



Texas Legislative Study Group

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LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 8:00 AM – Tuesday, May 9, 2023

<p>HB 2965</p> <p>By: Vasut Slawson Murr Gervin-Hawkins</p>	<p>Relating to certain construction liability claims concerning public buildings and public works.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Chapter 2272 was created by the 86th Legislature to ensure governmental entities could not file lawsuits against their contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers without allowing them the opportunity to fix the concern before warranties expired. However, some governmental entities have been forcing contractors to waive Chapter 2272 before filing a bid or after the contract has been awarded. Additionally, some cities and counties are attempting to repair roads themselves and then charging contractors.</p> <p>HB 2965 seeks to address this issue by removing exemptions from certain construction liability claims for civil works projects and changing the exemption to only apply to contracts entered into by a river authority. HB 2965 also prevents Chapter 2272 on certain construction liability claims from being waived.</p> <p>HB 2965 ensures that civil works projects, except for river authorities, will be included in the right to repair and that Chapter 2272 cannot be waived. HB 2965 protects contractors by giving them an opportunity to resolve the issue before being subject to a lawsuit and preventing governmental entities from waiving their ability to do so.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2960</p> <p>By: Cain Holland Isaac Hefner Patterson</p>	<p>Relating to the applicability of a defense to prosecution for an offense relating to carrying a handgun in certain prohibited locations and to repealing associated notice requirements.</p>	<p>Community Safety-Select</p> <p>7 Ayes, 3 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>It is unlawful for a person to have or conceal a firearm in places with proper signage denoting that firearms and other weapons are prohibited on the premises. Section 46.15(o) of the Penal Code allows persons to post said signage notifying individuals that firearms are not allowed. Section 46.15(m) grants a defense to prosecution for a person who carries a handgun into a prohibited place, is told by an authority that it is not allowed, and then promptly leaves the premises. However, under Section 46.15(n), the defense to prosecution is not allowed if a sign, described by Subsection (o), was posted at each entrance to the premises.</p> <p>HB 2960 repeals sections 46.15(n) and (o) of the Penal Code repealing the provision allowing signage postings notifying individuals of prohibited weapons and firearms. Subsection (n) is effectively nullified because without the ability to post signage, the defense to prosecution is extended to all individuals.</p> <p>The bill attempts to protect individuals, who in good faith, unknowingly carry firearms into prohibited places. However, most often, the only way people know that firearms are prohibited is by signs posted outside the premises. Additionally, this “good faith” justification is not applied to a myriad of other crimes in which ignorance of the law is an acceptable excuse for breaking it.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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

<p>HB 1585 By: Geren</p>	<p>Relating to matters affecting the powers and duties of the Texas Ethics Commission.</p>	<p>State Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 4 Absent</p>	<p>HB 1585 updates campaign finance law regarding reporting requirements and advocacy transparency. Additionally, HB 1585 sets a \$500 maximum on campaign contributions and expenditures before a campaign treasurer is appointed. HB 1585 removes the requirement to treat electronic political contributions separately and replaces the requirement for campaign finance reports to include the name of each candidate or officeholder who was supported or opposed during the reporting period instead of the person who benefits from a direct campaign expenditure. Finally, HB 1585 expands the definition of legislation for lobbying purposes to include the election of the Speaker of the House and updates reporting thresholds to the nearest multiple of \$100 every 10 years based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers (CPI-U).</p> <p>Concerns This bill contains a very concerning provision stating that communication supporting or opposing legislation by a member of the legislature is considered political advertising if it “appears to express support or opposition” of the member or persons who support or oppose the legislation. Existing law states that any PAC or candidate doing political advertising has to put the disclosure notice on the ad. Existing law only requires any “person” (which includes nonprofit corporations, businesses, etc.) to put the disclosure statement on, but only if the advertisement contains “express advocacy” — or, advocacy for the passage or defeat of a candidate or measure on a ballot. Additionally, appearing to express support may be a low threshold to reach to qualify something as political advertising. People and organizations have a right to free speech, including on policy and legislation before the Texas Legislature.</p> <p>Expanding this definition to any support or opposition to a piece of legislation and going so far as to define the appearance of supporting or opposing any person who takes a stance on the legislation is deeply problematic. For example, this bill would consider a communication from a 501 c-4 advocacy organization thanking a corporation for its support of a key piece of legislation political advertising.</p> <p>Overall, this provision is an expansion of existing regulations over free speech without clearly providing a benefit. Current law already considers someone advocating for or against the election of a Member of the Legislature political advertising and requires disclosure. It is unnecessary and bad precedent to add this expansion, and risk weakening protections for speech.</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>
<p>HB 2044 By: Bowers Allen Rose</p>	<p>Relating to depression screenings for certain women in county jail</p>	<p>Corrections 8 Ayes, 0 Nays,</p>	<p>For incarcerated individuals, childbirth has especially unique challenges that compound the already difficult experience of giving birth. Incarcerated pregnant women experience psychosocial conditions that put them at risk of adverse perinatal outcomes. Furthermore, women in prison experience high rates of mental health problems,</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

	or in the custody of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.	0 PNV, 1 Absent	with pregnant women in prison being particularly vulnerable. Despite this, there is no requirement for pregnant incarcerated individuals to receive depression screenings while housed in a state correctional facility. HB 2044 requires six perinatal depression screenings for all pregnant individuals in county jails and state correctional facilities. This aligns with recommendations from Postpartum Support International. The measures of HB 2044 connect incarcerated individuals with much-needed mental health resources for early mental health intervention and a better birth experience.	
HB 4918 By: Rosenthal Cain Bernal	Relating to the processing, manufacture, and sale of hemp products for smoking.	Agriculture & Livestock 5 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	A loophole in Texas legislation permits the growth and sale of low-to-no THC smokable hemp products but prohibits their manufacture and processing within the state. Consequently, suppliers and manufacturers of hemp products must transport them to other states, like Oklahoma, for processing and manufacturing, only to transport them back to Texas for sale. As a result, Texas is missing out on potential business and investment opportunities. HB 4918 removes the prohibition against a state agency from authorizing a person to manufacture a hemp product for smoking and replaces that prohibition with an authorization to do so. HB 4918 removes “the processing and manufacturing of consumable hemp products for smoking are prohibited” from the principles meant to be reflected in the Health and Human Service Commission’s rules over the sale of consumable hemp products. HB 4918 allows the hemp industry to continue more of its operations in Texas and can positively impact the Texas economy.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 4362 By: Johnson, Ann	Relating to the eligibility of certain criminal defendants for an order of nondisclosure of criminal history record information.	Corrections 7 Ayes, 1 Nays, 1 PNV, 0 Absent	In Texas and nationwide, justice-involved individuals experience significant barriers as a result of having a criminal record, specifically difficulty finding employment, housing, and supporting a family. This reality can be a lifetime burden with estimates that suggest a loss of \$32 billion in wages for this specific population in Texas. Current statute significantly limits who can request to have their record sealed, ultimately making it more difficult for justice-involved Texans to reenter society and increasing the likelihood of recidivism. HB 4362 makes it easier for people with nonviolent criminal records to have their records sealed by a court by expanding eligibility to include individuals with nonviolent state jail felony convictions and enabling individuals with multiple nonviolent misdemeanors or state jail felony convictions to petition a court for an order of nondisclosure after a certain amount of time since their last conviction. This timeline ranges from one to five years based on the nature of the nonviolent offenses on an individual’s record. Under HB 4362, a judge retains the discretion to grant or deny an order of nondisclosure based on the unique merits of each case or request.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 303	Relating to a justice	Criminal	In recent years, Texas' Failure to Appear/Pay (FTAP) program has drawn widespread criticism due to its harsh	<u>Favorable</u>

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

<p>By: Bernal</p>	<p>or municipal court's authority to order a defendant confined in jail for failure to pay a fine or cost or for contempt and to the authority of a municipality to enforce the collection of certain fines by imprisonment of the defendant.</p>	<p>Jurisprudence 7 Ayes 2 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent</p>	<p>consequences for individuals unable to pay fines and fees for traffic tickets and minor offenses. Unfortunately, the program has resulted in many people having their licenses suspended or put on hold, leading to crippling debt that can be impossible to escape. Currently, if an individual's fine or fee goes unpaid, a justice or municipal court is authorized to order the individual to be confined in jail. This not only exacerbates an individual's inability to pay, but is an unfair punishment that criminalizes poverty. HB 303 seeks to solve this issue by ensuring that an individual's inability to pay fines or fees does not result in incarceration.</p> <p>HB 303 prohibits a justice or municipal court from ordering confinement in jail for a person, including juvenile offenders, who are unable to pay their fines and fees regarding a conviction for a fine-only offense. The bill also disallows a municipality to use incarceration as an enforcement mechanism for unpaid fines and fees regarding fine-only offenses.</p> <p>HB 303 also replaces the current requirement that an individual may be discharged upon proof that they do not have the funds to pay the applicable fines and fees, or have been incarcerated for an appropriate period of time in order to satisfy their fines, with a requirement that an individual may be discharged by proving that they were incarcerated in violation of HB 303's provisions or as a result of failure to pay fines for a conviction of a fine-only offense. Regarding a defendant who defaults, HB 303 replaces the current provision that allows a judge to order that individual to confinement if they make a written statement regarding the defendant's indigence and failure to make an attempt to pay, with a requirement that a judge set a hearing for the defendant to show cause as to why they cannot pay.</p> <p>HB 303 mandates the release, by September 2, 2023, of any individual who is currently being detained in a county or municipal jail due to their failure to pay fees associated with a fine-only offense or for contempt of a judgment for a fine-only offense. This includes people who were ordered to be incarcerated in jail for failing to pay fees based on a judge's determination of their inability to pay, as well as those being held for contempt of a judgment entered for the conviction of a fine-only offense.</p> <p>Criminalizing poverty cannot be the state's solution to an individual's inability to pay fines and fees, not only because it is not just punishment, but because it is wholly ineffective and exacerbates the issue. Incarceration is costly for the state and creates further barriers to payment for the confined individual. HB 303 will prevent this practice and allow Texas to explore solutions to this issue that do not cause further harm.</p>	
<p>HB 421 By: Lopez, Ray Plesa </p>	<p>Relating to the operation of a motor vehicle passing a pedestrian or a person operating a</p>	<p>Transportation 9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>The safety of pedestrians and cyclists on Texas roads is a growing concern. According to the Texas Department of Transportation, the number of fatalities involving cyclists and pedestrians in road accidents has increased in recent years. Unfortunately, even the safest and most well-intentioned drivers may misjudge the space between them and cyclists or pedestrians. For example, there is a known phenomenon - a suction effect - when passing vehicles can pull cyclists further into the road and possibly knock them off their bikes. This typically occurs when</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

