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LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 9:00 AM – Friday, May 5, 2023				
HB 3548 By: Anchía | Sherman, Sr. | Jones, Venton | Lalani | Cook	Relating to increasing the criminal penalty for assault of certain hospital personnel.	Criminal Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Recently, violence against medical workers has increased, with the rate of violent attacks growing by 63% between 2011 and 2021. COVID-19 exacerbated this issue, with 44% of nurses reporting violence against them during Spring of 2020. This in combination with the extreme shortage of healthcare professionals underscores a need for enhanced protection for those who work in the medical field. HB 3548 seeks to address this by enhancing the penalty for an assault that results in bodily injury from a Class A misdemeanor to a third degree felony, if the actor committing the offense assaults known hospital personnel while they are providing services. Applicable personnel include nurses, physicians, physician assistants, maintenance or janitorial staff, receptionists, and other individuals who work in a facility that is licensed as a general hospital or special hospital, including state hospitals. Hospital personnel have stood on the frontlines of a public health crisis for years in order to protect Texans. It is vital that their health and safety is prioritized by the state.	**Favorable**
HB 4692 By: Morrison | Martinez | Flores	Relating to the unlawful sale or purchase of shark fins or shark fin products; creating a criminal offense.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	There has been an increase in the illegal sale, purchase, or possession of shark fins. Many of these cases have yet to be prosecuted in response to concerns about current statutes that local game wardens and prosecutors have raised. HB 4692 seeks to address these concerns by clarifying prohibited actions related to the sale and purchase of shark fins, clarifying requirements to process them, and granting Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) rulemaking authority to address additional needs or concerns about this. HB 4692 establishes that a person can process a shark carcass into steaks or filets in a restaurant or place of business only if the steaks or filets do not contain any portion of the fin and each of the shark's fins is destroyed and discarded immediately upon removal as prescribed by TPWD. A person is subject to a Class B Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor if the person fails to comply with the requirement. This offense is enhanced to a Class A Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor if it is found that the person has a prior conviction of the offense within five years of the presenting offense.	**Favorable**

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A.L. Walle

			HB 4692 establishes that proof a person possessed a shark fin, other than one that was destroyed, in a place of business, a restaurant, or a commercial vessel on Texas waters, then this is evidence that the person possessed shark fin for sale. HB 4692 also establishes that proof a person advertised for sale a shark fin, a product containing shark fin, or a product represented to be or contain shark fin as evidence that the person offered a shark fin for sale. HB 4692 exempts a person who possesses, transports, sells, or purchases a shark fin under a TPWD permit for scientific research from being considered a violation of its provisions. HB 4692 establishes that each fin a person purchases or possesses in violation of its provisions is considered a separate offense. HB 4692 authorizes TPWD to adopt as needed to administer provisions relating to the offense of unlawful sale or purchase of shark fins or shark fin products and make it an offense to violate a proclamation or rule adopted under these provisions. HB 4692 proposes required changes to address increased violations of possessing or selling shark fins.	
HB 4287 By: Metcalf | Cunningham | Manuel | Bailes | Ashby	Relating to the use of customer-sited distributed generation facilities owned by certain non-ERCOT electric utilities.	State Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	HB 4287 allows non-ERCOT utilities within the Southeastern Electric Reliability Council to provide backup electric service to nonresidential retail customers through a customer-sited distribution generation facility. This would apply to Entergy's service region on the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) grid in southeast Texas. The backup generator must be capable of providing electric service during a power outage, and the facility must be owned and operated by the electric utility with no more than 10 megawatt capacity. HB 4287 requires the Public Utility Commission of Texas to establish just and reasonable rates for backup electric service supplied using a customer-sited distributed generation facility, consistent with provisions of the Public Utility Regulatory Act governing electric utility rates.	**<u>Favorable</u>**
HB 1915 By: Hefner	Relating to land services performed by a landman.	Energy Resources 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	Current statute is not reflective of services performed by a landman in Texas. As a result, these laws need to be revised to ensure that landmen receive fair and equal statutory protections and benefits. HB 1915 amends the state Occupations Code and expands the exemption for non-attorneys who perform acts related to mineral or mining interests in real property. The exemption now covers any act related to land services as long as they don't hold themselves out to be licensed attorneys. This includes negotiating mineral or energy rights, reviewing title status, managing rights derived from interests in minerals or energy, and pooling such interests. The bill defines "mineral" as substances considered minerals in Texas, including hydrocarbons and other minerals, regardless of depth. "Other energy sources" include natural resources necessary to produce energy like	**<u>Favorable</u>**

			geothermal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar, and wind energy. Transactions involving the sale, lease, or transfer of an interest in real property related to such a natural resource are exempted from The Real Estate License Act. HB 1915 also includes landmen as among the individuals exempt from the Private Security Act, who in the course and scope of their services would not qualify for exemption otherwise. This change excludes payments made to nonemployees for landman services related to other energy sources from a taxable entity's total revenue for franchise tax purposes. HB 1915 is a clean-up bill that updates language in statute to ensure the code reflects the nature of landman industry practices in the present day.	
HB 4091 By: Johnson, Ann | Jetton	Relating to the mental health needs of a minor in the managing conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services.	Youth Health & Safety, Select 7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Foster children often face more behavioral health challenges than their peers due to the trauma or abuse they've experienced. Texas currently has a shortage of inpatient services and beds for children in Child Protective Services (CPS). To address this, the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth Houston) proposed the Successful Transitions for Adolescents–Recovery Trajectories Success (START) pilot program in collaboration with the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). START is designed for CPS children with significant trauma, persistent mental health needs, and multiple failed foster placements. UTHealth Houston will dedicate an 18-bed unit for the program and may expand to the new Dunn Center hospital if successful. START, modeled after UTHealth Houston's successful sub-acute adult treatment program with published research findings, offers extended stays of 30-60 days and provides personalized therapy and additional recovery programming to improve long-term outcomes. However, DFPS's statutory restrictions on inpatient hospital admissions would hinder the program. Therefore, the statute needs to be amended to grant more authority for sub-acute, or longer stay, programs like START. HB 4091 seeks to broaden the conditions under which DFPS can request admission of a minor in their managing conservatorship to an inpatient mental health facility. Under HB 4091, this would now include cases where a physician believes that the minor's mental health has deteriorated to a point where they require and would benefit from a specialized inpatient treatment program designed to help them transition to residential treatment or a less restrictive foster care setting. HB 4091 aims to support Texas youth in CPS by allowing for longer stay, sub-acute style programs like START.	**Favorable**

OK for Distribution

LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 9:30 AM – Friday, May 5, 2023				
HB 2794 By: Lujan | Leo-Wilson | Neave Criado | Bailes | Murr	Relating to the appointment of a guardian ad litem in certain suits filed by the Department of Family and Protective Services.	Juvenile Justice and Family Issues 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Court-appointed special advocates (CASA) are dedicated volunteers appointed by a judge to advocate for children involved in the child welfare system. These compassionate advocates become intimately familiar with a child's family, community, and legal team to ensure the child's best interests are represented in court proceedings. They also play a crucial role in cases where court-ordered services are necessary for one or both parents. Currently, state funding is limited to services for children formerly in foster care and is not available for those involved in parent-child relationship cases. HB 2794 seeks to allow CASA programs to use state funding to provide services for children and families involved in court proceedings that involve the parent-child relationship or court-ordered services. HB 2794 enables the court to provide a guardian ad litem to represent a child immediately after the Department of Family Services files a petition, before the hearing regarding a temporary order for the child's guardian to participate in child welfare services. HB 2794 allows this guardian the same powers under current provisions regarding special appointments, child custody evaluations, and adoption evaluations, and authorizes this guardian to be: an adult with training and expertise, an attorney appointed in a dual role, or an organization of advocates or an individual advocate appointed under statutory provisions related to child services. HB 2704 prohibits a court from appointing an attorney in a dual role as a guardian ad litem if a government entity brings the suit, unless the court appoints another person to serve as the child's guardian ad litem. The bill restricts the actions of an attorney appointed solely as a guardian ad litem to actions that a non-attorney guardian may take and prohibits such an attorney from providing legal services. Additionally, the bill makes revisions to several definitions regarding statutory provisions related to CASA programs, as follows: changes to the term "abused and neglected" to "allegedly abused and neglected," includes a child who is the subject of a suit filed by a governmental entity in requirements regarding participation in certain child welfare services, and replaces volunteer advocates goal of obtaining a permanent placement for such a child that is in the child's best interest with a goal of promoting the child's best interest. HB 2794 will allow CASA advocates the resources necessary to ensure that each child involved in the child welfare system receives the care they need to stay safe and move forward.	**Favorable**
LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 10:00 AM – Friday, May 5, 2023				
HB 5066	Relating to electricity service in areas of	State Affairs	The ERCOT West Texas Load Study found that the current process for building electric transmission to meet customer demand is inadequate, especially in areas with heavy oil and gas development and rapid industrial	**Favorable**

