 By: Patterson</p>	<p>Relating to the operation of an electric bicycle in a state park.</p>	<p>Culture, Recreation & Tourism 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Texas parks permit standard bikes on state park trails and do not allow any class of electric bikes. This prohibits individuals with mobility issues from being able to go to Texas state parks. HB 715 ensures that people of all physical ability types can enjoy the natural beauty of Texas.</p> <p>HB 715 permits an individual to operate a Class 1 electric bicycle in the same area where the operation of a standard bicycle is permitted in a state park. Further, a person may operate a Class 2 electric bicycle in an area authorized by the park to use such a bike. For the purpose of its provisions, a Class 1 electric bicycle is defined as an electric bicycle with a motor that assists a rider only when the rider is pedaling with a maximum assisted speed of 20 mph. A Class 2 bicycle is defined as a bicycle equipped with a motor that can be used to propel the bicycle without the rider pedaling with a maximum assisted speed of 20 mph.</p> <p>HB 715 requires the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to adopt rules and procedures for a person to apply for authorization to operate a Class 2 electric bicycle. TPWD would establish the criteria for application approval or denial and designate which parks area to permit the use of Class 2 electric bicycles. TWPD is given the discretionary authority to prohibit the operation of Class 1 or Class 2 electric bicycles in a state park area if TPWD determines it is necessary to protect public safety, state park infrastructure, or state fish and wildlife resources or habitats.</p> <p>HB 715 allows people of varying physical abilities to access and navigate Texas state parks.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 855 By: Gervin-Hawkins</p>	<p>Relating to the reimbursement of state employees for groceries consumed while traveling on official state business.</p>	<p>State Affairs 8 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>HB 855 addresses an issue faced by employees of agencies that often travel to remote locations where food options are limited. Currently, grocery store purchases are reimbursable for state employees on days they travel for state business and only if purchased outside of a certain radius of their designated headquarters.</p> <p>HB 855 authorizes state agencies to reimburse state employees for food purchased at grocery stores near headquarters for consumption during travel for official state business the day before leaving or the first day of travel. The reimbursement is limited to the portion of food items consumed each day while traveling, and the purchase is considered a meal expense with limits set forth in the travel provisions of the General Appropriations Act. HB 855 requires state agencies to develop a policy before implementing the provisions of HB 855.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 963 By: Jetton</p>	<p>Relating to the transfer of money in the identification fee exemption account.</p>	<p>Appropriations 24 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Personal identification certificates include drivers licenses, photo IDs, birth certificates, passports, and more. Having to pay a fee for such a certificate can be difficult for certain vulnerable Texans such as the homeless, foster youth and survivors of domestic violence. Homeless and foster youth are eligible to receive waivers for these various forms of identification but domestic violence survivors were not included in a prior fee exemption bill.</p> <p>HB 963 addresses this issue by waiving the fee for such certificates for certain victims of domestic violence. The bill amends the Transportation Code to include the fee waiver for a personal identification certificate to a victim of dating violence, a victim of family violence, or the child of such a victim.</p> <p>HB 963 is meant to support survivors of domestic violence and help them to regain their independence.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1003 By: Shaheen</p>	<p>Relating to ineligibility to serve as a poll watcher.</p>	<p>Elections 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1003 expands who is ineligible to serve as a poll watcher to include anyone convicted of a felony offense. Currently, an individual is ineligible to serve as a poll watcher if they have been convicted of an election-related offense. HB 1003 also specifies that this applies to misdemeanor offenses only.</p> <p>While it makes sense to bar certain individuals convicted of election crimes from working in elections, it is unjust to prevent someone who has regained their right to vote from serving in elections.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1004 By: Shaheen Bhojani</p>	<p>Relating to the prosecution of the offenses of trafficking of persons and compelling prostitution and to certain consequences of those offenses.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Texas ranks second in the nation for reported cases of human trafficking, with just under 1,000 cases reported in 2020. Those with disabilities are more susceptible to trafficking, and concerns have been raised that this population does not receive adequate protection under the law. Currently, there are no specific protections in Texas statute aimed at providing protection for those with disabilities from human trafficking, increasing their vulnerability. HB 1004 seeks to address this by ensuring that those with disabilities are provided the same protections from trafficking as children and adjusting the statute of limitations.