<p>Johnson, Ann Lujan Lalani</p>	<p>bicycle; creating a criminal offense.</p>	<p>3 Absent</p>	<p>vehicles do not give enough space while passing, and the vehicles are heavier and going at a higher speed. As a result, HB 421 will require drivers to move to another lane while passing a pedestrian or cyclist on a multi-lane highway or street.</p> <p>HB 421 requires motor vehicle operators to exercise due care to avoid collisions with pedestrians or bicyclists on a highway or street. In addition, HB 421 establishes minimum safe passing for a vehicle passing left or right of a pedestrian or bicyclist, and a driver must move to another lane while passing a pedestrian or cyclist on a multi-lane highway or street. Violating a requirement is considered a road misdemeanor offense. An affirmative defense for this violation is if the pedestrian or cyclist violated traffic law in a way that contributed to the violation in question. HB 421 exempts drivers passing a pedestrian or cyclist in a no-passing zone from the prohibition of not driving on the left side of the road or driving over the no-passing indicators as long as the driver is otherwise complying with existing vehicle operation and movement requirements.</p> <p>Cyclists and pedestrians are commonly exposed to high-speed vehicles on Texas roadways. HB 421 establishes minimum safe passing distances so drivers exercise due care when sharing the road with cyclists and pedestrians.</p>	
<p>HB 5280 By: Bucy</p>	<p>Relating to operation by certain nonprofit organizations of certain regional healthcare programs for employees of smaller employers.</p>	<p>County Affairs 7 Ayes, 2 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Various stakeholders use TexHealth — an Austin-based nonprofit organization — to offer health care assistance in their counties. However, due to TexHealth being a three-share plan, current law does not allow them to operate in a county without commissioners court approval. This approval process is onerous and creates barriers around helping small business owners and their employees gain access to affordable health insurance. TexHealth began as a healthcare provider but has since restructured to be a premium assistance program which no longer offers health care coverage, therefore no longer needing county commissioners' approval. HB 5280 seeks to enable the operation of regional health care programs, such as TexHealth, in counties without the approval or certain governances of the county commissioners court.</p> <p>HB 5280 allows a community-based nonprofit organization to establish or participate in a regional health care program without participation of the commissioners court of a county. The program must be a premium assistance program that does not offer health care services or healthcare benefits. This bill permits a nonprofit organization to operate and govern a program directly, and mandates that the program align with the objectives set forth in state law for regional or local health programs.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1973 By: Harris, Caroline Klick Frank </p>	<p>Relating to itemized billing for health care services and supplies provided by health care providers; authorizing an</p>	<p>Public Health 9 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Medical bills can be complex; some providers only give a "balance due" statement without detailing the services and charges. Itemized bills are essential for patients to understand their charges and verify accuracy. The lack of itemized bills hinders transparency and infringes on patient rights. Although patients can request an itemized bill, contacting the billing department can often be difficult and time-consuming. HB 1973 addresses this by requiring healthcare providers to issue an itemized statement before or when collecting payment for services or supplies provided to patients.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

Campos Collier	administrative penalty.		<p>HB 1973 requires healthcare providers to submit a written, itemized bill detailing each service and supply provided to patients when requesting payment within 30 days after receiving the final payment from a third party. Providers may issue itemized bills electronically, such as through a patient portal. The itemized bill must include plain language descriptions of each service or supply, billing codes and amounts billed to and paid by third parties, and the amount due from the patient. Patients can request an itemized bill at any time, and providers cannot pursue debt collection unless they comply with the bill's provisions. Violations result in a \$1,000 administrative penalty per violation, and additional disciplinary action may be taken.</p> <p>HB 1973 seeks to provide Texans with easier access to itemized medical bills.</p>	
LSG Floor Report For POSTPONED BUSINESS UNTIL 10:00 AM – Tuesday, May 9, 2023				
<p>HB 2181 By: Rose</p>	<p>Relating to the administration by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs of a homeless housing and services program for youth and young adults.</p>	<p>Urban Affairs 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Texas spends roughly \$7 billion annually on costs related to unhoused youth, such as incarceration and emergency medical care. Additionally, youth homelessness in Texas is tied to a host of negative outcomes, including increased risk of depression and anxiety, homelessness into adulthood, disruption or halt to their education, and a higher likelihood of engaging in criminal activity.</p> <p>HB 2181 seeks to address this issue by establishing a grant for youth and young adult homeless housing services and programs through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). This programming will provide funding for the construction of housing for youth, financial assistance, and services.</p> <p>The programming established by HB 2181 would help to break the cycle of poverty by providing young adults ages 18 to 26 with assistance during their first months of independence. In addition, it is sensible to invest in prevention instead of spending billions on the outcomes of youth homelessness after the harm has already been caused. HB 2181 is a step towards compassionate care for unhoused youth and a smart investment for the state.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
<p>HB 1775 By: Thompson, Ed</p>	<p>Relating to the oversight and election of board members for certain emergency services districts.</p>	<p>County Affairs 8 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 175 applies to a district that is located wholly in one county with a population of more than 200,000, but not more than three million, with exceptions for a counties that border Lake Palestine, border the United Mexican States, or have a population of more than 800,000 in which the commissioners court appoints a board of emergency services commissioners under specified provisions.</p> <p>Several counties with emergency services districts overseen by appointed boards of emergency services commissioners are advised to turn to the county commissioners court when problems arise within the district. However, despite having the authority to appoint emergency services commissioners, the commissioners court may not enforce district actions. These districts were originally designed to function as a rural county service supplement. However, with the growth of these districts into more sizable and modern districts, the level of accountability provided by an appointing county commissioner is insufficient. In some cases, these unelected emergency service commissioners may oversee two districts simultaneously and are given powerful authority to</p>	<u>Will of the House</u>

levy property taxes, sale taxes, and manage budgets exceeding \$40 million.

HB 1775 aims to enhance accountability for emergency service commissioners by requiring the district’s county commissioners court to choose whether the board will be elected or if the commissioner’s court will approve the annual budget and tax rate. The commissioners court of a county must choose whether the board chooses whether the board of emergency services commissioners will be elected or the commissioners court will approve the annual budget and tax rate by January 1, 2024.

Once a district is created and the emergency services commissioners are appointed, the commissioners court will decide whether the board will be elected or the commissioners court will approve the annual budget and tax rate. A commissioners court that initially chooses to approve district budgets and tax rates may switch to an elected board at any time, but a commissioners court that chooses to require a district’s board be elected may not switch to approving the district’s budget and tax rates.

Election of Board
 If districts require an elected board, HB 1775 establishes a five-member board of emergency services commissioners, elected at large from the district to serve staggered four-year terms. HB 1775 outlines member eligibility requirements, procedures, and term lengths.

Budget and Tax Rate Approved
 If the annual budget and tax rate are to be approved by commissioners court, the court must establish a schedule for the district to submit its annual budget, tax rate calculations, notices, and recommended tax rate for final approval. If a commissioners court does not approve or deny a submitted budget or recommended tax rate before the 31st day after submission, it is considered approved. If the submitted annual budget is denied, the district may only make expenditures for obligations incurred before the beginning of the fiscal year. If the submitted tax rate is denied, the district may not impose a tax rate greater than that of the previous fiscal year.

Impact
 Emergency Service Districts across the state have concerns over the cost of running an election and how it could take away funds from volunteer fire departments, negatively impact the ability of an ESD to provide Fire and EMS services to their respective communities. Making the commissioner chosen on the basis of election could turn the position into one based on political connection, as opposed to abilities and knowledge of emergency provider services. An appointment process allows for the vetting of the person to ensure they have expert knowledge, whereas an electoral process does not guarantee the elected individual has knowledge specific to the role.

Others, however, view the current system as a form of taxation without representation, as there is budget control

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

			without democratic accountability or citizen oversight.	
HB 2541 By: Garcia Campos Johnson, Julie Sherman, Sr. Oliverson	Relating to policies and procedures regarding children placed by the Department of Family and Protective Services in a residential treatment center or program.	Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	The 87th Legislature passed SB 1575, which required the Children’s Commission and the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to collaborate and establish a work group to determine best practices related to Residential Treatment Center (RTC) placements for children. The work group found that court-appointed guardians and attorneys' inability to access all relevant information hindered their ability to properly advocate for a child’s placement in an RTC. HB 2541 seeks to remedy this issue by ensuring a child's guardian ad litem can review all relevant information about the child’s needs, mental health, past and current placements, and therapy notes to determine whether RTC placement is suitable. They must also provide a report or testimony to the court with a recommendation on whether the placement is in the child’s best interest. The bill also authorizes the attorney or guardian to request a placement conference with DFPS, participate in any conferences by the agency, and, when representing a parent, participate in any case staffing conducted by DFPS. If DFPS requests or recommends a child for RTC placement, the attorney ad litem must meet with the child to elicit their opinion and advise them according to their developmental stage. HB 2541 strives to better advocate for children who are living in or who will be placed in an RTC and standardizes best practices for guardian and attorney ad litem.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1754 By: Smithee	Relating to the disclosure of certain prescription drug information by a health benefit plan.	Insurance 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Healthcare practitioners and providers may lack information on the financial impact of prescribing medication to their patients, which can cause patients to delay or abandon care as well as create administrative burdens for pharmacies and providers. In many circumstances, access to the cost of prescription, with and without insurance coverage, at the time a prescription is written would facilitate continuity of care and a better patient experience. HB 1754 addresses this by requiring health benefit plans to disclose the list of generic and brand-name prescription drugs for a specific health insurance plan, along with enrollee eligibility, cost-sharing information, and any utilization management requirements to patients or their providers upon request. HB 1754 will help providers understand the financial impact on their patients and make better-informed decisions when prescribing medication.	<u>Favorable</u>
LSG Floor Report For Major State Calendar – Tuesday, May 9, 2023				
HB 20 By: Schaefer	Relating to measures to ensure the safety and welfare of the border region of this state, including	State Affairs 8 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV,	In 2012, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that Arizona did not have the authority to enact a state statute, SB 1070, that empowered state law enforcement officials to enforce federal immigration law. The Court struck down provisions of SB 1070 that required state and local law enforcement officials to determine immigration status of individuals without cause other than suspicion and made it a state crime for undocumented immigrants to work in Arizona. In doing so, the Court held that most of the provisions of SB 1070 were	<u>Unfavorable</u>

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

	<p>protection from ongoing criminal activity and public health threats and the establishment of the Border Protection Unit; creating a criminal offense; creating a civil penalty.</p>	<p>2 Absent</p>	<p>preempted by federal immigration law. <i>Arizona v. The United States</i> set legal precedent that immigration policy and enforcement are matters of federal, and not state, policy – clearly establishing that states do not have the authority to implement their own immigration laws.</p> <p>HB 20 is a legislative effort meant to test this precedent given the significant changes to the Court’s composition from 2012 to now. HB 20 includes three major components: establishes a Border Protection Unit (BPU), creates an expansive trespassing offense with civil and criminal penalties, and creates a Texas equivalent of Title 42, a federal policy that authorized the federal government to deny entry in response to public health concerns related to COVID-19. Additionally, HB 20 attempts to assert the state’s authority to enact its provisions by framing current immigration trends along the southern border as an invasion and the ramifications of drug and human trafficking as imminent dangers to the public that necessitate immediate intervention by the state; therefore, allowing Texas to invoke a section of the U.S. Constitution that authorizes a state to maintain a military; defend its air, land, and maritime borders; and declare war when invaded or facing imminent danger.</p> <p><i>Border Protection Unit</i> HB 20 establishes the BPU within the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to deter and detain individuals attempting to enter the state through areas that are not ports of entry. HB 20 also empowers the BPU to supervise construction and maintenance of a state-funded border wall. The BPU would be in operation until at least 2030. Although an entity within DPS, the BPU chief would be appointed by and only accountable to the governor allowing the BPU chief, and by extension the entire unit, to operate with minimal to no direct accountability or oversight. Another alarming concern is BPU staffing methodology which would employ “commissioned” and “non-commissioned” officers. HB defines a commissioned officer as a citizen who is a licensed Texas Peace Officer and a non-commissioned officer as a citizen who completes a training program designated by the Public Safety Commission. Combined the staffing requirements deputize civilians and strain law enforcement agencies experiencing workforce shortages that solely employ licensed peace officers.</p> <p><i>Expansive Trespass Offense with Criminal & Civil Penalties</i> HB 20 creates a third degree felony criminal trespass offense for an individual who enters Texas outside of designated ports of entry and in the process enters private property without permission. HB 20 also imposes a civil penalty of up to \$10,000 per offense. This provision directly targets migrants; it functionally applies to individuals regardless of immigration status. The expansiveness of this provision exacerbates racial profiling and discrimination.</p> <p><i>Creates a Texas Equivalent of Title 42</i> This provision amends the Health and Safety Code by mandating that individuals who enter Texas by land from another country through a port of entry must consent to a medical review during a public health emergency.</p>	
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Texas Legislative Study Group – An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