OK for Distribution

By: Geren	this state with a need for transmission projects.	9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	growth. ERCOT only counts new loads in its planning process once financial security has been provided, which hinders long lead-time transmission projects. This reactive planning approach creates a problem for larger customers who may need power immediately. HB 5066 aims to address this issue by requiring ERCOT, the Public Utility Commission (PUC), and utilities to plan the grid more proactively based on load growth information from utilities in their area. HB requires PUC to identify regions with insufficient transmission capacity and develop and implement a reliability plan to meet existing and forecasted electric loads. HB 5066 requires the plan to ensure efficient planning, identification, and approval processes and includes a provision specifically for the Permian Basin through September 1, 2025.	
LSG Floor Report For Major State Calendar – Friday, May 5, 2023				
SB 14 By: Campbell | Bettencourt | Hall | Hughes | Kolkhorst | Middleton | Parker | Paxton | Perry | Springer 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	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. SB 14 prohibits public funds from being allocated to any entity, organization, or individual involved in providing or facilitating prohibited procedures or treatments for minors related to gender transitioning. This means CHIP and Medicaid won't cover such treatments for minors, and implementation might be delayed if federal waivers or authorizations are needed. The undefined term "facilitates" could result in cutting off public funding for businesses and organizations in Texas that offer healthcare insurance or otherwise enable access to care. This vague and discriminatory language could negatively impact any businesses in Texas. SB 14 allows the attorney general to take legal action against healthcare providers or entities, even if no violation has yet occurred, for providing or planning to provide gender transition healthcare to minors. This could lead to wasted resources and taxpayer dollars if future violations are falsely assumed. Moreover, enforcing this provision could infringe on privacy and necessitate access to private medical records. Under SB 14, 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 support from every major medical association representing over 1.3 million U.S. doctors.	**Unfavorable**

OK for Distribution

			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. 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. 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 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 General State Calendar – Friday, May 5, 2023				
HB 102 By: Thompson, Senfronia	Relating to the recovery of exemplary damages based on a compensable death under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act.	Business & Industry 7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Currently, under the Workers Compensation Act, only a surviving spouse or heirs of a deceased employee in a wrongful death claim are eligible to recover exemplary damages. This excludes parents of a deceased person who was unmarried and without children. HB 102 would close this loophole, allowing the estate of a deceased employee, including parents and adopted children, to pursue exemplary damages in a wrongful death caused by an employer's intentional act, omission, or gross negligence. Ultimately, HB 102 would allow parents and adopted children the opportunity to seek justice, hold employers accountable, and have closure in wrongful death cases.	**Favorable**
HB 1003 By: Shaheen	Relating to ineligibility to serve as a poll watcher.	Elections 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Currently, an individual is ineligible to serve as a poll watcher if they have been convicted of an election-related offense. HB 1003 clarifies that anyone convicted of a first or second-degree felony in connection with an election-related offense is ineligible to serve. The bill also disqualifies anyone convicted of a first or second-degree felony from serving. 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.	**Unfavorable**

OK for Distribution

HB 4416 By: Goldman	Relating to the regulation of auctioneering by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation; authorizing an administrative penalty.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	The Sunset Review of the 87th Legislature directed the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) to review the auctioneering program and submit any updated changes to be made. HB 4416 seeks to address the changes and update statutory language to reflect current practices within the department. HB 4416 amends current statute regarding the regulation of auctioneers and associate auctioneers. This includes modifying the entity responsible for taking certain regulatory actions, such as issuing and revoking auctioneer licenses, and imposing disciplinary actions. HB 4416 also modifies the auctioneer education and recovery fund. HB 4416 adds that an individual must show proof of employment as a licensed associate auctioneer to the list of eligibility requirements to obtain licensure as an auctioneer. On the contrary, to become eligible for licensure as an associate auctioneer, an individual must have worked under the direct supervision of a licensed auctioneer. Under HB 4416, an applicant for licensure must apply directly to TDLR through a form provided by the department. Any nonresident applicant must submit a written irrevocable consent to service of process in addition to the application. The consent must be outlined in the form and supported by additional information through the Texas Commission on Licensing and Regulation (TCLR), legal proceedings related to any transaction governed by this chapter can be initiated against the license holder in the appropriate county court where the cause of action occurred or the plaintiff resides, and include a statement agreeing that services provided is as valid and binding as another service. HB 4416 authorizes any individual that meets the requirements for an auctioneer's license to apply directly to TDLR to take the licensing exam. Additionally, TDLR must oversee the administration of a license exam. HB 4416 also mandates the auctioneer advisory board members to serve 6-year terms expiring on September 1 biennially. It also prohibits any member of the advisory board from receiving compensation for serving on the advisory board from TDLR. Additionally, HB 4416 protects auctioneers by updating practice standards. An auctioneer who agrees to provide services to a person must provide a written contract with agreement terms to them, and include information directly from TCLR in compliance with regulations. Before the auction, both the auctioneer and client must agree in writing to an itemized inventory of property to be sold or offered for sale by the auctioneer at auction, and an amendment to the inventory must be in writing and signed by both parties. TCLR must adopt regulatory standards for auctioneer and associate auctioneer practices, including maintenance and use of a trust or escrow account for funds belonging or owed to another and required consumer notices. HB 4416 also authorizes TDLR regulatory oversight regarding application fees, funding, and unpaid claims.	**Favorable**

			Moreover, HB 4416 requires TDLR to pay the claim from the fund if their determination for an auctioneer's contract violation was not disputed by the auctioneer. If a hearing is held regarding TDLR's determination, they must pay actual damages to the aggrieved party as determined by an administrative law judge with the State Office of Administrative Hearings who presided over the hearing. HB 4416 also prevents TDLR from paying a single aggrieved party more than $15,000 for all claims arising from a single auction, and the total payment of claims against a single auctioneer arising from a single auction may not exceed $100,000. HB 4416 also adds an associate auctioneer to be able to have actions or penalties imposed upon them. Upon proposal of denial for an application for licensure by TDLR through disciplinary action or penalties, the applicant or license holder is entitled to a hearing. Any proceeding related to a license denial or disciplinary action by TDLR is a contested case. HB 4416 seeks to add more transparency and accountability to those acting as associate auctioneers, and gives TCLR and TDLR clarifications regarding their regulatory oversight.	
HB 4337 By: Canales | Cook | Noble | Capriglione | Morales, Eddie	Relating to the inclusion of licenses and similar documents issued by certain foreign governments in the criminal offense of tampering with a governmental record.	State Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent	HB 4337 addresses concerns from the Department of Public Safety regarding the fraudulent use of commercial drivers licenses (CDL) issued by foreign countries. Often these licenses are used by individuals to circumvent the licensure process in Texas. HB 4337 clearly defines licenses issued by foreign countries as a "government record" and therefore establishes a criminal offense for tampering or falsification of such licenses. The bill aims to curtail the rampant misuse of licenses purportedly issued by Canada and Mexico.	**Favorable**
HB 4856 By: Darby	Relating to the jurisdiction of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality over certain recharge injection wells.	Natural Resources 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Produced water – "fluid oil" or "gas waste" – is a term in the oil and gas industry to describe the water extracted from underground formations during oil and gas production. This water is often contaminated with various substances, such as hydrocarbons, salts, and metals, and needs to be treated before it can be reused or discharged safely. Produced water can make up most of the fluids produced during oil and gas extraction, and its management is a significant environmental and economic consideration for the industry. Texas oil and gas companies typically disposed of this water in the past, but now companies are seeking beneficial reuse solutions, including aquifer storage and replenishment. As pilot recycling projects increase, the state must determine jurisdiction for regulating and permitting recharge injection wells, which inject fluids into the earth's subsurface for various purposes. HB 4856 grants the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) exclusive jurisdiction over regulating and permitting recharge injection wells, including those used for fluid oil and gas waste. HB 4856 states that fluid oil and gas waste may not be injected into recharge injection wells unless treated to meet TCEQ standards.	**Favorable**

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			HB 4856 aims to establish clear jurisdiction for the TCEQ and ensure that fluid oil and gas waste is adequately regulated and treated before being injected into recharge injection wells.	
HB 3878 By: King, Ken | Thompson, Senfronia | Hernandez | Patterson | Smith	Relating to the Texas Real Estate Research Center, the Real Estate Research Advisory Committee, the Texas Real Estate's Commission, and the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board; increasing a fee; authorizing a fee.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	HB 3878 proposes several changes related to real estate in the state of Texas. The bill aims to update and revise certain provisions related to real estate licensing, research, and recovery, as well as to require certain disclosures related to equitable interests. **The Research Center & Advisory Committee** HB 3878 proposes changes to the Education Code to rename the Real Estate Research Center to the Texas Real Estate Research Center. and the real estate research advisory committee. The bill includes provisions for the real estate research advisory committee which includes changing the person responsible for submitting the committee's proposed budget each year from the president of Texas A&M University to the executive director of the center and providing additional compensation for committee members for travel expenses. Additionally, the bill would authorize virtual meetings for the committee, which would improve efficiency and flexibility in conducting its business. The proposed changes aim to streamline operations, improve funding and compensation, and enhance the effectiveness of the real estate research advisory committee. **Licensing** HB 3878 also amends the Occupations Code in several ways related to real estate licensing requirements. Firstly, the bill would exclude certain business entities from the licensing requirements of The Real Estate License Act, provided they meet specific criteria such as receiving compensation on behalf of a licensed broker or sales agent that is earned by the license holder while engaged in real estate brokerage, performing no other acts of a broker, be a limited liability company or an S corporation, registered with the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC), and be at least 51 percent owned by the license holder on whose behalf the entity receives compensation. HB 3878 also repeals provisions regarding the fees collected by the commission and establishes new rules for the collection of fees for deposit in the trust account. Specifically, the bill repeals provisions specifying the amount of the fee collected by TREC from an applicant for an original license or certificate of registration, instead allowing the commission to establish fees by rule. The bill also establishes a new $70 or $20 fee, depending on the type of license, that will be applicable. Finally, the bill makes several technical changes, including renaming the commissioner of the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board (TALCB) to the executive director of TALCB and clarifying the deadline for taking the constitutional oath of office for TREC appointees. These changes aim to simplify and streamline the licensing process for real estate professionals in Texas. **Real Estate Recovery Trust Account**	**Favorable**