</p> <p>HB 1004 establishes that an individual commits a compelling prostitution offense if they knowingly cause a</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>person who has a disability to commit prostitution, regardless of if the actor knows they have a disability. The bill also expands conduct that constitutes a first degree felony trafficking offense to include knowingly trafficking a person with a disability for forced labor, services, or prostitution, and knowingly receiving a benefit from participating in ventures that involve trafficking a person with a disability for such purposes, even if the actor did not know the person was disabled at the time of the offense.</p> <p>HB 1004 establishes that there is no statute of limitations for the offense of compelling prostitution by a person with a disability. The bill makes further adjustments to the statute of limitations for conduct that constitutes a first degree felony trafficking of persons by establishing that there is no statute of limitations for trafficking a person with a disability or receiving benefit from a venture regarding sexual or prostitution conduct and extending from three years to ten years from the offense the statute of limitations for knowingly trafficking or receiving benefit from a venture regarding forced labor by a person with a disability.</p> <p>HB 1004 addresses a gap in current law that has allowed vulnerable Texans to go unprotected and will help ensure that law enforcement has the tools they need to combat the issue of human trafficking.</p>	
<p>HB 1229 By: Harris, Cody</p>	<p>Relating to the collection and confidentiality of information regarding weapons in agency foster homes; creating a civil penalty.</p>	<p>Community Safety-Select 10 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The state has a responsibility to safeguard children in foster care and ensure they have safe and appropriate homes. As part of the process to become a foster parent, current and potential parents are required to provide information about any weapons in their homes.</p> <p>Current law already allows lawfully permitted firearms and ammunition in agency foster homes, with minimum standards for safe storage. HB 1229 would make it so the types of weapons in an agency foster home, including firearms, are confidential and not subject to disclosure. HB 1229 prohibits the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), or a child-placing agency from requiring foster homes to disclose the types of weapons, including firearms, in the home. If these entities obtain information about firearms in the home, they cannot use it for any other purpose than to determine if there are weapons in the home. If they do, they are liable for a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 for each violation. This bill would not disallow caseworkers from checking for safe storage of firearms and ammunition during home visits.</p> <p>While this bill aims to protect foster parents' privacy, it may make it more difficult for agencies to assess the level of safety and risk for a child placed in a home, which should be the number one priority for the state. Studies have shown that foster youth are two and a half times more likely to contemplate suicide than youth not in foster care and four times more likely to attempt suicide. Access to firearms is associated with increased firearm risk, and over half of all suicide deaths in the U.S. occur with a firearm. These factors, combined, support the need for the state to take this information into consideration. Additionally, the bill is unnecessary as the law already allows permitted firearms in agency foster homes when determining appropriate placements for children. Licensed gun</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			owners have no reason to hide or not disclose weapons in the foster care process.	
HB 1289 By: Campos	Relating to a training program for persons investigating suspected child abuse or neglect.	Human Services 8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>Families involved with investigations conducted by the Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS) have raised concerns about their cases. Following a review of these cases, it was determined that inconsistent investigator training has resulted in unnecessary child removals, traumatization of families, and insufficient evidence being presented to the courts, resulting in overturned cases. HB 1289 seeks to address the quality of investigator training and prescribe requirements for the training content.</p> <p>HB 1289 requires DFPS to develop a training program for persons who conduct investigations of suspected child abuse at the state or local levels and their supervisors. The program must address various topics, including the legal definitions of abuse and neglect, the required investigative notices and information, investigation standards, DFPS policies for placing children during investigations, and assessing proposed caregivers. The program also covers procedures for supporting youth aged 13 and older, as well as the constitutional rights of parents and community resources available to help the child.</p> <p>HB 1289 mandates that DFPS investigators receive advanced investigative techniques and protocol training to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct thorough investigations. This would include subjects like techniques and protocols for conducting interviews with alleged perpetrators of and witnesses to alleged child abuse or neglect, accurately scaling markings of suspected abuse or neglect, protocols for collecting and packaging evidence, and methods for analyzing and applying forensic evidence to applicable statutory definitions and possible signs of abuse and neglect.</p> <p>Under HB 1289, each DFPS investigator and investigative supervisor must pass an exam to demonstrate their knowledge and competency before being assigned to any case. This ensures they are fully prepared to handle suspected child abuse or neglect investigations. HB 1289 also allows DFPS to collaborate with other professionals, such as licensed attorneys, forensics medical professionals, law enforcement personnel, and other appropriate experts, to develop and implement the training program.