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<p>HB 800</p> <p>By: Guillen Raymond Muñoz, Jr. Lozano Lopez, Janie</p>	<p>Relating to the punishment for certain criminal conduct involving the smuggling of persons, the operation of a stash house, or evading an arrest or detention; increasing criminal penalties.</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>9 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 800 changes penalties for certain criminal conduct related to human smuggling, stash houses, and evading arrest or detention. It establishes a 10-year mandatory minimum term of imprisonment for some offenses and increases the punishment for certain offenses to the next higher category if committed in a disaster area. It also enhances the penalty for some offenses if committed while smuggling someone or evading arrest or detention. The penalty for the operation of a stash house is increased to a third degree felony with a 5-year mandatory minimum term of imprisonment and can be increased to a second degree felony under certain conditions. The punishment for arson, criminal mischief, reckless damage or destruction of property, interference with railroad property, and graffiti is also increased to a third degree felony if committed in the course of smuggling persons or evading arrest or detention.</p> <p>HB 800 ignores that a lot of undocumented people in Texas are a part of families with different immigration statuses. The provisions of HB 800 create a dynamic in which some penalties are increased to felonies involving crimes that do not pose a danger to individuals or businesses. These penalties could stay with an individual for a lifetime when communities are overpoliced and overcharged. Felony enhancements such as the ones proposed in HB 800 have detrimental effects on the lives of those contending with this sort of criminalization, ranging from job loss, barriered access to education, inability to obtain housing, to deportation. Regarding immigration cases, felonies such as the ones proposed in the bill can render someone inadmissible to the country. Mandatory minimums are proven to worsen outcomes within marginalized communities and are ineffective at reducing crime. Additionally, the bill ignores the confluence of policies at the state and federal level that make it exponentially more difficult to enter through designated ports of entry which increases the demand for smuggling as people seek safety, shelter, and opportunity.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
<p>HB 7</p> <p>By: Guillen</p>	<p>Relating to services and programs in the southern border region of this state to address the effects of ongoing criminal activity and public</p>	<p>State Affairs</p> <p>8 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Funding is an indicator of values and an investment in the future. As such, HB 7 institutionalizes Operation Lone Star by solidifying the governor’s authority to establish international agreements regarding border security and establishing a wide range of grant programs that use public and private funds to continue and expand Operation Lone Star. The Compact Clause (Article 1, Section 10) of the Constitution expressly prohibits states from entering into agreements or compacts with foreign governments without congressional approval. HB 7 is yet another attempt to circumvent federal law. Moreover, the function of the bill is to authorize and fund efforts that deter “illegal activity,” namely human and drug trafficking. Yet, it fundamentally ignores data suggesting that the</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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

	<p>health threats in that region.</p>		<p>majority of illicit drugs enter the United States through points of entry by citizens and many of the individuals entering the United States along the southern border do so seeking asylum, which is a matter of federal and international law.</p> <p><i>Establishes State Government Sovereignty</i> HB 7 grants the state legislature and governor the authority to “protect and defend” Texans as well as maintain sovereignty over the state’s borders. Moreover, HB 7 authorizes the governor to create international agreements with Mexico.</p> <p><i>Border Protection Court Grant Program</i> HB 7 establishes a grant program to support court operations in the border region for “border-related” offenses. This includes offenses associated with undocumented entry, human and drug smuggling, and cartel activities. The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System (OCA) would oversee and administer funds from the legislature, federal government, and private entities for the specialty court program. Additionally, HB 7 enables grant funding to be used for a wide-range of operational court costs, including salaries for visiting and associate judges, personnel travel costs, and public defender services. The OCA would adopt rules to establish the grant, determine criteria, conduct study of offenses and prosecutions, and procedures to monitor use of the grants.</p> <p><i>Additional Funding, Grant Programs, & Initiatives</i> HB 7 also establishes additional grant programs, initiatives, and funds that support a variety of efforts that further border-related operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Border Protection Equipment & Infrastructure Fund provides grants to state agencies and local governments in the border region for temporary border security infrastructure such as fences and trenches as well as equipment related to public health and safety services. • the Border Protection Criminal Justice Facilities Fund provides grants to government and private entities for construction and maintenance of correctional and judicial facilities used for “border-related” offenses. • the Border Protection Public Safety Personnel Fund provides grants to state agencies and local governments to pay salaries, provide employee benefits, and operational expenses for local law enforcement services. • the Border Protection Secure Trade Fund provides grants to state and local government entities as well as private businesses for the construction or improvements of transportation assets used for commercial vehicles and for ports of entry aimed at enhancing investigation, interdiction, and prosecution of human and drug smuggling. • the Border Protection Economic Development Initiative mandates the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office (TEDTO) create a campaign to attract companies to the border region, promote tourism, 	
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			<p>and support institutions and initiatives that create a suitable environment for homeland security technology or service providers. TEDTO may pursue funding from public and private sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Border Property Damage Compensation Account provides victim compensation to individuals whose property sustain damage as a result of border-related offenses • the Border Institution Grant Program provides funding to higher education institutions that provide programs that increase workforce in border-related fields. The program would be administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). <p>Many of the financial incentives included in HB 7 aren't expressly unconstitutional but the provisions establishing sovereignty challenge federal authority. Furthermore, HB 7 will increase law enforcement presence and surveillance in the border region which is inextricably invasive and discriminatory. The sum of the financial incentives does nothing to address the root causes of immigration and does not provide support to immigrant communities in the border region, but perpetuates constitutionally questionable tactics that criminalize them.</p>	
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LSG Floor Report For Constitutional Amendments Calendar – Tuesday, May 9, 2023

<p>HJR 153 By: Wilson</p>	<p>Proposing a constitutional amendment to authorize a limitation on the total amount of ad valorem taxes that a political subdivision other than a school district, county, municipality, or junior college district may impose on the residence homesteads of certain low-income persons who are disabled or elderly and their surviving spouses.</p>	<p>Ways & Means 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>HJR 153 authorizes the governing body of a political subdivision that is not a public school district, county, municipality, or junior college district to limit the amount of property taxes imposed on people who are of limited financial means that is disabled or 65 years or older and receive a homestead exemption. Surviving spouses that are 55 years of age or older and of limited financial means are qualified to continue receiving this exemption. HJR 153 specifies that ad valorem taxes should not be decreased as long as a qualifying person maintains the homestead. Alternatively, the governing body must call an election to determine whether to establish a tax limitation under HJR 153 upon receipt of a petition signed by 5% of the registered voters of the political subdivision. If the person moves, the Legislature may allow the transfer of tax limitations if a qualifying person relocates somewhere in the same political subdivision. HJR 153 allows these taxes to be increased for applicable improvements, and prevents the governing body of a political subdivision from repealing or rescinding this tax limitation. The Legislature may determine the method used for deciding whether a person is of limited financial means.</p> <p>HJR 153 is the constitutional amendment for HB 3757.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
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LSG Floor Report For General State Calendar – Tuesday, May 9, 2023

<p>HB 3782 By: Guillen Raymond Morales,</p>	<p>Relating to establishing the Border Security Advisory Council and the Border Protection</p>	<p>State Affairs 7 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>HB 3782 would establish a Border Security Advisory Council and Border Protection Task Force to inform state immigration and homeland security policy, respectively.</p> <p><i>Border Security Advisory Council</i></p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
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<p>Eddie Muñoz, Jr. Lopez, Janie</p>	<p>Task Force.</p>	<p>3 Absent</p>	<p>The Council would advise the governor on matters impacting homeland security regarding the southern border. Voting members on the council would include the lieutenant governor, speaker, and four members of each legislative chamber. HB 3782 mandates members of the minority party in each chamber be included members from border region districts. Nonvoting Council members are primarily state and local law enforcement entities and private business interests. Notably absent are advocacy organizations that center the needs of immigrant communities.</p> <p>Border Protection Task Force The task force would be established by a state agency based on a recommendation from the council. The selected agency must then create the task force as a division within its organization to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of border protection operations in Texas. The task force would operate through 2031 using funds appropriated by the Legislature.</p> <p>While the policy's intent is decent, it fails to include grassroots advocacy stakeholders committed to addressing border concerns in a safe, humane way. Furthermore, there are concerns that the inclusion of law enforcement and business interests prioritizes criminalization over creative, humane collaboration.</p>	
<p>HB 884 By: Harless</p>	<p>Relating to the law enforcement authority of federal border patrol agents.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p> <p>5 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>Border patrol agents, employed by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, enforce customs and immigration law at and near the border. State troopers and local police enforce general law, such as traffic and criminal law, and investigate crime.</p> <p>HB 884 grants border patrol agents the powers of arrest, search, and seizure as to any felony offense under state law, or any criminal offense under federal law, that is committed within counties adjacent to the Texas-Mexico border or the Gulf of Mexico, any adjacent counties, and counties served by an attorney representing the state whose jurisdiction includes any of these counties.</p> <p>HB 884 directs the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to provide written notice to each border patrol commanding authority in Texas of agents' expanded authority and responsibility. The bill will take immediate effect if it receives a 2/3 vote in each chamber or on September 1.</p> <p>Concerns Border patrol agents are employed by the federal government, not the state. The duty to expand responsibilities rests with the federal government, not the state. Furthermore, expanding the duties and responsibilities of border patrol agents without a compensable wage increase is unconscionable. Additionally, there are concerns about the lack of appropriate training for border patrol agents. If border patrol agents have the power to arrest, they would also need to be informed of criminal law and attend court proceedings as witnesses.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			Furthermore, this new authority would expand and strengthen the disastrous Operation Lone Star (OLS). It may even lead to increased arrests of border residents due to their power to search individuals due to “probable cause.” Lastly, concerns have been raised about the lack of oversight for these agents. There should be proper oversight if the state wants to burden federal agents with state and local responsibilities to enforce the law. While the Constitution does not directly address this issue, the supremacy clause dictates that federal law preempts state statute and therefore any state law authorizing federal entities to enforce general state law is unconstitutional. As a result, HB 884 is likely to result in lawsuits at taxpayers’ expense.	
HB 82 By: Spiller Hefner Clardy Cook	Relating to an interstate compact for border security, including building a border wall and sharing state intelligence and resources.	State Affairs 8 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>According to U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, 2.3 million people entered the U.S through the southern border outside designated points of entry in 2022. HB 82 proposes an interstate compact for border security that would enable state law enforcement agencies to share resources and intelligence regarding border enforcement and defensive border structures without congressional approval.</p> <p>HB 82 mandates the governor to create and implement an interstate compact with interested states. The proposed compact would authorize collaborative actions between involved states, including the exchange of intelligence on activities occurring at the southern border, pooling resources to build physical and technological barriers to deter or identify activity along the border, and sharing law enforcement resources.</p> <p>The implementation of HB 82 would be an extension of immigration policy. Supreme Court precedent has firmly established immigration policy as the responsibility of the federal government, and not state legislatures. Simply because HB 82 states its intent is not to require congressional approval does not mean that congressional approval is not necessary given the function of its provisions.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
HB 4930 By: Craddick	Relating to the adoption of a climate policy in a municipal charter.	State Affairs 8 Ayes, 5 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>In recent years, several cities in Texas have implemented measures to address climate change and its impact, specifically increased extreme weather events and greenhouse gas emissions. For example, Houston adopted a Climate Action Resiliency Plan, Austin adopted a Climate Equity Plan, and Dallas adopted a Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan (CECAP). However, in that cities have not proactively adopted a climate action plan, such as El Paso, constituents have advocated for referendums to adopt climate charter amendments. HB 4930 is a direct response to the efforts of El Paso citizens to vote on the city adopting a climate charter. HB 4930 defines a climate charter as a comprehensive policy, ordinance, or rule that seeks to outline measures to mitigate the impact of climate change regarding energy, water, and emissions.</p> <p>Under HB 4930, home-rule municipalities or charter commissions must obtain approval from the appropriate state agency with jurisdiction over the creation of or an amendment to a climate charter before voting on a municipal charter or charter amendment that creates or modifies a climate charter. In addition, HB 4930 establishes that existing climate charters before the effective date are valid and enforceable until January 1, 2026. However, these cities must comply with the approval requirement by January 1, 2025.</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>