			HB 3878 includes several changes to the fees and caps on payments from the real estate recovery trust account. The bill requires the rules adopted by TREC to include a fee for the registration of a business entity excluded from the license requirement under The Real Estate License Act, and to provide for the reasonable and necessary costs of administering the trust account. The cap on payments from the trust account for claims arising from a single transaction is raised from $50,000 to $125,000, and the cap for claims based on judgments against a single license or certificate holder is raised from $100,000 to $250,000. Additionally, the bill repeals the requirement for TREC to transfer excess money in the trust account to the general revenue fund. HB 3878 also revises the provision relating to equitable interest disclosure. This requires a person selling an option or assigning an interest in a contract for the purchase of real property to disclose in writing to the owner of the real property that the person intends to sell an option or assign an interest in a contract. The disclosure must inform the owner that the person does not have legal title to the real property. HB 3878 repeals provisions in various sections of the Occupations Code including alternate experience requirements for broker license applicants, eligibility requirements for certain nonresident applicants, additional eligibility requirements for certain nonresident applicants, guidelines for the commission, and payments into the trust account. HB 3878 updates current operational standards, terms, and procedures to increase efficiency in the real estate industry.	
HB 2951 By: Buckley | Rogers | Stucky | González, Mary | Garcia	Relating to the establishment of a service dog pilot program for certain veterans.	Defense & Veterans' Affairs 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reported that in 2020, approximately 16.8 veterans committed suicide each day. Over 500 Texas veterans died by suicide the same year. Veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), military sexual trauma (MST), and substance abuse problems, including opioid addiction, have displayed reduced symptoms with the help of service dogs. HB 2951 establishes a pilot program to provide trained-service dogs to alleviate PTSD, substance abuse, and related mental health conditions in veterans. This bill requires the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) to create a pilot program in which one or more nonprofit organizations provide service dogs, training, and other necessary services at no cost to eligible veterans. To qualify, the organization must demonstrate prior experience in working with veterans suffering from PTSD, TBI, and MST, and must be able to provide follow-up services to veterans and their service dogs. They must also adhere to Assistance Dog International or the Association of Service Dog Providers for Military Veterans standards. The approved nonprofit must follow the provisions outlined in the legislation, which includes providing a new service dog to a veteran if their original dog cannot fulfill its duties before the fourth anniversary of the veteran receiving the dog. The service dog must complete an accredited program, comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and be evaluated by a veterinarian to ensure that it is medically fit to serve as a service dog.	**Favorable**

			HB 2951 authorizes TVC to accept donations and grants to fund the pilot program. The TVC must submit a report by Oct. 1, 2026, that evaluates the pilot program, makes recommendations to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house, and appropriate standing committees of the legislature, and provides an update on the program's status (continuation, expansion, or termination). The pilot program provisions expire on Sept. 1, 2027, and TVC must establish the necessary rules to administer the program as soon as possible after Sept. 1, 2023.	
HB 2821 By: Smithee	Relating to decedents' estates and the delivery of certain notices or other communications in connection with those estates or multiple-party accounts.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	State probate and estate planning laws govern the distribution of a person's property after they pass. As this process is sensitive and occurs as the family grieves, it is vital that laws are clear and make the process efficient. Recently, Texas attorneys have identified concerns regarding current statutes that result in unnecessary litigation and a slowing of the process. For example, certain community property liability laws mainly focus on the deceased spouse's debts, causing confusion. HB 2821 seeks to clarify the statute by making several adjustments to the Estates Code regarding heirships, executors who have been convicted of a felony, and brokerage accounts. HB 2821 allows alternative delivery methods for certain communications related to decedents' estates or multiple-party accounts. The bill permits the use of qualified delivery methods, including courier delivery with proof of delivery, private delivery services designated by the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, or certified or registered mail with return receipt. HB 2821 broadens the allowable delivery methods for certain notices and citations in probate proceedings, including heirship declarations, estate administration, and claims against an estate. The bill permits delivery by any qualified method, such as hand-delivery by a courier with a receipt or delivery by a designated private service or certified mail with a return receipt. The expansion of delivery methods applies to multiple-party accounts with pledged security interests, notices of resignation of resident agents, court notices on the removal of personal representatives or independent executors, citations on account presentations, and temporary administrator appointments. The bill also covers notifications relating to foreign corporate fiduciaries, foreign executors, and administrators, as well as court clerk notices to the comptroller of public accounts. HB 2821 clarifies that a surviving spouse is liable for the undivided one-half interest of community property that was under the sole management of the deceased spouse during marriage, and clarifies that the deceased spouse's heirs are liable for the same share. The bill also confirms that a surviving spouse has control over community property if there is no administration pending on this estate, and that the requirement to report the sale of estate personal property applies to successful bids or contracts. HB 2821 increases the age limit for which a parent, managing conservator, guardian, attorney ad litem, or guardian ad litem can waive the citation required to be served on a distributee from 12 years old to younger than 16 years old. The bill also allows testimony regarding a decedent's heirs and family history to be taken through a	**Favorable**

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			recorded statement of facts contained in an affidavit, instrument, or judgment of a court of record if it qualifies as prima facie evidence of heirship. Furthermore, HB 2821 permits a creditor or claimant to serve as a witness in an heirship proceeding if they are otherwise a credible witness. Additionally, the bill authorizes heirs who are 16 years old or older, as well as parents, managing conservators, guardians, attorneys ad litem, or guardian ad litems of heirs younger than 16 years old, to waive the citation required to be served on an heir for the probate of a will that cannot be produced in court. HB 2821 allows a person who has a felony conviction to serve as an executor or administrator of an estate if all distributees of the decedent agree on and designate the person as the executor or administrator and acknowledge the conviction in applications for probate of the decedent's will, letters testamentary or of administration of the estate, or one or more separate documents consenting to applications. HB 2821 allows a person to create and sign a declaration or to be issued letters of administration to serve as an executor or administrator instead of taking an oath to serve as a personal representative.	
HB 2767 By: Klick	Relating to the sharing of controlled substance prescription monitoring information between the Texas State Board of Pharmacy and the Health and Human Services Commission for the state Medicaid program.	Public Health 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Federal law mandates that the Texas Medicaid program use prescription monitoring program (PMP) data in annual drug utilization review reports submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Texas law requires pharmacies and prescribers to verify a patient's PMP history before dispensing or prescribing certain controlled substances and to report them. However, the Texas Medicaid program is not currently authorized to access this information. HB 2767 addresses this issue by allowing the Texas Medicaid program to access PMP data managed by the Texas State Board of Pharmacy (TSBP). The bill requires the TSBP to establish and maintain a data-sharing agreement with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). The agreement must ensure timely information sharing between TSBP and HHSC for preparing and submitting the required annual report. HB 2767 includes the administration of Medicaid among the permitted uses of the official prescription information submitted to the TSBP and grants to HHSC or its designee access to such information to meet the federal law standards for a qualified prescription drug monitoring program. HB 2767 allows for the delayed implementation of any provision for which an applicable state agency determines a federal waiver or authorization is necessary for implementation until the waiver or authorization is requested and granted.	**Favorable**
HB 1301 By: Geren	Relating to the duty of an appraisal review board to determine a motion or protest filed by a property owner and the right	Ways & Means 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	There is concern that Appraisal Review Boards (ARB) have increasingly decided that they did not have jurisdiction to decide protests, and refused to issue appealable orders. Without an order from the ARB, property owners cannot go to a district court to protest their appraisals. HB 1301 aims to solve this issue by requiring an ARB to consider and determine by written order a motion timely filed by a property owner to correct an appraisal roll. Property owners can appeal this order through judicial	**Favorable with Concerns**