</p> <p>HB 1289 aims to enhance the consistency of training received by investigators employed by DFPS. This consistency in training can lead to improved investigation practices and ultimately increase the accuracy of investigations overall.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1617 By: Ordaz	Relating to notice for certain defendants regarding the unlawful possession or acquisition of a	Community Safety-Select 12 Ayes, 0 Nays,	At present, there is inconsistency in courts informing convicted criminals that they may no longer legally possess firearms. If they fail to surrender their firearms, they may face additional charges for unlawful possession, and if they make false statements, which could lead to a perjury charge. HB 1617 aims to ensure that defendants are notified that their particular conviction would make them ineligible to possess or acquire a firearm or ammunition.	<u>Favorable</u>

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	firearm or ammunition.	0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>HB 1617 modifies the Code of Criminal Procedure to mandate that courts and peace officers admonish defendants of the change in firearm rights with specific statements.</p> <p>The bill requires a court, before accepting a plea, to inform the defendant that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A felony conviction may make it unlawful to possess a firearm; • The defendant should discuss with an attorney if they have any questions; and • Making a false statement under oath about the defendant’s possession of a firearm or ammunition may subject them to a perjury charge. <p>The bill ensures the following types of statements are aligned to match the new felony conviction admonishment described above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misdemeanor involving family violence; and • Class C Misdemeanor other than intoxication involving violence where the person has a specified relationship with the victim. <p>HB 1617 does not amend offenses or sentencing but ensures consistency and transparency for defendants in all stages of their change in Second Amendment rights.</p>	
<p>HB 2533 By: Walle Gates</p>	<p>Relating to the implementation of a statewide homeless data sharing network to share real time data on homelessness.</p>	<p>Urban Affairs 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Developing an accurate understanding of the extent of homelessness is challenging. For example, it is extremely difficult to count transient people living in cars, abandoned buildings, and other deserted places, and some of the homeless population may not wish to be found. Texas’ government agencies and non-government organizations have difficulty tracking and recording data for people experiencing homelessness across the state.</p> <p>HB 2533 aims to implement a homeless data sharing network through which homeless response systems and data storage vendors are able to share and assess real-time data on homelessness throughout this state. The bill directs the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) and the Texas Homeless Network to implement this network by identifying individuals experiencing homelessness and connecting and referring those individuals to available services and resources, including housing navigation assistance, for the purpose of improving health outcomes. All information shared on the network would be confidential.</p> <p>HB 2533 will help connect Texas’ homeless population with agencies and organizations who can offer resources for bettering their lives.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 3723 By: Gerdes Troxclair</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the Rural Workforce Training Grant Program.</p>	<p>International Relations & Economic Development 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Rural Texas communities face limited education opportunities, low wages, and increasing poverty, which can deter investment and drive people away.</p> <p>HB 3723 addresses this by directing the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to create and manage the Rural Workforce Training Grant Program. This program provides targeted funding for job-specific training to enhance skills and opportunities in rural Texas. Grants are awarded to public, private, or nonprofit entities and educational institutions offering on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and workforce education in counties with under 200,000 residents.</p> <p>Under HB 3723, funds can only be used for training materials, instructors' fees, participant expenses, facility fees, administrative costs, and outreach, mentoring, and recruiting. Grant recipients must provide periodic reports on fund usage and outcomes. The TWC can accept donations for the program and will establish its rules. Annually, the TWC must report to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house, and relevant legislative committees on grants awarded and program effectiveness.</p> <p>HB 3723 aims to expand workforce education and employment opportunities in rural communities, driving investment and reducing poverty among Texans.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2663 By: Tepper</p>	<p>Relating to the initiation of customer choice by municipally owned utilities that provide electric service.</p>	<p>State Affairs 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 2663 is designed to redesign Lubbock Power & Light – the third-largest municipally owned utility in Texas – so it can function the same way as investor-owned utilities and no longer serve as the provider of last resort.