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			<p>HB 4930 creates an extra layer of bureaucracy, reduces the authority of municipalities, and weakens the voice of local constituents. Local governments are accountable to their citizens and are in the best position to develop and implement policies tailored to their communities' unique needs and priorities.</p>	
<p>HB 2401 By: Oliveron Burrows Jetton Shaheen Noble</p>	<p>Relating to the repeal of certain contracting requirements under the Medicaid managed care delivery model.</p>	<p>Human Services 6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Texas has the highest number and percentage of uninsured individuals in the U.S., with 5.2 million or 18% of all Texans uninsured. Further, Medicaid is critical in Texans' health care, providing 5.4 million low-income individuals with health insurance. The reality is that Texans are in dire need of healthcare access, and one method of access is county-based "hospital" or "health" districts that are Medicaid Managed Care providers. The local hospitals and health districts are essential in providing and covering the medical care costs of their residents.</p> <p>HB 2401 will change sections of code created to serve communities through better-coordinated care. Currently, if a public hospital district-owned managed care organization bids on a Medicaid-managed procurement, meets all conditions and requirements of that procurement, and is certified by HHSC as being able to perform under the contract, HHSC must award the hospital district managed care organization (MCO) a contract in its service area. Four public hospital district-owned plans would be impacted by HB 2401: Bexar County (Community First), Dallas County (Parkland Community Health Plan), El Paso County (El Paso Health), and Harris County (Community Health Choice). HB 2401 would disrupt the two pending procurements - STAR Plus (Medicaid-managed care for age-blind and adults with physical disabilities) and STAR Medicaid-managed care. HB 2401 would establish a bad precedent for legislative operations as it would interfere with the procurement process while procurements were happening.</p> <p>HB 2401 would repeal provisions relating to mandatory contracting with Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) affiliated with hospital districts or certain nonprofits. HHSC would no longer be required to contract with MCOs wholly owned or operated by a hospital district, created by a qualifying nonprofit corporation, or held a certificate of authority as a health maintenance organization under specific conditions. Essentially, HB 2401 repeals provisions that would end the beneficial provision of public, non-profit, hospital district-owned plans. HB 2401 repeals the requirement that HHSC makes the awarding and renewing of a mandatory contract to an MCO affiliated with a hospital district or municipality contingent on the district or municipality entering into a matching funds agreement to expand Medicaid for children. Lastly, HB 2401 states that it applies to a contract awarded by HHSC that is fully executed and has not reached its operational start date on or after the bill's effective date.</p> <p>Concerns HB 2401 would have sweeping impacts on healthcare provisions for low-income Texans and the uninsured. HB 2401 removes guaranteed contracting for healthcare plans that have demonstrated to meet all qualifications for procurement. HB 2401 would make public hospital district-owned plans vulnerable to losing their Medicaid contracts despite their performance, as they do not have the staff to respond to RFPs like for-profit plans.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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			<p>Additionally, their performance as healthcare plans does not reflect their performance on an RFP response, effectively refuting why HB 2401 was introduced. Community-based plans perform equally if not better than national competitors, according to HHSC’s report card. Public hospital district-owned plans are vital for healthcare access and providing quality healthcare.</p> <p>Another concern would be the impact of the jobs through public hospital district-owned plans. An example would be the Parkland Community Health Plan, which is currently procuring a Medicaid contract for the Dallas area. Under HB 2401, if PCHP falls short in the RFP, then PCHP would cease to exist. If PCHP ceases, 250,000 people would have their health care disrupted as they would have to find an alternative (potentially only for-profit) plan, and 200 Texans would lose their jobs. This concern extends to the other entities and the populations they serve - destroying the healthcare safety net for major metropolitan areas.</p>	
<p>HB 286 By: Thompson</p>	<p>Relating to the procedure for an application for a writ of habeas corpus based on certain new evidence.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Texans who have been incarcerated currently have only one opportunity to file a writ of habeas corpus challenging wrongful conviction. There are five ways to obtain writ relief under current law; actually innocence, presentation of false evidence by the State, new science, ineffective representation, or suppression of exculpatory evidence. The court does not recognize grounds for writ relief based on new evidence that is non-scientific and fails to meet an incredibly high evidentiary burden of proof.</p> <p>HB 286 seeks to address this by providing a pathway for a convicted person to challenge their conviction based on new non-scientific evidence that was not available during their trial. If an application for a writ of habeas corpus contains specific and material evidence that was not ascertainable through the convicted person’s exercise of reasonable diligence, the evidence would be admissible under the Texas Rules of Evidence, and the court finds that such evidence would have prevented a conviction at the original trial, the court may grant relief. The bill also establishes that in order for a court to consider the merits of or grant relief based on a subsequent application, the claim being raised could not have been presented in an original or previously considered application, if the claim or issue is based on evidence that meets the bill’s provisions.</p> <p>80% of wrongful convictions are overturned using non-scientific evidence, making its consideration vital to a fair justice system. HB 286 creates room for the courts to consider more of this type of evidence, while ensuring that the applicant must still meet specific criteria. This brings needed change to the writ process and helps to ensure that those who are innocent have an opportunity to prove so.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4628 By: Goldman</p>	<p>Relating to the duties of law enforcement agencies, crime laboratories, and the Department of Public Safety following the</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety 7 Ayes, 0 Nay,</p>	<p>HB 3106, passed during the 86th legislative session, changed the data collection process in sexual assault investigations for law enforcement agencies. However, there is an issue with lacking established deadlines for processing sexual assault evidence kits. The lack of deadlines has led to a situation where matches from the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) are returned to the lab but not shared with investigators or are shared with investigators but are left pending due to the need for follow-up sample collection.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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	performance of certain DNA profile comparisons.	0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>HB 4628 requires the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to notify crime laboratories if a match was discovered when comparing a DNA profile from a sexual assault evidence kit with DNA profiles maintained in state and CODIS databases within seven days of DPS performing the comparison. If a match is identified, the law enforcement agency that submitted the kit to the laboratory must provide any requested additional information by the laboratory concerning the match within five days after the request. Within 30 days of an identified match, a written notice will be given to the law enforcement agency that submitted the kit of any case-to-case match that could assist in the investigation or any verified match identifying a suspect or offender. Law enforcement agencies must acknowledge receipt of the notification within five days of receiving the notice. Within 30 days of the notice, the law enforcement agency must collect a DNA sample from an identified suspect or offender and submit the sample to the crime laboratory for analysis.</p> <p>The deadlines introduced in HB 4628 will aid in mitigating delays in sexual assault cases and ensure information is shared between various entities.</p>	
HB 327 By: Thompson, Sefronia	Relating to the affirmative defense to prosecution for a criminal offense for persons acting under duress.	Criminal Jurisprudence 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>Traffickers often compel their victims to participate in illegal activities as a control tactic and to further their own criminal activity. As the law stands, a person who has been trafficked is not able to use their history as a victim or their vulnerability to coercion as a result of trauma as a defense in trial for offenses they may have committed under duress and control of their trafficker. This pushes victims closer to their trafficker, and makes it even more difficult for a survivor to break the cycle of control. HB 327 seeks to address this by making adjustments regarding what facts a jury may consider in a situation involving duress-inducing threats.</p> <p>HB 327 modifies the conditions under which a defense of "compulsion" can be asserted in response to charges of committing an offense under duress to include situations where a reasonable person in the defendant's circumstances would be unable to resist the pressure because of force or threat of force.</p> <p>HB 327 is a common sense adjustment that allows the courts to consider that trauma deeply affects how a person may react in any given situation and can be used as a control tactic.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 2923 By: Dutton	Relating to the operation of free prekindergaren programs by certain school districts and to the early education allotment under the Foundation School Program.	Public Education 10 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>The 86th Legislature passed HB 3, which required schools to offer free, full-day prekindergarten to eligible four-year-old students. Certain schools lacked the resources to handle the rising enrollment, while community-based child-care providers reported concerns over their decreased enrollment, leading to increasing tuition cost or shut down. To mitigate this unintended consequence, the legislature incentivized prekindergarten partnerships, however those were rarely utilized by school districts.</p> <p>HB 2923 mandates partnerships with a school district in specific scenarios and allocates an extra allotment for students attending a prekindergarten class provided by these partnerships. HB 2923 requires school districts to contract with a community-based child-care provider to provide a prekindergarten class if the commissioner determines that:</p>	<u>Unfavorable</u>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a district election to issue bonds for constructing or repurposing a classroom to provide the prekindergarten class fails within 24 months preceding the determination; or • if the district is unable to properly staff the prekindergarten class. <p>The commissioner may waive the aforementioned requirements if a community-based child-care provider is not located in the school district.</p> <p>In addition to the early education allotment, HB 2923 entitles a district to an annual allotment equal to the basic allotment multiplied by 0.2 for each student in average daily attendance (ADA) enrolled in a prekindergarten partnership. HB 2923 sets the following <i>maximum</i> number of students for whom the additional allotment may be provided for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,000 students for the 2024-2025 school year; • 4,500 students for the 2025-2026 school year; and • 7,000 students for the 2026-2027 school year. <p>These provisions expire September 1, 2027, and beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, the number of students who can receive the additional allotment for enrolling in prekindergarten partnerships is capped at 10,000 students statewide. If the number of students in ADA for whom a district is entitled to both the early education allotment and the additional annual allotment exceeds the cap, the commissioner must allocate the allotments to districts in accordance with commissioner rule.</p> <p>Concerns</p> <p>Although this bill is intended to mitigate the unintended consequences of previously enacted legislation, HB 2923 could inadvertently have its own consequences as well. Certainly these partnerships could be valuable to communities. However, capping the number of pre-K “partnership” students statewide while requiring these partnerships in certain situations determined by the commissioner could function as an unfunded mandate for a certain type of pre-K classes. Further, if the number of students exceeds the cap, full jurisdiction is granted to the Commissioner to allocate the allotment to school districts which, without guardrails, gives an appointed official heavy power over districts and their funding for these partnerships. Incentivizing public-private partnerships is one thing, and mandating is another. School districts already have the opportunity to enter into pre-k partnerships, an underutilized program. Rather than improving the program or its outreach, this bill mandates its use.</p>	
<p>HB 2273</p> <p>By: Oliverson Harris, Cody Buckley </p>	<p>Relating to including an understanding of certain political ideologies in the foundation curriculum in public</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,</p>	<p>HB 2273 aims to establish statewide curriculum standards that promote students' comprehension of political ideologies in foundational curriculum. Unfortunately, if ideologically weaponized, the curricula could be used to indoctrinate students.</p> <p>HB 2273 expands the requirements of the State Board of Education (SBOE) to adopt a curriculum that includes an understanding of political ideologies, such as communism and totalitarianism, that conflict with the principles</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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Garcia Plesa	schools.	3 Absent	of freedom and democracy essential to the founding principles of the United States.	
HB 3745 By: Goldman	Relating to the procedure for maintaining the qualification of land for appraisal for ad valorem tax purposes as qualified open-space land.	Ways & Means 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Landowners who utilize their property for wildlife management may be asked to file a written management plan upon request of their local appraisal district outlining how their property is being used to qualify for a property tax reduction provided by law for agricultural land. Some landowners have reported being asked to submit a written management plan yearly, which is burdensome and increases processing costs for central appraisal districts across Texas. HB 3745 prohibits a chief appraiser from requiring a landowner to file a report on the implementation of a written management plan more than once during a five-year period. HB 3745 would alleviate the bureaucratic burden on rural landowners and decrease government expenses.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 3258 By: Howard Darby	Relating to a report by the Legislative Budget Board on the reliance by this state on certain dedicated revenue for purposes of budget certification.	Appropriations 26 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	In 2013, HB 7 was enacted and directed the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) to study and provide recommendations on opportunities for the state to reduce reliance on dedicated revenue for the purposes of budget certification and to provide plans for the succeeding six years. The LBB has not produced a report since 2019 because of confusion as to whether reports were supposed to be made past the six year mark. Given the growing number of dedicated funds, it is essential for the LBB to continue evaluating whether a dedicated fund is not being used or is no longer needed so that the dedicated funds can be returned to the general revenue for other purposes. HB 3258 seeks to address concerns raised in reports by the LBB regarding the state's reliance on certain dedicated revenue for budget certification. Under HB 3258, the LBB would have several responsibilities related to the review and evaluation of the use of dedicated revenue for budget certification. The LBB would be required to develop and implement a process to review new legislative enactments that create dedicated revenue, as well as the appropriation and accumulation of dedicated revenue and available dedicated revenue. The LBB would also need to develop and implement tools to evaluate the use of available dedicated revenue for state government financing and budgeting. This would involve analyzing the effectiveness of current practices and identifying areas for improvement. Finally, the LBB would be required to develop specific and detailed recommendations on actions the legislature may reasonably take to reduce the state's reliance on available dedicated revenue for budget certification. These recommendations should involve suggestions for alternative revenue sources or changes to current budgeting practices. HB 3258 will help ensure that the state government's use of dedicated revenue for budget certification is appropriate and sustainable, while also identifying opportunities for improvement.	<u>Favorable</u>