OK for Distribution

	of the owner to appeal the board's determination.		review. HB 1301 also prohibits an ARB from determining that a property owner has forfeited the right to file the motion or have the motion considered and determined by the ARB, except if the property owner qualifies for forfeiture due to not paying their taxes. There are concerns that HB 1301 would require the ARB to determine every protest and send orders for those who do not show up to ARB hearings or who have protest agreement between parties. This allows property owners to go straight to district court, even if they do not appear for their ARB hearing. This could cut out the ARB from the process and send more protests to the courts, potentially increasing the amount of litigation and costs to appraisal districts. While property owners should have the right to take their cases to court if desired, HB 1301 would circumvent the ARB process, which aims to resolve protests to the benefit of both parties, costing less time and money. Because the prevalence of instances that provoked the bill are unclear, it may not be prudent to make a blanket policy for all appraisal protests.	
HB 920 By: Klick	Relating to the use of medication designated for treatment of respiratory distress on public and private school campuses.	Public Education 10 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Currently, respiratory distress medication may only be administered by an authorized health care provider at the school, which creates a barrier to timely emergency response to those in respiratory distress. Access to emergency albuterol for asthma treatment remains limited, with only 14% of children having access to quick-relief medication at school. Delayed albuterol administration was reported in one-third of the 192 asthma-related deaths among children in 2018, a lack of medication was one of the leading causes of the delays. Respiratory distress may be sudden, unexpected, and life-threatening, making access and timely administration of albuterol a life and death matter in such cases. HB 920 seeks to expand the respiratory distress medications which may be administered at any public, private, or charter school, or a university. HB 920 defines "medication for respiratory distress" as albuterol, levalbuterol, or other medications authorized by the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to treat respiratory distress. HB 920 expands the authority of the state health service commissioner's advisory committee to examine and review the administration of medication for persons experiencing respiratory distress on a campus of a school district, charter school, private school, or university. With this expansion of authority, the advisory committee must also advise the commissioner on the training of school and university personnel and volunteers in the administration of respiratory distress medication and one or more of these trained individuals must be on each school or university campus during regular hours. HB 920 outlines the required information for respiratory distress medication training to include recognizing signs and symptoms, administering the medication, protocol for emergency procedures, and proper disposal of expired medication. HB 920 expands the prescriptive authority of physicians to include medication for respiratory distress. The commissioner of the HHSC must establish rules that include maintenance, administration, and disposal of respiratory distress medication, the amount of medication available at each campus, inventory checking process,	**<u>Favorable</u>**

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			and the amount of required training required administration, and the types of medication that may be administered. The medication must be stored in a secure location that is easily accessible for the authorized personnel to obtain and administer. HB 920 requires each school or university to establish a policy regarding protocol for respiratory distress medication. The policy must allow an authorized and trained person to administer these medications to a person reasonably believed to be experiencing respiratory distress on campus or during a school-sponsored event that is not on school property. If medication is administered to a student whose parent or guardian has not notified the school of any asthma diagnosis, the school must refer the student to the student's primary care physician on the day the medication was administered. The referral must include observed symptoms, name of the administered medication, and any patient care instructions; schools are to notify parents of the referral. If the student does not have a primary care physician, the parent or guardian must receive information to assist in the selection of a primary care physician. Within 10 business days of the administration of respiratory distress medication, the school must report the information to the district or governing body of the school, the physician who prescribed the medication, and the commissioner of state health services. The report must include the age of the person who received the medication, the person's affiliation to the school, the dosage of medication, the title of the person who administered the medication, and any other information required by the commissioner of education. Making this life-saving medication available for the immediate administration for individuals under respiratory distress could mitigate the harm - and potentially death - as a result of inaction due to lack of medication availability and authorization to administer.	
HB 1152 By: Vo | Garcia | Neave Criado | Geren | Guillen	Relating to the licensing of certain veterans by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement and the hiring of those veterans by political subdivisions.	Homeland Security & Public Safety 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Law enforcement agencies in Texas are facing a significant shortage of police officers and jailers, while those choosing to join these professions are declining. A viable population to supplement this need would be unemployed or underemployed veterans. This population is trained to work in a unit, operate under stress, and have excellent communication skills. Further, some veterans are legal permanent residents who complete a rigorous process to obtain permanent residency. This population is allowed to serve and die for the United States but would not be allowed to serve as Texas peace officers. HB 1152 addresses this by allowing legal permanent residents who served for a certain period and were honorably discharged to be eligible to serve as Texas peace officers. HB 1152 authorizes a political subdivision that appoints or employs a position requiring a license issued by the Texas Commission of Law Enforcement (TCOLE) to appoint or hire a legal permanent U.S. resident who was honorably discharged from the U.S. armed forces, served two years in the U.S. armed forces before discharge, and holds the appropriate TCOLE licensure.	**Favorable**

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			HB 1152 requires TCOLE to issue a license for a U.S. permanent resident who was honorably discharged from the U.S. military and served two years before discharge if they meet all eligibility requirements for the license. Law enforcement agencies must obtain and review proof of legal permanent residence for these applicants and submit confirmation to TCOLE before hiring an applicant. TCOLE is to update existing rules to comply with HB 1152. HB 1152 opens the pool of eligible candidates to apply for law enforcement positions while providing more opportunities for employment for unemployed veterans who otherwise would not qualify.	
HB 1511 By: Perez	Relating to the disposition of real property interests by navigation districts and port authorities.	Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Navigation districts cannot exchange or impose restrictions on the development, use, or transfer of real property or interest in real property for public purposes. HB 1511 seeks to allow navigation districts to exchange real property or interest in real property owned by the district and to impose restrictions on the development, use, and transfer of any real property or interest in real property connected with a sale or exchange. HB 1511 revises the current authority of navigation districts to dispose of district land by sale or lease. It now allows Texas navigation districts to sell, lease, or exchange real property or interests in real property, with retained exceptions already in statute. HB 1511 authorizes a navigation district to exchange real property or any interest in real property owned by the district, with some exceptions regarding specific lands or flats that may only be sold or exchanged with the state. For sales of real property by a navigation district, the navigation and canal commission must determine that the real property being sold is no longer needed and that the exchange adheres to state regulations. HB 1511l also permits navigation districts to impose restrictions on the development, use, and transfer of real property for public purposes. HB 1511 allows navigation districts to donate, sell, or lease real property or interests in real property to electric or telecommunications utilities for a price less than fair market value to help the district develop without going through the standard notice process, bidding, and awarding. However, the district must ensure the terms and conditions follow the Public Utility Regulatory Act. When boundary or surveying conflicts occur with adjacent property owners, navigation districts can give up, transfer, exchange, or release narrow strips of real property to the neighboring owners on terms the district considers suitable. The district may convey such property for less than fair market value without complying with the usual requirements for public notice, bidding, or award and execution. HB 1511 improves navigation districts and port authorities' ability to manage resources and more effectively develop infrastructure for moving cargo.	<u>**Favorable**</u>

OK for Distribution

HB 351 By: Bell, Cecil	Relating to the provision of workers' compensation insurance and group accident and health insurance together in a packaged plan.	Insurance 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	HB 351 proposes a plan in which employers can offer both workers' compensation and health insurance to employees and dependents in a combined package. The plan would involve a workers' compensation insurance company partnering with an accident or health insurance company to offer a single package to employers. The plan packages offered under HB 351 would cover major medical expenses for employees and dependents in conjunction with medical benefits required under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act. The bill specifies that its provisions should not be construed to skirt any required employee obligations to provide workers' compensation benefits. Additionally, HB 351 requires that a group accident and health insurance policy offered by a workers' compensation insurance company be authorized to do so and be separate from the company. HB 351 prohibits cost-sharing requirements imposed by insurers and requires employee contributions to exclude any portion of premiums allocated to workers' compensation benefits. Finally, HB 351 establishes that the workers' compensation insurer remains liable for workers' compensation obligations provided through the accident and health insurance policy in the packaged plan if the issuing insurer terminates coverage or becomes insolvent. While HB 351 could make it simpler for employees and their dependents to access healthcare, there is the possibility that a combined package may reduce coverage or benefits for employees compared to separate policies and result in conflicting regulations.	**<u>Unfavorable</u>**
HB 3657 By: Anchía	Relating to notaries public; creating a criminal offense.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Deed fraud has been increasingly reported, where individuals illegally acquire property ownership by falsifying the owner's signature and filing a fraudulent deed. HB 3657 allows the secretary of state to reject an application or suspend or revoke the commission of a notary public due to inadequate record keeping. Additionally, HB 3657 would require a notary public to retain the requisite notary records until the 10th anniversary of the date of notarization. HB 3657 would also enact criminal offense for those who knowingly perform a notarization when the person for whom the notarization was performed did not personally appear before the notary public at the time of notarization. The penalty would be a Class A misdemeanor for all notaries performed in this manner, but would elevate to a third degree felony if the notarized document involved the transfer of real estate. Furthermore, HB 3657 would require the secretary of state to establish educational requirements for newly appointed notary public and continuing education requirements for reappointment notary publics. HB 3657 aims to enhance the credibility, knowledge, and documentation of traditional notaries public in response to the growing concern of deed fraud.	**<u>Favorable</u>**

OK for Distribution

HB 1740 By: Leach	Relating to the issuance of state parklands passports to and a waiver of certain state park fees for certain veterans, active duty armed forces members, and certain family members of a person who died while serving in the United States armed forces.	Culture, Recreation & Tourism 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Texas State Parklands Passports waive entry fees to state parks for certain individuals. However, under current Texas law only members of the U.S. Armed Forces that are on active duty and are 65 years old or older and certain veterans who have certain service-connected disabilities are eligible. On the contrary, under federal law, certain military personnel and veterans receive free entry to all national parks. HB 1740 would align Texas' policy with federal law by allowing all honorably discharged veterans to apply for a state parklands passport. In addition, HB 1740 would also allow the surviving spouse, parent, child, or sibling of a person who died while serving in the U.S. armed forces to apply.	**Favorable**
HB 1857 By: Guillen | Davis	Relating to the certificate of medical examination for chemical dependency and the duration of court-ordered treatment for a person with a chemical dependency.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Some have contended that court-ordered rehabilitation for individuals struggling with chemical dependency or drug addiction is inadequate. The most recent drug abuse treatment outcomes study conducted by the National Institute of Drug Abuse found that those who left treatment early had the same relapse rates as those who stayed for only a day or two. However, after longer stays, relapse rates decreased as the length of treatment increased. While there is a maximum limit to the number of days a person must attend a court-ordered drug treatment program in Texas, there is no minimum stay as can be found in other states. HB 1857 sets a minimum duration of 60 days for court-ordered treatment of individuals with chemical dependency and allows for renewals of the order if necessary. Additionally, the bill expands the grounds on which a treatment facility may discharge a patient early to include a physician's determination that the patient no longer meets the criteria for court-ordered treatment. HB 1857 also updates provisions related to the approval of treatment facilities that accept court commitments. Previously, the Department of State Health Services approved such facilities, but the bill would assign the Health and Human Services Commission as the approving agency. HB 1857 also changes the requirements for a certificate of medical examination for chemical dependency filed for a court-ordered treatment hearing. Under current law, the certificate must include the physician's opinion on whether the proposed patient has a chemical dependency and whether they meet certain conditions related to the likelihood of harm to themselves or others, or their ability to function independently if not treated. HB 1857 updates this requirement so that the certificate clarifies that it is the physician's opinion that the proposed patient has a chemical dependency, and that, as a result of the dependency, one of the aforementioned conditions applies. HB 1857 aims to improve outcomes for individuals with chemical dependency. Individuals need time to recover at their own pace as every person's addiction and story differs. This bill will help prevent relapses and even possible suicide attempts by these individuals who need support to recover and live fulfilling lives.	**Favorable**