</p> <p>HB 2663 changes the way a municipally owned utility (MOU) designates a provider of last resort for its retail customers when the utility initiates customer choice. Under HB 2663, a utility would be authorized to designate itself or one or more entities as the providers or providers of last resort for customers within its service area upon entering the retail market. The utility may delegate the authority to designate the provider or providers of last resort to the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC).</p> <p>The bill also expands the circumstances under which a provider of last resort must offer a customer the standard retail service package for the appropriate customer class at a fixed, non-discounted rate. This requirement now applies when a customer is unable to obtain service from a municipally owned utility, electric cooperative, or retail electric provider.</p> <p>The PUC would be authorized to set the rate the provider may charge if it designated the provider of last resort. HB 2663 also removes a provision allowing customers to choose to receive a single bill from the municipally owned utility for distribution, transmission, and generation services provided by a retail electric utility provider.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 2093</p> <p>By: Manuel Thierry Rose Ordaz</p>	<p>Relating to the minimum duration of a protective order.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Frequently, protective orders are urgently required, leaving victims and survivors without sufficient time to obtain legal representation. This absence of counsel can leave them exposed and unaware of the duration of the protective order. Currently, there is no set minimum period for a final protective order, causing concern among many that victims are not given enough time to gather resources and establish a secure environment for themselves.</p> <p>HB 2093 seeks to remedy this by requiring that the minimum duration of a protective order issued for victims of sexual assault or abuse, indecent assault, stalking, trafficking, or family violence cannot be less than one year.</p> <p>HB 2093 helps to ensure that victims in Texas are protected and able to begin to move forward.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2239</p> <p>By: Troxclair Bailes Burns Thimesch Patterson</p>	<p>Relating to municipal regulation of the removal of an Ashe juniper tree.</p>	<p>Land & Resource Management</p> <p>7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>There is an ongoing dispute over regulating Ashe juniper trees and the municipal protections against cutting them down in Texas. While some view these native, drought-tolerant trees as an essential part of the local ecosystem, providing habitats for wildlife and contributing to carbon sequestration, and mitigating the heat island effect, others argue that they should be allowed to remove these trees from their private property without penalties.</p> <p>HB 2239 seeks to stop municipalities from prohibiting Ashe juniper tree removal on private property or charging tree mitigation fees. This diminishes local control in Texas and can lead to environmental issues.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>
<p>HB 3014</p> <p>By: Harris, Caroline</p>	<p>Relating to the motor vehicle safety inspection of electric vehicles.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>At present, state law mandates that every vehicle undergo a routine inspection. However, fully electric vehicles do not have the key components checked in an inspection – emissions and exhaust systems.</p> <p>HB 3014 proposes to exempt electric vehicles from inspection requirements related to emission and exhaust systems, and calls for the director of public safety at the Department of Public Safety to create rules that enable this exemption to be put into practice.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4827</p> <p>By: Leo-Wilson Schaefer </p>	<p>Relating to the prosecution of the offense of possessing or carrying a weapon in certain prohibited</p>	<p>Community Safety</p> <p>10 Ayes, 2 Nays,</p>	<p>It is considered a criminal offense for someone to knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly possess a firearm or other prohibited weapons on the premises of a school or educational institution. However, the Penal Code does not define what constitutes a “school” or “educational institution. HB 4827 defines these terms in the applicable code.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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Guillen Canales Frazier	places associated with schools or educational institutions.	0 PNV, 1 Absent	An “educational institution” is defined as a public, private, or independent institution of higher education or a career school or college. Additionally, “school” is defined as a public or private primary school, and it does not exclude schools that are not accredited by the Texas Educational Agency (TEA). The bill does not change existing law, it simply clarifies it.	
SB 1563 By: Creighton	Relating to the eligibility of Sam Houston State University to receive formula funding for the Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine.	Appropriations 25 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (SHSU-COM) was established in 2019 to provide medical education and increase the physician workforce in the eastern region of Texas. Their focus is to expand health care availability in small and rural communities and to address the shortage of primary care physicians in Texas. SHSU-COM is a growing and competitive medical school, but the average in-state tuition/fees to attend are \$59,100 while the average in-state tuition/fees at other public medical schools in Texas are about \$23,800. SB 1563 seeks to eliminate disparities between SHSU-COM attendance costs and the costs of other Texas medical schools by making SHSU-COM eligible for applicable formula funding.	<u>Favorable</u>