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<p>HB 3195 By: Bonnen</p>	<p>Relating to conduct of insurers providing preferred provider benefit plans with respect to physician and health care provider contracts and claims.</p>	<p>Insurance 6 Ayes, 1 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 3195 establishes rules for insurance companies that offer preferred provider benefit plans, specifically relating to contacts and claims involving physicians and healthcare providers. The provisions of HB 3195 ensure healthcare providers are not unfairly punished for advocating for patients which could ultimately lead to better outcomes for insured Texans.</p> <p>HB 3195 prohibits insurers from retaliating against physicians or healthcare providers who file a complaint or appeal a decision on behalf of an enrollee. As such, HB 3195 defines retaliatory actions imposing penalties during contract negotiations, engaging in unfair or deceptive practices, reducing fees, and making adverse changes to contractual terms. However, HB 3195 excludes freestanding urgent care facilities from its prohibitions. Additionally, HB 3195 mandates insurers provide electronic notice to preferred healthcare providers if a claim is not payable and restricts the ability of an insurer to recover payments or demand information from preferred providers that are not urgent care facilities until a final audit is completed.</p> <p>HB 3195 aims to protect preferred providers and physicians from retaliatory actions for advocating on behalf of an insured patient. As such, it promotes fairness and transparency between healthcare providers and insurers, ultimately improving quality of care and reducing costs for patients.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 182 By: Thompson, Senfronia</p>	<p>Relating to the authority of a court to terminate the sentence of certain persons released on parole.</p>	<p>Corrections 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>HB 182 is the enabling legislation for HJR 11, passed by the House and sent to the Senate.</p> <p>HB 182 expands the scope of judicial clemency in Texas by creating a process for eligible parolees to seek early sentence termination. This aims to alleviate the state's financial burden and support individuals who have successfully rehabilitated during parole.</p> <p>HB 182 allows an individual on parole for at least ten years and not required to register as a sex offender to request early sentence termination. Parolees must submit rehabilitation progress details, including employment, education, volunteer work, and letters of support. Upon receiving the request, the court notifies the state attorney and requests the parolee's conduct information from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. A court may hold a hearing to consider the motion, take testimony from the parolee, and from others that have relevant information. A court that holds this hearing must allow the state attorney to participate.</p> <p>Within 180 days, the court must review the request, information, and testimony to determine eligibility. If eligible, the court can terminate the sentence if it's in the best interest of justice, the public, and the individual, without imposing any conditions. Once terminated, the person's sentence is considered fully discharged.</p> <p>HB 182 allows rehabilitated Texas parolees to request sentence termination, reducing parole monitoring costs and offering relief to individuals and their families.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 4059</p> <p>By: King, Ken Kacal Johnson, Ann Thompson, Senfronia Burrows</p>	<p>Relating to the right to try cutting-edge treatments for patients with life-threatening or severely debilitating illnesses.</p>	<p>Public Health</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>In 2015, Texas enacted the Right to Try law, giving terminally ill patients access to experimental treatments that completed a Phase 1 FDA clinical trial. This law is now federal but doesn't cover patients with rare or ultra-rare diseases.</p> <p>HB 4059 requires a physician to verify a patient's illness and recommend treatment based on genetic analysis for eligibility. Patients must consider all FDA-approved options and provide written informed consent. HB 4059 allows eligible patients to request treatments from compliant health care facilities or manufacturers, who aren't required to provide treatment, and patients may have to cover costs.</p> <p>Health care providers' licenses or Medicare certification won't be affected solely based on recommending these treatments. HB 4059 doesn't change insurance requirements, force government agencies to cover costs, or require hospitals to provide additional services without approval. Additionally, HB 4059 prevents legal action against manufacturers or caregivers involved in a patient's care, receiving individualized investigational treatment, if they are harmed by the treatment, provided they act in good faith and follow the bill's provisions with reasonable care.</p> <p>HB 4059 seeks to expand Right to Try, enabling patients with rare or ultra-rare diseases to access personalized treatments while maintaining patient protections like informed consent and treatment risk disclosure.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4217</p> <p>By: Troxclair</p>	<p>Relating to the powers of certain public utility agencies; granting the power of eminent domain.</p>	<p>Natural Resources</p> <p>10 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>West Travis County Public Utility Agency (WTCPUA) is a governmental entity that provides water and wastewater services to a portion of western Travis County, Texas. It is responsible for managing and maintaining water and wastewater systems in its service area and ensuring that the infrastructure can meet the needs of its customers. It is seeking to undertake certain projects that are part of its capital improvement plan, but it requires new right-of-way authority to do so. Right-of-way authority refers to the legal right to access and use a particular area of land for a specific purpose, such as constructing and maintaining utility infrastructure.</p> <p>HB 4217 helps to grant the WTCPUA the power of eminent domain, a legal process through which a government entity can acquire private property for public use, provided that the owner is justly compensated.</p> <p>HB 4217 amends the state Local Government Code and grants a public utility agency, located in a county with a population of more than 1.2 million, the power of eminent domain to acquire land, easements, and property inside its service area for its projects or purposes. HB 4217 requires the agency to exercise eminent domain in the manner provided by the Property Code but exempts the agency from providing bonds for appeal or costs and from depositing more than the amount of any award in any suit. HB 4217 prohibits the agency from using eminent domain to condemn land to acquire rights to underground water or water rights.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

			<p>HB 4217 requires the agency to hold a public hearing and allow for public comment before extending service to new customers located outside the service area identified in the 10-year capital improvements plan in effect when an application for extension of service is received.</p> <p>HB 4217 helps public utilities in Texas’ largest counties obtain the right-of-way property necessary to expand operations. HB 4217 helps ensure these agencies consider public opinion and feedback before extending services to new customers outside its existing service area.</p>	
<p>HB 3480 By: Turner Lujan Harless</p>	<p>Relating to the reporting of certain overdose information and the mapping of overdoses for public safety purposes.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety 6 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>The CDC reported that drug overdose deaths in the U.S. increased 30% from 2019 to 2020 and 15% in 2021, resulting in an estimated 108,000 deaths in 2021. Currently, there is no designated location or database for emergency medical services personnel or other health officials to track and share overdose information. HB 3420 aims to provide public health and public safety entities, including law enforcement agencies, with overdose mapping (ODMAP) technology. This technology will enable them to share and analyze overdose data, as well as identify areas where the distribution of controlled substances may be more prevalent.</p> <p>HB 3480 requires local health authorities or law enforcement agencies to enter into an agreement with an entity that possesses computerized overdose mapping capabilities to report incidents of drug overdose. Emergency medical service personnel would then be required to promptly report information about overdose incidents to the local law enforcement agency or public safety authority within their jurisdiction. The bill defines an "overdose" as an acute condition resulting from the abuse or misuse of a controlled substance, characterized by symptoms such as severe physical illness, decreased consciousness, respiratory depression, coma, or death.</p> <p>The report must include the date and time of the overdose, the approximate location of the incident using the specified method, whether an opioid antagonist (such as Narcan) was administered, and whether the overdose was fatal or nonfatal. Medical service personnel who report an overdose incident in good faith are protected from civil or criminal liability. HB 3480 strictly limits the use of the report information to mapping overdose locations for public safety purposes, and it remains confidential and exempt from disclosure.</p> <p>The bill exempts emergency medical services personnel, local health authorities, law enforcement agencies, from civil or criminal liability for contributing information related to the overdose map, and the information is not subject to disclosure under state public information law. The participation agreement outlined in the bill does not waive sovereign immunity for legal actions or liability.</p> <p>Impact HB 3480 strives to create a single, uniform avenue of data collection related to drug overdose. There are concerns that overdose mapping may be used as an enforcement tool to justify the over-policing of certain areas and criminalization of substance use. However, there are currently 30 states who have enacted state-wide legislation</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

			<p>for the use of overdose mapping, and the program is also utilized in numerous counties in Texas. There is no evidence of inappropriate utilization of overdose mapping data in the six plus years of its existence. Additionally, ODMAP does not collect all overdose information, just information for certain substances that have been identified due to their life threatening nature. HB 3480 specifies that if a controlled substance is not in the system it does not have to be reported. Disclosure of information is limited and only approximate GPS coordinates of the address where the overdose victim was initially encountered or where the overdose occurred will be used rather than specific identifying information. One of ODMAP’s main purposes is to support public safety and public health efforts to collaborate and mobilize immediate responses to a sudden increase or spike in overdose incidents. HB 3480 strives to ensure that both public health and public safety officials are equipped with the necessary resources to treat and reduce overdose spikes.</p>	
<p>HB 3562 By: Smithee</p>	<p>Relating to durable powers of attorney and the construction of certain powers conferred in those durable powers of attorney.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Probate and estate planning lawyers have recommended that revisions be made to the Durable Power of Attorney Act to provide more clarity in its provisions and avoid any potential for unnecessary litigation.</p> <p>HB 3562 updates the language to the Durable Power of Attorney Act by replacing the language of “person” with “individual” as it pertains to defining principal, the meaning of disabled or incapacitated for purposes of durable power of attorney, and the the use, meaning, and effect of statutory durable power of attorney.</p> <p>HB 3562 revises the relationship between a ward’s named durable power of attorney and a court-appointed guardian for the ward’s estate following the execution of a durable power of attorney by established the following: a qualified, court-appointed permanent guard for the ward’s estate shall have their granted powers and authorities revoked unless the court orders the powers to be suspended during the interim of the estate guardianship; a court-appointed, qualified, temporary guardian for the ward's estate shall have any granted powers and authority granted automatically suspended for the duration of the guardianship unless a court order confirms the appointment validity and states the effectiveness of the power of attorney. HB 3562 removes the specification that the appointment is made by a court of the principal's residence.</p> <p>HB 3562 authorizes any government agency providing the principal with protective services to bring an action requesting a court to construe, determine the validity or enforceability of a durable power of attorney, or to review an agent's conduct under a durable power of attorney and grant appropriate relief. Should an agency request such action, the court is authorized to award costs and attorney fees, which may only be applied to matters concerning a durable power of attorney after the bill’s effective date.</p> <p>HB 3562 broadens the scope of the statutory durable power of attorney, extending its authority over business transactions and allowing it to cover an entity or entity ownership interest. This is subject to any conditions specified in an agreement or other document governing the entity or interest. The bill revises the applicable powers of the agent to to reflect this expansion by removing language restricting certain powers to action taken under a partnership agreement; specifies that related powers apply to sole ownership of an entity as well as to</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