HB 1916 By: Holland	Relating to county approval for improvement projects of certain conservation and reclamation districts.	Land & Resource Management 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	In Texas, conservation and reclamation districts like municipal utility districts (MUDs) and water control and improvement districts (WCIDs) regulate resources in service areas. Established by the legislature or the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), these districts can impose taxes and issue bonds. However, limited oversight in bond issuance and fund management for improvement projects can lead to unsupported bonds, mismanaged projects, and inadequate public input, resulting in projects that cannot be supported by current or planned local infrastructure. HB 1916 addresses this issue by requiring specific conservation and reclamation districts to obtain written approval from the county commissioners court before issuing bonds for district improvement projects or finalizing plans for bond-funded projects. This only applies to districts in counties with a population of 100,000 or more and a total area of less than 250 square miles and requires written approval from the county commissioners court before they can issue bonds for a district improvement project; or finalize plans and specifications for a bond-financed district improvement project related to land use outside municipal corporate limits, county-granted easements, or rights-of-way for roads or highways. HB 1916 will only apply to Rockwall County. HB 1916 aims to give Texans in specific districts local input and oversight. However, critics worry that mandating county approval for bonds might lead to the rejection of crucial bonds, not only during the initial stages of development but also when a project has already been planned, platted, and partially built.	**Will of The House**
HB 1956 By: Geren | Metcalf	Relating to the award of attorney's fees to a prevailing property owner in a judicial appeal of certain ad valorem tax determinations.	Ways & Means 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Currently, prevailing property owners can recover $15,000 or 20 percent of the total amount by which the property owner's tax liability is reduced as a result of the appeal in attorney fees from appraisal districts after judicial review of certain property tax determinations. This disincentivizes homeowners from contesting property tax appraisals in the courts rather than with the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) due to this amount not being sufficient to cover damages. HB 1956 seeks to allow property owners who prevail on their property tax appraisals to recover up to $25,000 or 50 percent of the total amount by which the property owner's tax liability is reduced as a result of the appeal. This bill also expands the award of attorney's fees to property owners who prevail in an appeal to the court in cases for local appraisal protests under local review. Attorney's fees awarded to the prevailing property owner cannot exceed the total amount by which the property owner's tax liability is reduced as a result of the appeal. Attorney's fee amounts to the prevailing property owner are not subject to limitations imposed by this bill if the property owner prevails in an appeal in an appeal for excessive or unequal appraisals and if the owner qualifies the property as the owner's residence homestead. There are concerns that HB 1956 will result in an increase in litigation with attorney's reaping the benefits, as this takes the cap off of attorney fees in certain cases. Additionally, appraisal districts are concerned that there is currently no risk or downside to suing an appraisal district, appraisal districts cannot get reimbursed for fees, and	**Favorable with Concerns**

			that HB 1956 will cause an increase in attorney fees along with lawsuits. This will make it more difficult for smaller appraisal districts to take on litigation. HB 1956 may make it easier for homeowners to take their protests to court without fears of being unable to afford it.	
HB 2084 By: Landgraf	Relating to the punishment for the criminal offense of racing on highway; increasing a criminal penalty.	Criminal Jurisprudence 7 Ayes 1 Nay 0 PNV 1 Absent	The overall trend for roadway deaths in Texas has been steadily increasing in recent years, some of which are caused by highway racing. Currently, the penalty for racing on a highway is a Class B Misdemeanor, with an enhancement to a second degree felony if death or serious bodily injury to more than one individual was a result of the offense. HB 2084 seeks to lessen these tragedies by increasing the penalty for highway racing. HB 2084 increases the penalty for racing on a highway from a Class B Misdemeanor to a first degree felony if as a result of the offense, more than one individual was harmed. HB 2084 seeks to make Texas roadways safer, but may not actually function to do so. Data suggests that penalty enhancements alone don't always deter this sort of criminal behavior, and the purpose of the bill may be better served by education campaigns and community based programs geared at addressing this serious crime.	**Will of the House**
HB 2262 By: Darby	Relating to gas utility alternative gas expenses and infrastructure investments.	Natural Resources 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Technological advancements have enabled the safe use of alternative gasses like hydrogen or renewable natural gas to be safely added into a natural gas distribution pipeline. This blending of gasses can diversify energy sources, increase sustainability, and increase natural gas capacity for electric generation. HB 2262 will allow utilities to blend alternative gasses with natural gasses for distribution by creating a gas certification process, designating permitted alternative gasses, and recovering certain utility costs. HB 2262 allows the Railroad Commission (RRC) to approve a process that certifies a gas has less carbon than natural gas and to label it as an "alternative gas." HB 2262 defines "alternative gas" as any gaseous fuel that can be transported through pipelines. This definition includes gasses made from biomass, agricultural waste, or landfill gas, and hydrogen made through carbon capture and storage, renewable energy, or pyrolysis, and other gasses approved by the RRC. HB 2262 allows gas utilities to include one or more forms of purchased alternative gas in their supply portfolios used for providing service to the public. Regulatory authorities must allow gas utilities to recover the cost of buying alternative gas if the purchases were reasonable and necessary. Gas utilities can invest in infrastructure for alternative gasses. Regulatory authorities must allow the cost of this infrastructure in the gas utility's invested capital as long as it is being used to provide service to the public. HB 2262 intends to promote the use of alternative gas to reduce carbon emissions and encourage investment in alternative gas infrastructure.	**Favorable**

HB 2402 By: Moody	Relating to the eligibility of certain at-risk developments to receive low income housing tax credits.	Urban Affairs 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	"At-risk-developments" under the low income housing tax credit program excludes a development that receives federal Section 8 housing assistance that would have otherwise qualified for eligibility. HB 2402 expands the definition of "at-risk development" to include these developments. This applies to the federal programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for new construction and substantial rehabilitation. Under HB 2402, a development is considered to be at-risk regardless of whether the development proposes to newly construct or reconstruct at the same location of the original development site; completely construct or reconstruct housing units at a location other than the original development site and also qualifies for points on the department's rule of opportunity index or is supported by the applicable governing body of the municipality or county. Expanding this definition will enable more developments to be considered for inclusion in the low-income housing tax credit program, which incentivizes the construction or rehabilitation of affordable rental housing for low-income households.	**Favorable**
HB 2606 By: Canales	Relating to powers and duties of navigation districts and the boards of trustees of municipal port facilities.	Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Texas ports account for a quarter of the state's GDP, and laws governing navigation districts must be consistently updated to help the ports meet supply needs and enhance the state's economy. HB 2606 aims to make administrative changes toward more efficient and cost-effective operations while considering economic inflation and dynamic changes in domestic and global supply chain logistics. HB 2606 grants a port commission authority to allow a trusted party, like the executive director of the port district or an authorized representative, to make routine purchases or contracts up to $100,000 without requiring approval. HB 2606 allows emergency purchases or contracts that exceed the usual limit by the executive director or an authorized officer of a navigation district in response to supply chain disruptions or other emergencies that could delay port operations. This provision ensures that the district can respond quickly to security directives from federal and state agencies and make emergency purchases without going through standard competitive bidding procedures. This exception is allowed if it won't harm the district's welfare or result in undue costs. HB 2606 allows navigation districts to use the condemnation procedure in the Property Code for eminent domain and extends the authorization for the district to enter into operating contracts and leases with cities and other governmental subdivisions, including designated portions of the water system by the navigation and canal commission. HB 2606 grants navigation and canal commissions the power to dispose of surplus or salvage property in the same way as the county court. HB 2606 allows them to sell dredge material from a placement area to anyone	**Favorable**

			under terms that the commission or board finds suitable or beneficial to the district, as long as the US Army Corps of Engineers has approved. HB 2606 improves efficiency in navigation districts' business operations and their response to emergencies in a rapidly expanding global supply chain.	
HB 2493 By: Capriglione | Talarico | Leo-Wilson | Cook	Relating to maintenance and production of electronic public information under the public information law.	State Affairs 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 5 Absent	The Texas Public Information Act requires the state to provide Texans with access to government records in a variety of formats. HB 2493 requires government entities to provide citizens access to public information in its original format if sought by the requestor. Essentially, if an agency internally stores and uses the information as a spreadsheet, the agency must provide it in that format rather than as a PDF. This measure makes public information more accessible and user-friendly. The bill also includes data dictionaries, or keys identifying the type of data in a database, as types of public information.	**Favorable**
HB 2146 By: Howard | Hinojosa	Relating to the continuation of a health care provider participation program by a certain hospital district.	County Affairs 5 Ayes, 3 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	In Texas, local hospitals can choose to implement a healthcare provider participation program (LPPF), through which a healthcare-related tax is implemented on a local level. LPPFs are administered by an existing unit of local government and are designed specifically to meet federal requirements regarding eligible local funds. The Travis County LPPF is set to expire on December 31, 2023. HB 4928 extends Travis County's LPPF authority to December 31, 2027.	**Favorable**
HB 3033 By: Landgraf	Relating to the public information law.	Committee 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 PNV, 5 Absent	Currently, government entities can delay releasing public information requested by citizens by asking the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) if withholding the information is allowed. This can delay the release of the requested information. HB 3033 aims to address this by implementing measures that ensure information is released quickly and efficiently. As such HB 3033 makes several changes to the Texas Public Information Act: it shortens the time the OAG has to issue an opinion to 45 days; establishes a 30-day deadline for government entities to issue a response to the OAG opinion; requires counties with populations above 150,000 to utilize the OAG online application system to submit requests to the OAG for opinions; mandates the OAG to establish a publicly accessible database, and enables the OAG to require public officials to take an open records training course. HB 3033 makes it easier for the public to access public information and increases government transparency. However, the condensed timeframe may make it difficult for government entities to meet the requirements for large, complex requests. Additionally, the provisions may burden smaller, less technologically efficient government entities.	**Favorable**

OK for Distribution

HB 2956 By: Shine	Relating to municipal annexation of an area adjacent to contiguous or connecting railroad rights-of-way.	Land & Resource Management 8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Currently, a municipality is not explicitly allowed to annex an area within its extraterritorial jurisdiction separated by a railroad. In some parts of Texas, a railroad can create a barrier preventing land annexation, even if the landowner supports it. HB 2956 addresses this issue by allowing a municipality annexing an area also to annex an additional area adjacent to a railway line, spur, or other railroad property under specific conditions. HB 2956 authorizes a municipality annexing an area under certain provisions also to annex an additional area adjacent to a railway line, spur, or other railroad property that is contiguous and parallel to the municipality's boundaries and contiguous to the area being annexed. HB 2956 considers an area adjacent or contiguous to the initial area being annexed as adjacent and contiguous to the annexing municipality for the bill's authorization or other laws with a municipal boundary contiguous requirement, including municipal charters or ordinances. The bill also exempts the annexation of the additional area from statutory annexation width requirements. HB 2956 would allow Texas municipalities, in certain circumstances, to include additional areas near railroads in their annexation process.	**Favorable**
HB 2879 By: Oliverson | Morales, Eddie	Relating to venue in certain actions involving a contract for an improvement to real property.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	There have been instances of large, out-of-state contractors including in their contracts the requirement for issues, such as nonpayment or improper backcharges, to be litigated outside of Texas. This is a significant cost burden for Texas contractors, subcontractors, or materialmen involved in the suit. HB 2879 seeks to ensure legal disputes for Texas construction projects are resolved in Texas. HB 2879 voids any venue provision in a contract for an improvement to real property that requires legal action involving a Texas resident contractor, subcontractor, or materialman to be brought outside of Texas. The bill requires that any legal action arising from a contract be done in Texas, specifically in the county where the defendant resides, where the cause of action accrued, or where the property in question is located, unless the parties agree to another venue after the dispute arises. HB 2879 applies to contracts entered into on or after the bill's effective date. HB 2879 is a pro-business bill that prevents out-of-state contractors and small businesses from leaving the state for litigation.	**Favorable**
HB 3046 By: Kacal | Ashby	Relating to the omission of a deceased candidate from the ballot in certain elections.	Elections 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	HB 3046 provides guidelines in certain circumstances in which a candidate for office dies before a filing deadline or before a voting ballot is printed. It is already the case that if a candidate dies on or before the filing deadline, the authority responsible for preparing the ballots may choose to omit the candidate from the ballot and extend the filing deadline up to five days. If this happens, HB 3046 makes it so the authority responsible for preparing the ballot must prepare a notice identifying the name of the deceased candidate, the sought office, and the date of the new filing deadline. The notice must be published on the political subdivision's website or bulletin board for posting meeting notices.	**Favorable with Concerns**

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			For cities with a population of 100,000 or less, if a candidate dies before the printing of the ballots, the authority responsible for preparing the ballots may choose to omit the candidate from the ballot. There are concerns that this might result in a candidate winning an election by default because their opponent has died when the candidate who remains alive would have otherwise lost. This occurred in a 2000 U.S. Senate race in Missouri in which the winning candidate died three weeks before the election date. The current process for omitting dead candidates in Section 145.098(b) allows for an extension of the filing deadline so another person can enter the race in place of the dead candidate. However, the bill's provision is permissive and still allows a city with a population of 100,000 or less to use this process.	
HB 3104 By: Anderson	Relating to the temporary exemption of certain tangible personal property related to certain connected data center projects from sales and use taxes.	Ways & Means 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	During the 84th session, the Legislature enacted legislation that exempted certain tangible personal property used in large data center projects from sale and use taxes. A "data center" is a facility that houses servers and related equipment for processing, storing or distributing data. TData center projects qualified if they were composed of buildings with at least 250,000 square feet of space, located on a single piece of land, and involved a capital investment of at least $500 million. HB 3104 aims to adjust the existing sales and use tax exemption for data centers in Texas to align with updated best practices for cybersecurity. HB 3104 includes connect data center projects that are located in the state, composed of one or more buildings, specifically constructed and used to house servers and related equipment and support staff for the processing, storage, and distribution of data, used by a single qualifying occupant, not used by a telecommunications provider for telecommunication services, and has uninterruptible power sources, backup electricity generation, and other important systems. This updates the existing program, which only applies to data centers on a single parcel of land or contiguous parcels of land. The comptroller will ensure qualifying owners create at least 40 full-time, permanent jobs, make a capital investment of at least $500 million over a five-year period on the data center project, agree to contract for at least 20 megawatts of transmission capacity, and have a single qualifying occupant that either leases space or occupies a space previously not used as a data center. The comptroller will certify all applications and adopt rules to implement the exemption. The fiscal note bill indicates that there is no expected cost to general revenue, although local taxes may take a slight hit. Newer data centers often build buildings on non-contiguous parcels of land for enhanced cybersecurity and disaster recovery. If one building of a data center is impacted, data is transferred to another building to maintain reliability. If Texas intends to use tax breaks to incentivize the creation of a certain business, we should ensure those tax breaks are for businesses using best practices.	**Favorable**

OK for Distribution

HB 3350 By: Holland | King, Ken | Harless | Hernandez	Relating to the purchase and sale of vintage distilled spirits by the holder of a package store permit or local distributor's permit.	Licensing & Administrative Procedures 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Currently, a package store permit holder cannot legally purchase vintage distilled spirits from individuals and then sell them in their store. HB 3350 seeks to change this by clarifying the definition of vintage distilled spirits and who can sell them. Under HB 3350, package store permittees are authorized to purchase and sell vintage distilled spirits. Additionally, stores and distributors can buy vintage distilled spirits from a seller, who can sell a maximum of 24 containers per year. The stores and distributors must keep a record of each purchase, including the seller's information, the purchase date, and the quantity purchased. These stores and distributors can sell vintage distilled spirits to consumers for off-premises consumption and holders of passenger transportation permits. If a store or distributor is harmed by a seller who has sold them forged, adulterated, or counterfeit vintage distilled spirits, they can take legal action. HB 3350 also grants the Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission the power to waive penalties if a store or distributor unknowingly purchases an illicit beverage that was believed to be vintage distilled spirits. HB 3350 prohibits taxes from being imposed on vintage distilled spirits.	**Favorable**
HB 3374 By: Button | Craddick	Relating to the definition of qualified employee for purposes of the enterprise zone program.	International Relations & Economic Development 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	The Texas Enterprise Zone Program (EZP) is a state sales and use tax refund program designed to encourage private investment and job creation in economically distressed areas of the state. The EZP has various eligibility standards, including a requirement that qualifying employees perform at least 50 percent of their work at the business site. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, employers had to adjust their operations to allow remote work, which caused some businesses designated as enterprise zone projects to struggle to meet the 50 percent work site requirement. HB 3374 aims to temporarily waive this requirement for enterprise projects with a designation period encompassing all or part of a specified COVID relief period. HB 3374 redefines "qualified employee" for the Texas Enterprise Zone Act, adding the criterion that the employee must be a Texas resident. The bill waives the 50 percent work site requirement for qualified employees during the COVID relief period (March 2, 2020, to December 31, 2021). This waiver applies only to Texas residents and extends throughout the job retention period. HB 3374 provides temporary relief to businesses affected by the pandemic, helping them maintain their enterprise project status and supporting Texans in the workforce.	**Favorable**
HB 3843 By: Wilson	Relating to a study and report by the Texas Department of Transportation	Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,	Constituents have expressed that current law makes it difficult to compare the practices and operations of toll project entities due to difficulty in accessing information to do so. HB 3843 responds to this by requiring the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to compare the practices and operations of all toll project entities statewide. The study must include comparisons of toll operations, customer complaints, billing practices, and	**Favorable**