			<p>ownership of a business; specifies powers related to a certified or uncertified ownership interest held by the principal, including the power to exercise to claims as the holder of interest and the power to defend litigation to which the principal is a party concerning such an interest.</p> <p>HB 3562 exempts certain disclaimers made on or after the bill’s effective date from the requirement for the court approval if the disclaimer is authorized instead under the Durable Power of Attorney Act. These disclaimers must be made by a fiduciary acting in a fiduciary capacity that would result in property passing to the person making the disclaimer.</p> <p>HB 3562 authorizes a court to suspend rather than revoke the durable power of attorney during a permanent guardianship, providing a less restrictive alternative to guardianship if needed. HB 3562 also allows the court to award equitable and just court costs and attorney’s fees when a person files an action questioning the actions of an agent under a durable power of attorney. This bill also expands the definition of the grant of authority to include transactions related to a limited liability company instead of a just partnership. HB 3562 provides clarifications that were recommended by the Texas Real Estate Probate Institute (T-REP) to the Durable Power of Attorney Act.</p>	
<p>HB 2647</p> <p>By: Sherman, Sr. Talarico Bhojani Buckley VanDeaver</p>	<p>Relating to allowing the board of trustees of certain school districts to create a nonvoting student trustee position on the board.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>12 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Constituents across Texas have voiced a desire to involve the student’s voice on the boards of trustees of certain independent school districts and charter schools. HB 2647 seeks to give students across Texas a voice in matters regarding their education by providing for the appointment of student trustees.</p> <p>HB 2647 creates the Student Trustee position. The position would be a non-voting position in addition to the already established number of members in a school district’s board of trustees, and the student may be appointed by the board of trustees. A student trustee would have similar powers and responsibilities as a regular trustee, such as attending and participating in open board meetings. However, the student trustee is not allowed to vote or make any motions, and their presence does not count towards determining a quorum or vote outcome.</p> <p>Increasing the representation of students on school boards could encourage active participation of students in decisions related to their education, enabling them to voice their concerns and needs. This will help students develop leadership skills and play a more proactive role in shaping their future.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 717</p> <p>By: Frank</p>	<p>Relating to the fire escape exemptions for certain courthouses.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Cottle County officials are concerned about a section of the fire code after the historic courthouses in Paducah were flagged for investigation by the state fire marshal’s office and the courthouses were determined to be in non compliance with specific fire escape requirements.</p> <p>The courthouse was built in 1930 with fire-resistant materials to reduce risk. The building's upper floors are currently unused, adding to its safety. Cottle County leaders argue that small counties should be able to maintain their courthouses according to their specific needs and insurance requirements. HB 717 exempts specific county courthouses from following statutory regulations that mandate and govern the use of fire escapes.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

			HB 717 exempts county courthouses constructed before September 1, 1989 and is located in a county with a population less than 50,000 from statutory regulatory provisions regarding fire escapes.	
HB 1613 By: Shine Martinez Fischer Kuempel Ordaz Slawson	Relating to the provision of state aid to certain local governments to offset the cost of the exemption from ad valorem taxation of the residence homestead of a 100 percent or totally disabled veteran.	Ways & Means 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>Texas introduced the 100% disabled veteran homestead property tax exemption in 2009, and extended it to surviving spouses in 2011, with retroactive treatment added in 2015. While well-supported, this exemption has also led to considerable revenue losses for local governments near the 15 federal military installations in Texas, due to the growing number of disabled veterans retiring in these areas.</p> <p>HB 1613, the State Economic Reimbursement for Veterans Exemption (SERVE) Act, revises rules for state-provided disabled veterans assistance payments. It makes all municipalities and counties eligible for these payments, instead of just those adjacent to U.S. military installations. Qualifying for payments now requires a municipality or county to lose more than one percent of their property tax revenue, rather than two percent of their general fund revenue.</p> <p>HB 1613 also creates the Disabled Veterans Local Government Assistance Trust Fund for reimbursing lost property tax revenue, replacing the current account. The comptroller will manage the fund and allocate money to qualified local governments without needing an appropriation. If the trust fund balance is not enough to cover payments, the comptroller will proportionately reduce each payment to prevent insolvency. Any surplus in the trust fund will be transferred to the general revenue fund at the end of each fiscal year.</p> <p>HB 1613 also requires the comptroller to deposit a certain amount of sales and use tax proceeds into the trust fund. Mandatory deposits of \$200 million each will be made for state fiscal years 2024 and 2025. For 2026 and beyond, the deposited amount will be equal to the preceding year's amount, adjusted by the annual rate of change in disabled veteran assistance payments.</p> <p>HB 1613 establishes the SERVE Act to help guarantee that communities where Texas veterans reside can offer the essential services and quality of life they and their families deserve.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 3757 By: Wilson Raymond	Relating to the authority of a taxing unit other than a school district, county, municipality, or junior college district to establish a limitation on the amount of ad valorem taxes that	Ways & Means 10 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>Current law requires school districts to provide a tax freeze for homeowners 65 years of age or older or disabled. Their surviving spouses receive the limitation if they were 55 or disabled when their spouse died. The tax freeze is extended to cities, counties, and junior colleges if they meet income criteria.</p> <p>HB 3757 extends this tax freeze option to all taxing units to restrict the total amount of property taxes from being raised on individuals who are age 65 or older or who have a disability and whose household income does not exceed 200% of the federal poverty level. The bill does not impede an appraisal district's ability to increase a taxable property based on residential improvements that are not made to fix structures that are uninhabitable or unusable by a casualty or wind or water damage. HB 3757 allows surviving spouses to receive the limitation on taxes if they are disabled or 55 years of age or older when the individual dies and who are eligible due to their</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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

	the taxing unit may impose on the residence homesteads of certain low-income individuals who are disabled or elderly and their surviving spouses.		household income level not exceeding 200% of the federal poverty level. The residential homestead also has to be the house of the surviving spouse when their spouse dies and has to remain the residence homestead of the surviving spouse. HB 3757 allows taxing units to freeze taxes for elderly or disabled individuals who make less than 200% of the federal poverty level. HB 3757 reduces the tax burden on these vulnerable populations, preventing them from being taxed out of their homes. HB 3757 is the enabling legislation for HJR 153.	
HB 118 By: Cortez	Relating to health benefit plan coverage for certain tests to detect prostate cancer.	Insurance 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	HB 118 prohibits a health benefit plan that includes coverage for an annual prostate cancer examination from charging a premium, deductible, copayment, coinsurance or any related fees for covered benefits. The mandatory coverage includes a physical exam, and for at-risk individuals, a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test. As such, HB 118 changes the rules for health benefit plans that cover tests to detect prostate cancer. The changes include expanding the types of plans that must follow these rules, such as those offered under a Lloyd’s plan, Medicaid, CHIP, TRS-ActiveCare, and small employers. HB 118 also removes language that limited the application of these rules to certain types of plans such as MEWAs and removes a plan that offers coverage under the Texas Political Subdivision Employees Uniform Group Benefits Act. HB 118 increases insurance coverage for prostate cancer detection to reduce the health disparities especially among underserved populations.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 4837 By: Lopez, Ray Garcia	Relating to a veteran housing program established by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.	State Affairs 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	Many veterans encounter various mental health issues as a result of their experiences in the military, and they face challenges adjusting to civilian life upon their discharge from military service. Incarcerated veterans struggle with their mental health and also face considerable obstacles during their readjustment upon release. There is a need for housing programs specifically for incarcerated veterans within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to offer support from peers who understand their unique mental health needs. HB 4837 aims to implement this veterans housing program within TDCJ. HB 4837 mandates TDCJ establish a housing program for incarcerated veterans of the U.S. armed forces. The program will dedicate specific cel blocks or dormitories for use by veterans, with procedures to verify veteran status during the diagnostic process. Inmates who are verified veterans can choose to opt into the housing program. TDCJ cannot house an inmate in a cellblock or dormitory of this program if it poses a safety or security risk to other inmates or staff. TDCJ must comply with the prohibition on housing inmates with different custody classifications in the same cellblock or dormitory unless certain circumstances apply under existing statute for mixing classifications.	<u>Favorable</u>

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

			<p>HB 4837 provides a program within TDCJ which aims to enhance the outcomes for incarcerated veterans during and after their time in prison.</p>	
<p>HB 1338 By: Raney</p>	<p>Relating to the participation of community-based organizations in workforce training programs funded by the skills development fund.</p>	<p>International Relations & Economic Development</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Some small businesses have reported difficulty accessing skills development fund support through junior colleges or local workforce development boards for reasons such as lack of interest or inability to provide timely support.</p> <p>HB 1338 aims to address this by allowing 501(c)(3) tax-exempt community-based organizations to work directly with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to ensure small businesses can access the skills development fund's support if they are unsuccessful in partnering with a community or technical college or the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.</p> <p>HB 1338 would exempt 501(c)(3) tax-exempt community-based organizations providing education, vocational education, rehabilitation, job training, or internship services or programs from the requirement to partner with a community and technical college or the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service when applying for money from the skills development fund. This exemption only applies if the organization has unsuccessfully tried to establish a partnership at least 90 days prior to applying. If an organization provides state-regulated services, it must submit evidence of any applicable certification, license, or registration to the TWC during the application process.</p> <p>HB 1338 seeks to help small businesses get the support they need for employee training and development.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 940 By: Dutton</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of the private child care task force.</p>	<p>Human Services</p> <p>5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>According to the Economic Policy Institute, childcare costs in Texas are unaffordable for most families. Texas families spend about \$9,324 per year on infant care. Considering the median family income of \$59,440, families allocate nearly 16% of their income toward childcare expenses.</p> <p>HB 940 establishes a private childcare task force to study the availability to improve the accessibility and affordability of childcare in Texas. The task force will consist of seven members, a governor-appointed representative, three senators selected by the lieutenant governor, and three representatives selected by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The task force will conduct a study examining the amounts charged for and the availability of childcare provided by private providers and methods to reduce these costs while increasing the availability of childcare.</p> <p>The task force will submit a report on the study and the recommendations developed by the task force to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each legislature member. The task force is authorized to request relevant information from the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) in conducting the study, and HHSC must comply with their request.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

			HB 940 can provide insight into how childcare costs can be reduced in Texas.	
HB 322 By: Cortez	Relating to certain evidentiary presumptions and burdens of proof in determining a defendant's incompetency to stand trial or a defendant's insanity in a criminal case.	Criminal Jurisprudence 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	In Texas, if a defendant commits a crime and is found not guilty by reason of insanity, they are assumed to be insane for all subsequent charges moving forward. This has caused situations in which upon release, an individual may commit a secondary crime, and the family is unable to fully seek justice. Additionally, this creates hardship for prosecutors. HB 322 seeks to address this by making adjustments to how these cases move forward. HB 322 dictates that the burden of proof to establish insanity or incompetence at the time of the offense lies with the defendant, regardless of if the defendant was previously found not guilty by reason of insanity or incompetent to stand trial in other cases. HB 322 will allow each individual case to be considered as it stands, while still allowing a defendant to prove incompetence or insanity. This protects the public while allowing an avenue for a defendant to have a fair trial that takes all of the facts into account.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 131 By: Murr Talarico	Relating to the excused absence from public school for certain students to visit a professional's workplace for a career investigation day.	Public Education 12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Career exploration is a quintessential experience for upper-classmen in high school as they begin to embark on life post-graduation. HB 131 would give excused absences for certain students to visit a professional workplace for a career investigation day. Currently, students may receive an excused absence for college visits during their junior or senior year to determine their interest, yet students may not receive an excused absence to visit professional workplaces. HB 131 seeks to allow excused absences for students visiting professional workplaces in determining interest in prospective careers. In order for this absence to be excused, students must be juniors or seniors in high school. The district may not excuse the student for more than two days. The district must also adopt a policy that determines the eligibility of this particular type of excused absence and a process to verify the visit with the student.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 2726 By: Klick	Relating to the practice of nursing, including disciplinary procedures of the Texas Board of Nursing; authorizing a fee.	Public Health 9 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	Texas, like the rest of the country, is experiencing an exacerbated nursing shortage due to the COVID-19 pandemic. HB 2726 aims to address this by applying the same standards and rules to both in-state and out-of-state nurses practicing under a waiver or emergency declaration and directing the Texas Board of Nursing to establish an expungement process for low-level violations on a nurse's record. HB 2726 empowers the Texas Board of Nursing (TBON) to establish a process for expunging low-level violations that don't involve direct patient harm from a nurse's record, provided they complete the requirements of a	<u>Favorable</u>