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	regarding toll project entities.	1 Absent	other factors deemed appropriate by TxDOT. TxDOT must then report the study's findings to the governor, lieutenant governor, and the legislature. Some contend that the study may be improved by examining alternative practices or procedures that would improve the performances of toll agencies, provide recommendations to improve, and expand on how customer complaints would be compared. It is essential that the study would allow for a fair comparison of similar situations.	
HB 4185 By: Bailes | Johnson, Ann | Cook | Lopez, Ray | Garcia	Relating to a pilot program to award grants for personalized treatment protocols for veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.	Defense & Veterans' Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Due to the various traumatic aspects of warfare, many veterans face a myriad of trauma-induced mental and physical conditions like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injury (TBI). These conditions can be resistant to traditional forms of treatment and therapy and can be resulting from neuroinflammation. Neuroinflammation can lead to other debilitating conditions and decrease the veteran's overall quality of life. In response, there is a need to consider alternative forms of treatment to address neuroinflammation, PTSD, and TBI while addressing the idiosyncratic needs of the veteran. HB 4185 addresses this by creating a pilot program to award grants for personalized treatment protocols for certain veterans diagnosed with PTSD and/or TBI. HB 4148 requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to collaborate with a nonprofit veterans organization to operate this pilot program to award grants to at least 250 veteran recipients diagnosed with PTSD, including TBI and/or treatment-resistant PTSD. The personalized treatment protocol under the pilot program aims to reduce neuroinflammation and replenish the deficient or insufficient brain injury to optimal levels. The treatment is required to be administered at the veterans' homes. HB 4815 authorizes HHSC to award a grant under the program only in accordance with a contract between the HHSC and the grant recipient. The contract between the veteran (recipient) and the HHSC includes provisions that ensure the public purpose of the treatment for veterans succeeds. Additionally, HB 4148 authorizes HHSC to accept gifts, grants, and donations to operate the pilot program. HHSC must submit a report that includes an evaluation of the program's effectiveness and information on the veterans who received the treatment to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the House of Representatives, and appropriate standing committees of the legislature. HB 4185 allows for the exploration of personalized treatment regimens for veterans in the safety of their own home. Ideally, this will demonstrate positive outcomes like improving their quality of life.	**Favorable**
HB 233 By: Murr	Relating to inservice training on identifying abuse, neglect, and illegal, unprofessional, and unethical conduct in	Public Health 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Current Texas law requires inpatient mental health facilities, treatment centers, and hospitals offering comprehensive medical rehabilitation services to provide a minimum of eight hours of annual in-service training for continued licensure. This training helps employees and associated health care professionals identify patient abuse, neglect, and unprofessional or unethical conduct within the facility. However, it is time-consuming and costly, and the content rarely changes substantially from year to year.	**Favorable**

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	certain health care facilities.		HB 233 revises these annual training requirements, applying the eight-hour minimum training only to new employees and reducing the minimum annual training hours for continuing employees to four. The training can be provided in person or through live, interactive, instructor-led electronic methods. Critics suggest that the number of training hours doesn't necessarily reflect an employee's understanding and ability to act on the information. They propose that competency-based assessment, which requires employees to demonstrate their comprehension of the material, is more effective than time-based requirements. HB 233 reduces the annual training for certain inpatient mental health facilities to four hours, allowing staff to concentrate more on patient care and other service aspects while emphasizing patient rights and ethical conduct.	
HB 712 By: Shaheen	Relating to state agency and local government security incident procedures.	State Affairs 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Current statute requires state agencies and higher education institutions to report specific security incidents to the Department of Information Resources (DIR) within 48 hours. Similarly, school districts and open enrollment charter schools must report cybersecurity breaches to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), while county election officials must report comparable cybersecurity issues to the Secretary of State. Cities and counties notably do not have similar reporting requirements to state agencies. The conflicting reporting requirements for cybersecurity incidents hinder state efforts to monitor trends and understand the scope of cyber attacks. HB 712 addresses this issue by expanding the definition of incidents that must be reported and requires all government entities to report cybersecurity breaches to DIR, excluding specific local incidents that warrant reporting to ERCOT. HB 712 bolsters cybersecurity reporting requirements which ensures Texans as well as critical infrastructure and data are secure.	**Favorable**
HB 1654 By: Cook | Capriglione | Murr | Goldman	Relating to the eligibility of a child for a determinate sentence for engaging in delinquent conduct that constitutes certain organized criminal activity.	Juvenile Justice and Family Issues 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Currently, there are two penalty options when a juvenile in Texas engages in organized criminal activity. Indeterminate sentencing, which does not provide a specific release time or length of incarceration upon adjudication, with a release date being later determined by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD). This date is generally determined by considering a child's behavior and progress while they are detained. This allows TJJD to tailor a release time specific to a child's need. The secondary option is a child being sentenced as an adult, which eliminates the child's access to the services provided by TJJD. Some have expressed concerns that these two options do not provide what is needed to address the issue of juvenile criminal organized criminal activity. HB 1654 seeks to provide a third option through determinate sentencing, where a child would be given a fixed sentence upon adjudication. HB 1654 expands conduct that would make a child eligible for a determinate sentence regarding organized criminal activity to include: murder, capital murder, or manslaughter, aggravated kidnapping, sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault, aggravated assault or aggravated robbery, injury to a child or elderly or disabled individual, felony deadly conduct involving discharging a firearm, certain drug offenses, criminal solicitation or	**Unfavorable**

			solicitation of a minor, indecency with a child, criminal attempt for murder or capital murder, arson resulting in bodily injury or death, or intoxication manslaughter. While HB 1654 seeks to provide another option for juvenile courts, the option it proposes can be incredibly harmful. Determinate sentencing can lead to greater recidivism, reduced access to education, long term mental health impacts, and longer periods of incarceration. Sentencing a child to a specific number of years does not allow for the courts to consider their progress, behavior, and circumstances. This session, the legislature has discussed the subject of the child brain and its capacity for growth and change at length. Children are 38% more likely to not commit an additional offense when restorative justice practices are used, which determinate sentencing provides less room for. HB 1654 could set the state back regarding the progress made for children in Texas.	
HB 1675 By: Holland	Relating to a border operations training program for peace officers employed by local law enforcement agencies.	Homeland Security & Public Safety 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	Operation Lone State has resulted in the apprehension of over 340,000 individuals and the filing of 21,000 felony charges. Due to the various opportunities in the United States and worsening global economic and social conditions in Central America, the influx of refugees crossing the border has overwhelmed local law enforcement agencies. These agencies are not receiving any support or guidance from the federal or state government on managing border security. HB 1675 requires the Department of Public Safety (DPS), in coordination with local law enforcement agencies, to establish and administer a border operations training program for peace officers employed at the local law enforcement agencies. The training program is meant to prepare officers to collaborate, cooperate, and assist with interdiction, investigation, and prosecution of criminal activity in the Texas-Mexico border region. In addition, the officers will work with other law enforcement agencies, district and county attorneys, the border prosecution unit, and other prosecutors involved in these operations. HB 1675 will cover topics related to the identified criminal activity along the Texas-Mexico border, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, and other activities conducted by organized criminal groups. The training will also include methods of identifying this activity along the I-35 corridor and the best practices to investigate and prosecute this activity and secure the border. Participants will also be informed about DPS border operations, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection collaborations. HB 1675 requires DPS to identify opportunities for local law enforcement officers to assist in DPS's border operations duties. It authorizes DPS to allow such an officer to aid in executing those duties. The bill establishes that officers assisting in border operations are not entitled to compensation from DPS and authorizes DPS to partner with federal agencies in administering the training program and facilitating peace officer assistance. Finally, HB 1675 authorizes the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) to recognize this training	**<u>Unfavorable</u>**

			program as continuing education for law enforcement officers and to credit officers who complete the program with the appropriate continuing education hours. There are many reasons not to support further or provide additional resources for Operation Lone Star. Operation Lone Star bypasses due process en masse and displaces refugees in various parts of the U.S. or incarcerates them. Concerns within the bill include allowing local law enforcement officers to aid in DPS operations, and the training does not guarantee reducing criminal activity around the border. Law enforcement officers who would aid with DPS operations would not be compensated for performing outside their occupational scope. In addition, they are not subject to the same ethical training or background checks. Another concern is the efficacy of the training program in reducing criminal activity at the border and if this program will be monitored or reviewed. There are no provisions relating to tracking the training results, like monitoring the increase in detecting criminal activity or interrupting organized criminal activity. Given the various humanitarian concerns and alleged civil rights abuses that have occurred under Operation Lone Star, any effort to expand or empower the program is problematic.	
HB 77 By: Neave Criado	Relating to status offenses committed by a child, including the repeal of the status offense of a child voluntarily running away from home.	Juvenile Justice and Family Issues 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	A child who runs away from home is considered to be committing a status offense, which is an offense that, if committed by an adult, would not be illegal. Often, these kinds of offenses are out of the child's control, and may happen because a child is fleeing an unsafe home environment, has issues at school, or is experiencing a mental health crisis. Using confinement as a punishment for a status offense is currently prohibited, but a child may be confined while awaiting adjudication. Additionally, if a child commits a second offense that violates a court order regarding the initial offense, they may be sentenced to confinement. Confinement does not meet the needs of these vulnerable children, and it is not the best solution to the issue. HB 77 seeks to provide a comprehensive solution to the issue of child runaways and status offenses. HB 77 removes the act of running away from home as a status offense and eliminates such behavior as an indicator that the child is in need of supervision. The bill defines the term status offense as "conduct a child commits that would not, under state law, be a crime if committed by an adult." HB 77 also removes the authorization for law enforcement to fingerprint or take a photo of a child who is a suspected runaway, and a court's authority to order confinement for a child who has committed a status offense as a violation of a court order. HB 77 outlines where a child may be detained regarding a status offense: a juvenile processing office or a place of non-secure custody for no more than six hours. If the former is not available, a non-secure correctional facility for no longer than 24 hours. If a child is not released within the six hour timeline regarding juvenile processing offices or non-secure custody, a detention hearing must be held before the twenty fourth hour from when the	<u>**Favorable**</u>