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

			<p>disciplinary order or board-approved settlement and haven't committed additional or repeated violations within five years before requesting expunction.</p> <p>HB 2726 requires the board to report a nurse's disciplinary record expunction to the National Practitioner Data Bank and permits the board to establish a reasonable expunction fee for administration costs. The bill states that expunged disciplinary orders and related investigatory documents are not public information under state law and are not subject to disclosure, except when required by a court order or subpoena. A nurse with an expunged disciplinary record may declare in response to an inquiry that the record does not exist.</p> <p>Furthermore, HB 2726 ensures that complaints, formal charges, final board orders, and disciplinary proceedings involving a nurse participating in a board-approved pilot program for innovative applications are subject to the same confidentiality and disclosure requirements as those for a nurse participating in a board-approved peer assistance program.</p> <p>HB 2726 seeks to promote fair and equal treatment in addressing nursing practice violations and encouraging licensed nurse employment in Texas through an expungement process for minor, non-harmful violations.</p>	
<p>HB 997 By: Muñoz, Jr.</p>	<p>Relating to the authority of a municipality to prohibit police or fire department employees from circulating or signing certain employment petitions.</p>	<p>Urban Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Some first responders, who work in a municipality in which they do not reside, contend they have been prohibited from participating and working to circulate petitions for civil service, meet and confer initiatives (encouraging parties to resolve their disputes without the need for court intervention), and other issues related to collective bargaining. HB 997 seeks to give first responders a voice in how the governance of the community they serve.</p> <p>HB 997 would prevent a municipality from adopting or enforcing any provision, policy, ordinance, or other measure that would prevent an employee of the municipality's police or fire department from signing or circulating a petition, regardless of residency. Police and fire department employees should have the right to sign and circulate petitions related to their employment, without fear of retaliation or punishment from their employer.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2605 By: Canales</p>	<p>Relating to the funding of certain port projects.</p>	<p>Transportation 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Texas ports handle significant international and domestic trade through essential gateways. Although the port access fund exists by law, it has not received any funding in the past. Additionally, there is no guarantee of equitable funding distribution across state ports. Texas plans to keep its leading position in maritime trade through provisions in HB 2605, which helps ensure the utility of a grant funding program for Texas ports to meet economic demands.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

			<p>HB 2605 amends the state Transportation Code and changes provisions related to funding certain port projects. These changes include renaming "port access improvement project" as "port connectivity project" and "port security, transportation, or facility project" as "port development and infrastructure project" which requires security, transportation, facility projects, and infrastructure for proper operation of a maritime port.</p> <p>HB 2605 allows the Port Authority Advisory Committee to determine facilities necessary for project funding as a port development and infrastructure project. The eligibility for funding as a port development and infrastructure project is also extended to include projects for acquiring mechanized equipment used in the movement of cargo or passengers in all types of commerce and trade, rather than only international commerce. The funding cap for an eligible applicant is 20% of the total amount of money appropriated to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in a fiscal biennium to fund eligible projects.</p> <p>HB 2605 requires money appropriated to the port access account fund by the legislature and money received from the federal government to be credited to the port access account fund. HB 2605 restricts the use of such money appropriated by the legislature to funding eligible port development and infrastructure projects. The expenses incurred by TxDOT for funding port security projects and studies require approval from the Port Authority Advisory Committee.</p> <p>HB 2605 seeks to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the funding process for port projects by clarifying the eligibility criteria and the role of the Port Authority Advisory Committee. Expanding the scope of eligible projects may promote more investment in port infrastructure and enhance the competitiveness of Texas ports in global trade.</p>	
<p>HB 1678 By: Jetton</p>	<p>Relating to a local remote learning program offered by a public school for certain students at risk of dropping out of school.</p>	<p>Youth Health and Safety</p> <p>6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>The overall dropout rate across the state of Texas was roughly 5.5% in 2020. According to data from the Texas Education Agency, many students at risk of dropping out are economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and students with disabilities. Some school districts have expressed a need for these students to be provided with greater accessibility to their education and more options for schooling. HB 1678 seeks to provide this by establishing that a school district may provide an online learning program for at-risk youth to attend school virtually under certain requirements.</p> <p>HB 1678 allows a public school district or open enrollment charter school to operate a remote learning program outside the state virtual school network, a requirement that raises concerns about the lack of state oversight and quality of the remote learning program. A student would be eligible for such a program if they are enrolled in high school and at risk of dropping out of school as defined by current statute, and the school determines that they would benefit from such a program.</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>

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

			<p>HB 1678 sets out requirements to ensure the virtual course program is appropriately structured, accessible to eligible students, and accountable for student attendance. The bill dictates that a remote learning program must meet certain requirements, including that the virtual course is taught using asynchronous instruction and meets the district's minimum number of minutes for operation. The school operating a program must have a process that will identify students who may be eligible, including a screening mechanism regarding a student's academic needs and whether they have the technology to properly participate. The bill allows schools to provide technology to students who may not be equipped. Students enrolled in the virtual course program should be counted towards the school's average daily attendance in the same way as other students to ensure the school receives funding.</p> <p>HB 1678 significantly expands options available to districts with concerns regarding at-risk students. The program established by this bill will help ensure that students facing challenges such as employment, caregiving responsibilities, or disabilities that make in-person attendance difficult, can access the education they deserve. While remote learning has been shown to be effective for some students, there are also standing concerns regarding its efficacy. These include the potential for social isolation, lack of structure and support, and limited engagement. It is essential to note that at-risk students may already struggle with these issues in traditional classroom settings, and remote learning may further exacerbate these concerns.</p> <p>Despite these potential challenges, HB 1678 represents a step forward in providing additional support to at-risk students. However, it is important to acknowledge that remote learning should not be viewed as a replacement for other forms of support. Rather, this program should be viewed as one tool among many for ensuring that at-risk students can succeed and achieve their full potential.</p>	
<p>HB 993 By: Muñoz, Jr. Frazier</p>	<p>Relating to the sheriff's department civil service systems in certain counties.</p>	<p>County Affairs 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Concerns have been raised by peace officers covered by a sheriff's department civil service system regarding the need for parity between county and municipal civil services in order to ensure the appeals process is fair and bipartisan. H.B. 993 aims to resolve the discrepancy in appeals procedures for county and municipal law enforcement personnel by enabling an employee who is part of a county civil service system to file an appeal with an impartial third-party hearing examiner rather than with the county civil service commission.</p> <p>HB 993 grants a county employee who was demoted, suspended, or removed by the commissioner the ability to appeal the decision through petition to the district court in the county within 30 days of the decision or through a third-party hearing examiner.</p> <p><i>Intent to Appeal</i> HB 993 outlines the procedures for hearing examiners. When a promotional bypass, demotion, or disciplinary action is issued to an employee, the written notice must inform the employee that in case of an appeal, they can choose to appeal to an independent third-party hearing examiner instead of the commission. The letter must also</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

state that if the employee elects to appeal to a hearing examiner, they will waive all rights to appeal to a district court except for specific grounds such as lack of jurisdiction, fraud, or an arbitrary ruling. The appeal must be filed within 45 days of the final ruling and state the basis for the appeal. The district court's judgment follows the substantial evidence rule and can be appealed like other civil cases. In order to appeal to a hearing examiner, the employee must submit a written request along with the original notice of appeal to the commission.

The appealing employee and the department must share the fees and expenses of the hearing examiner equality. Any witness costs are to be covered by the party who calls the witness.

Hearing Examiner Selection Process
 The involved parties must attempt to work jointly in selecting an impartial hearing examiner. If they cannot agree within 10 days of the filed appeal, the commission must immediately request a list of the seven qualified hearing examiners from either the American Arbitration Association or the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. The involved parties must then agree on one of the seven options. If they still can't agree, within 5 days after receiving the list, each party shall alternate striking a name from the list until one name remains. The remaining person shall be the designated hearing examiner and the parties shall set a date for the hearing.

The appeal hearing begins as soon as the hearing examiner is available. If they cannot begin within 45 days after the date they were selected, the employee has two days to call for the selection of a new hearing examiner, and the selection process shall begin all over.

Hearing Examiner's Duties and Powers
 The hearing examiner has all the same duties and powers as the commission, including the right to issue subpoenas. The hearing examiner may uphold, reduce, or overturn the discipline imposed on the employee, except the awarding of any lost compensation to the employee. If the district court's decision is overturned by the hearing examiner, the employee is entitled to full compensation for the actual time lost as a result of the suspension, restoration of benefits, or in the case of overturning a demotion, the employee is entitled to the difference in pay between the position they were demoted from and the position they held.

Hearing Decision
 To the extent possible, the hearing examiner must come to their decision within 30 days after the hearing ends or the briefs are filed. The hearing examiner's jurisdiction, the validity of the disciplinary action, or the final decision may not be affected if the examiner is unable to render their decision in the allotted time. The parties may agree to expedite the procedure, in which the hearing examiner must make their decision within 10 days after the hearing has ended. The hearing examiner's decision is final and binding on all parties. Should the employee decide to appeal the hearing examiner's decision, the employee waives all rights to appeal to a district court except for the guidelines under the appeal of a district court.

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<p>HB 503 By: Wu Moody</p>	<p>Relating to the jurisdiction of a juvenile court over certain persons and to the sealing and nondisclosure of certain juvenile records.</p>	<p>Juvenile Justice and Family Issues 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>The Texas juvenile justice system faces challenges in rehabilitating youth within limited jurisdiction and time frames. The limited options available to the court and prosecution can lead to unintended negative outcomes for youth, particularly those with severe trauma, mental health, and behavioral issues that require intensive therapy and guidance. Some youth receive determinate sentences due to limited time frames that may occur when a youth enters the system late, which can impact them for life. Although Texas law allows for juvenile records to be sealed for eligible youth, those who received determinate sentences are ineligible, leaving them with lifelong criminal records that can negatively affect their transition to adulthood. This can have a more severe impact than confinement or probation, and leaves youth with adult criminal records that follow them for life. HB 503 seeks to remedy this by expanding a courts jurisdiction regarding record sealing and granting them extensions to avoid determinate sentencing.</p> <p>HB 503 establishes that a juvenile court may retain jurisdiction over an individual if, among other requirements, the court finds that proceedings have been delayed by no fault of the state. The bill also allows a juvenile court to order the sealing of an individual's records if they were placed on determinate sentence probation under certain conditions. These conditions include that the person was not committed to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) for certain delinquent conduct for which the person was placed on probation. Additionally, the person must not have been transferred to an appropriate district court, and they must have been discharged from the sentence of probation.</p> <p>HB 503 will help to ensure that justice involved children can focus on rehabilitation and move forward with their lives without a record following them.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 463 By: Hull Noble</p>	<p>Relating to medical examinations for certain children entering the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services.</p>	<p>Human Services 7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 1 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The 85th Legislature passed SB 11, which required the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to establish rules for children entering into conservatorship with DFPS and remaining for more than three business days to receive a medical examination before the end of the third day of being removed from the home. DFPS interpreted this to mean that all children should undergo a medical examination regardless of the reasons for the removal. This medical exam is referred to as the “three-day medical examination.” HB 463 proposes a clarification regarding three-day medical examinations and to instill legislative oversight.</p> <p>HB 463 will limit which children entering into a conservatorship with DFPS for longer than three business days are to receive the three-day medical examination. HB 463 will limit the three-day medical examinations to children who are removed from their home due to physical or sexual abuse or for an obvious physical injury, or for children who have a chronic medical condition, a complex medical condition, or a diagnosed mental illness.</p> <p>HB 463 requires DFPS to submit a report to the applicable standing legislative committees about the implementation of the statewide medical examination requirement. The report must include, for each region of the state, the compliance with examination requirements, the number of examinations conducted, and the reason</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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