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			child arrived, excluding weekends and holidays. A judge overseeing such a hearing must release the child from custody except as otherwise provided by current law.	
HB 1649 By: Button | Klick | Collier | Harris, Caroline	Relating to health benefit coverage for certain fertility preservation services under certain health benefit plans.	Insurance 6 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Each year approximately 7,800 Texans between the ages of 15 and 39 are diagnosed with cancer. However, lifesaving cancer treatments like chemotherapy and radiation increase the risk of infertility. Fertility preservation services, such as egg and sperm storage, are expensive and difficult for patients to access as a result. HB 1649 aims to address this by increasing access to fertility preservation services. HB 1649 requires certain health benefit plans to cover the cost of fertility preservation services for individuals who will undergo medically necessary treatments that adversely impact fertility. Additionally, HB 1649 specifies that fertility preservation services must be consistent with established medical practices or professional guidelines published by the American Society of Clinical Oncology or the American Society for Reproductive medicine. The provisions of HB 1649 apply to certain health benefit plans with exceptions for CHIP, Medicaid, Medicaid managed care, or a health benefit plan that provides coverage only for hospital expenses.	**Favorable**
HB 3981 By: Paul	Relating to the designation of certain fire marshals and related officers, inspectors, and investigators as peace officers.	Homeland Security & Public Safety 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	The current law lists fire marshals with a permanent peace officer license commissioned by an emergency services district or a county as peace officers but does not include such officers commissioned by municipalities. HB 3981 classifies fire marshals and any other related officers, investigators, or inspectors of a municipality who hold a permanent peace officer license as peace officers.	**Favorable**
HB 1926 By: Hull	Relating to the expiration date of the supplemental special education services program.	Public Education 8 Ayes, 2 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	During the COVID-19 pandemic, intermittent closures were detrimental to the individualized learning plans of students receiving special education, leading to Gov. Abbott establishing the Supplemental Special Education Services (SSES) program in October 2020. The program offered some qualifying students with cognitive disabilities, including Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism, blind-visually impaired (BVI), or deaf and hard of hearing, a one-time online grant of $1,500 to purchase resources, services, or supplies. The 87th Legislature passed SB 1716, which codified the Supplemental Special Education Services (SSES) Program. This program is set to expire on September 1, 2024. HB 1926 would repeal this expiration date and make the program permanent. While providing resources, services, and supplies to families and their special ed students is desirable, SSES operates as a vendor program that allows an appointed commissioner to choose vendors without educator oversight and input from the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee to make sure these purchases have educational value. The types of products purchased through the SSES open the door to taxpayer-funded services for some students that are non-educational, such as dance lessons. The SSES program	**Unfavorable**

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			was created in response to school closures during COVID-19, which is no longer the case. The program has fulfilled its intended purpose and should expire as planned.	
HB 5277 By: Bucy	Relating to public access to criminal proceedings.	Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	In Texas, most court proceedings are publicly accessible. This ensures transparency, due process, and equal treatment under the law. However, some Texas counties have not been providing public access to bail hearings or have not provided adequate information to the public regarding how to access or attend such hearings. This creates barriers to the court process, weakening transparency and putting the rights of Texans at risk. HB 5277 seeks to address this by including hearings in front of a magistrate following an arrest in the types of hearings that must be accessible to the public. For each such proceeding, HB 5277 requires the court to publish the following information on their website or the location the hearing will be held, how the public may ask about an arrested person or proceeding, the time and location of the proceeding, and how the public may access the proceeding, including a livestream if applicable. If a court can not provide in-person access to the public, the bill dictates that the court must establish a process for the public to access a livestream or videoconference of the proceeding by January 1, 2024. HB 5277 allows any individual, the media, or the Attorney General to file a petition for a writ of mandamus, which is a court order that compels a government entity to perform a duty they are legally required to perform, to the bill's provisions. HB 5277 will allow greater access to court proceedings for the public, helping to ensure the health of our democracy and the rights of Texans.	**Favorable**
HB 2675 By: Jetton	Relating to the deposit of funds into court registries by the clerks of justice courts.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Currently, only county and district court clerks can deposit funds awarded to minors in the court registry, excluding justice courts. Concerns have been raised about this lack of authority, given justice courts' recent expansion of jurisdiction from $10,000 to $20,000 and subsequent increase of auto accident cases involving minors. HB 2675 authorizes justice courts to deposit funds set apart for minors into the court registry until the funds can be legally disbursed. HB 2675 facilitates justice courts' efficient handling of money awarded to minors, bringing them in line with county and district courts.	**Favorable**

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HB 4702 By: Campos	Relating to peer support specialists for certain individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability and peer services for those individuals under Medicaid.	Human Services 8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	A program funded by the Texas Council on Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) revealed that peer support positively impacted individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This program helped individuals with IDD acquire skills in self-advocacy and gain independence. HB 4702 aims to extend this program through the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). HB 4702 authorizes HHSC's executive commissioner to create and implement guidelines that define accessible, validated, certification and supervision training requirements for peer support specialists who provide services to IDD individuals. These guidelines will also identify the range of services that peer support specialists offer to IDD individuals, differentiate peer support services for IDD individuals from other services that require providers to possess a license or certification and introduce any other regulations deemed essential to safeguard IDD individuals who receive peer support services. These guidelines do not extend to peer support services provided to individuals residing in state-supported living centers. According to HB 4702, HHSC must establish a stakeholder workgroup that meets monthly to suggest recommendations for implementing rules governing peer support services. The HHSC executive commissioner will appoint mental health and IDD specialists, representatives from different state agencies and advocacy organizations, and someone certified as a trainer by Texas Advocates under the People Planning Together Program to serve on this workgroup. HB 4702 allows for delayed implementation if a federal waiver or authorization is required. HB 4702 allows IDD individuals to increase their quality of life through peer support services based in the community.	**Favorable**
HB 4477 By: Landgraf	Relating to the scheduling of University Interscholastic League competitions.	Public Education 9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	Currently, University Interscholastic League (UIL) playoff games may not be scheduled the Monday through Thursday of a statewide standardized and end-of-course testing week, which creates scheduling conflicts for schools, travel, and game times. HB 4477 seeks to repeal this prohibition and allow UIL scheduling any day of the week, even if the UIL schedules have a potentially harmful impact on a student's performance on a high-stakes exam. Testing is stressful and the results can have massive implications on student outcomes and the district's ratings. The existing scheduling requirement was adopted because students and their schools cannot afford to take time away from a student's preparation for these high-stakes tests and the subsequent administration. The inability to schedule UIL playoff games during testing weeks is a natural and logical consequence of the state's decision to make a single, high-stakes test at the end of the year such an imperative part of school accountability. If the legislature wants to allow entities, like UIL, to take the time and attention of students from anything other than testing that week, they need to lower the pressure the state creates because they put all the marbles on one summative assessment.	**Unfavorable**

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			Scheduling games during STAAR test week could put student-athletes at a disadvantage at a time when they are studying for a test that determines how the state views the entire summation of their academic progress and outcome for the year. It's unfair to take away valuable test-prep time instead of simply rescheduling practices or late-night games and travel for those participating in UIL. A high-stakes test should not be competing for attention with a high-stakes playoff game, as the former is a greater determinant of the student's academic progression than the latter.	
HB 3501 By: Thimesch | Thompson, Senfronia | Johnson, Ann | Klick | Hull	Relating to required human trafficking prevention training and disclosure of certain information about human trafficking by tattoo and body piercing studios.	Public Health 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Human trafficking is a prominent human rights issue, with around 313,000 victims in Texas, including 79,000 minors involved in sex trafficking. Traffickers often tattoo their victims with their name, nickname, or a distinctive symbol to claim "ownership" and track them. These tattoos can cause lasting psychological harm, reminding victims of their abuse and impeding recovery. HB 3501 aims to ensure individuals interacting with potential victims recognize signs of trafficking and provide help. HB 3501 requires each employee of a tattoo or body piercing studio to complete a training course approved by the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). HB 3501 mandates the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to approve human trafficking prevention training courses and adopt necessary rules. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) must post the approved courses list on its website and create a poster with information on recognizing potential trafficking victims and assisting them. Licensed tattoo or body piercing studios must display the poster in employee-accessible areas. Texas has significantly progressed in combating human trafficking through campaigns to identify victims. To further this progress, it's essential to identify victims who may be overlooked. Including tattoo and body piercing studios in the list of businesses required to receive human trafficking training under HB 3501 is a vital step toward a comprehensive statewide response to this issue.	**Favorable**

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