			<p>for each examination.</p> <p>Supporters of the bill appreciate the increased accountability of DFPS and ensure DFPS adheres to the standards to screen children for medical examinations appropriately.</p> <p>Advocates express concern about the limitation potentially removing the only opportunity for children to receive appropriate and timely medical care. It is crucial to know not all abuse is visible, and removing a child’s access to a proper medical examination may compromise their safety. In addition, children in state conservatorship often experience delays in receiving medical care for various conditions like infections, breathing difficulties, and malnutrition. These children are also likely to have unfilled prescriptions or incomplete medical information. An initial medical examination when entering a conservatorship mitigates this by identifying medical needs early in the process. There is also concern about having DFPS decide which children have higher medical priority or which have a complex or chronic health condition. CPS workers do not have medical training to diagnose those conditions along with seemingly healthy children who may have an underlying medical condition. It is particularly concerning that medical examinations provided to our most vulnerable Texans as “an unnecessary taxpayer expense.” Further, it is proposed that these medical examinations are traumatic and invasive when pediatricians providing these exams use evidence-based trauma-informed care.</p>	
<p>HB 1282</p> <p>By: Plesa DeAyala Lopez, Ray Romero, Jr. Garcia</p>	<p>Relating to the county jailer training on interacting with veterans in the criminal justice system.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p> <p>6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Texas has an increasing population of veterans who have experienced encounters with law enforcement, some of which ending them in county jails. HB 1282 aims to enhance the treatment of justice-involved veterans and promote safer jail environments by mandating that the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) work jointly with the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) to incorporate training on justice-involved veterans into its county jailer training program.</p> <p>The legislation would allow TCOLE to incorporate this training into the initial county jailer certification training without increasing the amount of training hours. Educating jailers on the specific needs, medical conditions, and military culture of these veterans can provide better services and ensure a safer environment for everyone in the jail.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 1487</p> <p>By: Gerdes Bailes Kitzman Holland Murr</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of a rural county law enforcement grant program.</p>	<p>County Affairs</p> <p>7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Law enforcement agencies in rural Texas face financial constraints, staffing shortages, and increasing responsibilities within their communities. C.S.H.B. 1487 seeks to provide funding assistance by creating a grant program.</p> <p>A rural county law enforcement agency includes the sheriff’s office or constable’s office of a county with a population of 275,000 or less.</p> <p>HB 1487 requires the comptroller to establish and administer a grant program for a rural county law enforcement agency to apply for a grant that may be used to pay for salaries, recruitment costs, equipment and facilities, and any cost for training. The agency must obtain written approval to use the money before spending any funding</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>granted to the agency. The bill establishes caps for grant disbursement depending on county size.</p> <p>The comptroller must submit a report to the legislature on December 1 of each even-numbered year regarding the results and performance of the grant program. The comptroller must adopt rules regarding the eligibility for grant applicants, application procedures, guidelines for grant amounts, evaluation procedure for application, and monitoring procedures for the use of the grant awarded to ensure compliance.</p> <p>The proposed grant program has the potential to strengthen and support rural law enforcement agencies by providing them with much-needed financial assistance.</p>	
<p>HB 1577 By: Hull Herrero</p>	<p>Relating to changing the eligibility for mandatory supervision of an inmate serving a sentence for or previously convicted of certain assaults.</p>	<p>Corrections 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Per the National Coalition for Domestic Violence, an average of 20 individuals are physically abused per minute nationally, with strangulation being a leading risk factor for domestic violence-related homicide. The Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) is responsible for determining parole eligibility, and it is suggested they should have more discretion on specific assault cases, including domestic violence offenses. Mandatory supervision is the legislatively enforced release of certain offenders on parole based on the calendar time served and good conduct time, but this release is at the discretion of the BPP. HB 1577 seeks to add to the list of offenses ineligible for mandatory supervision so that the release of these offenses is contingent on the BPP's approval.</p> <p>HB 1577 adds a second-degree felony assault or certain assault offenses to the list of offenses ineligible for mandatory supervision. The applicable assault offenses are assaults committed against a person with whom the actor has or had a dating, family, or household relationship with certain factors established at trial, a pregnant person to force them to have an abortion, or a person the actor knew was pregnant at the time of the assault.</p> <p>Domestic violence is a horrible reality and takes a significant toll on survivors. These individuals should be given justice in response to the atrocities they face. However, there is a need to recognize the burden of increasing incarceration time on Texas prison systems and the cost to the state. Additionally, the BPP could deny people convicted of these offenses when eligible for mandatory supervision now. With HB 1577's change, individuals must complete at least 50% of their sentence without good conduct time credit before parole consideration, and even then, it is not guaranteed release.</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>
<p>HB 1667 By: Jetton</p>	<p>Relating to the reporting of child abuse or neglect.</p>	<p>Human Services 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Data from the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) indicates that the agency receives hundreds of thousands of reports of suspected child abuse or neglect. DFPS reports they will open about 200,000 cases each fiscal year for the past couple of years and that they believed a complaint to be valid less than 30% of the time. HB 1667 aims to reduce the volume of inappropriate or invalid reports by limiting who is to be considered mandatory reporters and by referring at-risk families to community-based services.</p> <p>HB 1667 removes the mandatory reporting requirement for persons who have reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect. Instead, the mandatory reporting requirement will be for professionals with direct contact with children through the scope</p>	<p><u>Favorable with Concerns</u></p>

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			<p>and duties of their licensure or certification, like teachers, nurses, and doctors. Nonprofessional reports could provide a voluntary report of suspected child abuse or neglect.</p> <p>A mandatory report by a professional is not required if the concerns solely relate to a child’s behavior, truancy, or conditions of poverty like lack of adequate clothing, housing instability, or lack of utilities in the child’s home if it does not adversely affect the child’s physical or mental health or welfare. Instead, a reporter may refer a family to community-based prevention or family preservation services for these situations. The reporter must make a reasonable effort to ensure the family is connected with the appropriate provider. The provider must provide the appropriate resources or referrals to enhance the family’s ability to provide a safe and stable environment for the child.</p> <p>HB 1667 requires professionals who are mandatory reporters to receive training developed by the Department of Family and Protective Services. HB 1667 establishes that a professional who makes a referral to community-based prevention or family-preservation services in lieu of making a required report of abuse or neglect does qualify as a failure to report.</p> <p>Under HB 1667, a person making a report must provide their name and contact information to the receiving agency, and DFPS must make a reasonable effort to collect this information. Agencies receiving reports of abuse or neglect must inform the reporter they must collect the reporter’s name and contact information, their personal information will be confidential and disclosed as permitted by state law, and knowingly making a false report is a criminal offense. DFPS may still conduct a preliminary investigation even if they are unable to collect the reporter’s information.</p> <p>Referring at-risk families to community-based services diverts interactions with the legal system and can address presenting needs of the family. There is concern about urging people to provide their personal information when making a report. There are numerous reasons someone may be uncomfortable revealing information when making a claim (they may be undocumented, facing charges, etc.). While it does not explicitly remove the ability to anonymously report, it is possible this could discourage DFPS from accepting anonymous reports.</p>	
<p>HB 1990 By: Wu</p>	<p>Relating to requiring the Department of Family and Protective Services to notify certain individuals of changes to child abuse and neglect investigation reports.</p>	<p>Human Services 7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) maintains records of child abuse and neglect investigations. Currently, no parties with a stake in the child’s welfare are informed about any modifications made to these reports. HB 1990 aims to increase transparency by enabling specific concerned parties to receive notifications regarding changes made to the child’s investigation report.</p> <p>HB 1990 mandates that DFPS must inform interested parties whenever modifications are made to a child’s investigation report pertaining to abuse and neglect. The identified interested parties include the child’s parent, the parent’s attorney, the appointed attorney ad litem, the appointed guardian ad litem (including volunteer advocates), and any other individual deemed by the court to have a significant interest in the child’s well-being.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>By providing relevant information to all involved parties, HB 1990 ensures the safeguarding of children in the Texas DFPS system.</p>	
<p>HB 1367 By: Vasut</p>	<p>Relating to the violation of certain laws and provisions of governing instruments by, and the recall by property owners of, a property owners' association board member.</p>	<p>Business & Industry 7 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Property owners have raised concerns about lack of options to bring actions against property owners' associations (POAs), commonly referred to as homeowners' associations (HOAs), when board members violate the Texas Residential Property Owners Protection Act or a dedicatory instrument. HB 1367 is a response to these concerns.</p> <p>HB 1367 authorizes property owners holding at least 20% of all voting interests in a POA to petition a POA for a recall election to recall a board member. HB 1367 provides what is required for the petition and the required delivery method. HB 1367 prohibits a petition from naming more than one member to be the subject of a recall. The POA must hold the meeting for the recall within 90 days of receiving the petition. HB 1367 establishes that if there is a majority vote for the recall of the board member, the member's position on the board is immediately vacant.</p> <p>HB 1367 authorizes a property owner to bring an action against a POA for violating the Texas Residential Property Owners Protection Act or provisions of the POA's dedicatory instrument if conducted by a board member while acting in their official capacity. HB 1367 allows a property owner to file a petition for relief against the POA with the justice of the peace that has jurisdiction over all or part of the property governed by the POA. If the justice of the peace determines a board member did violate a provision of this bill or the dedicated instrument alone or with other board members, the justice of the peace may grant one or more remedies. The remedies include removing the board member from the board, making the POA responsible for damages incurred by the owner from the violation, or allowing the owner to deduct awarded damages, court costs, and attorney's fees from future assessments payable to the POA. HB 1367 requires a property to notify the POA of the intent to bring an action against them at least ten days before the action is delivered.</p> <p>Advocates for POAs raise concerns that HB 1367 provides another vehicle to remove board members from POAs. Additionally, the 20% threshold is suggested to be too low to prompt the removal of a board member. Another concern from this group is that this will deter people from volunteering on POA boards out of fear of being sued. In response, POAs may require hiring people to serve on their boards. Lastly, there is concern about having justices of the peace presiding over these cases. Advocates state that justices of the peace do not have injunctive authority, and standard rules of evidence do not apply to their courts. Further, it is stated that rulings from justices of the peace are often overturned when appealed in other courts.</p> <p>HB 1367 aims to address property owners' concerns about being able to respond to violations of POAs, however, there are concerns about how the bill attempts this.</p>	<p><u>Will of the House</u></p>

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<p>HB 2625 By: Moody</p>	<p>Relating to the formation of a municipal housing authority asset commission by certain municipal housing authorities.</p>	<p>Urban Affairs 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The housing authority in El Paso recently underwent some public housing improvements through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program offered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This program allowed El Paso to rebuild 7,000 public housing units, giving these properties a 40 year lifespan. Because of this transformation, the El Paso housing authority needs a highly qualified board of experts in finance to watch over these assets to ensure they are used in the best interest of the community. The current committee that watches over these assets is not made up of financial experts that are best suited to oversee assets.</p> <p>HB 2625 seeks to solve this issue by allowing El Paso to implement a municipal housing authority asset commission. HB 2625 only applies to counties with municipalities of 600,000 or more that are located in a county with a population of 800,000 or more that is located on the international border. A municipal housing authority asset commission can be formed by the commissioners of a municipal housing authority and no less than 80% of the members of the commissioners court of the county in which the authority operates.</p> <p>HB 2625 specifies that the asset commission will be composed of 5 members who serve staggered 5 year terms and are appointed by a majority of commissioners of the municipal housing authority that formed the asset commission. Asset commissioners must be licensed real estate brokers, certified public accountants, licensed attorneys who are certified in residential or commercial real estate law, current or former chief executive officer or director of a public housing authority that owns or manages 5,000 or more units, or have other applicable experience. Additionally, one of the asset commission members must have at least 10 years of experience in management or operation of apartments funded by low income housing tax credits. HB 2625 excludes elected officials and certain employees of the area. Initial members will be composed of members who serve three-year terms, two that serve four-year terms, and one that serves a 5 year term. HB 2625 excludes members that have conflicts of interest outlined by this bill. Asset commission members are entitled to reasonable compensation from the housing authority for their services and reimbursement for necessary expenses related to the commission, including travel expenses.</p> <p>HB 2625 requires an asset commission's majority vote for approval of transactions involving assets valued over \$100,000, including property, buildings, partnership interests, membership interests, ownership interests, and other assets of the authority or a sponsored public facility corporation. This includes the trading, financing, refinancing, or issuance of bonds associated with these assets. HB 2625 allows asset commissions to directly or indirectly hold or own an interest and any accompanying cash flow or benefit associated with that interest only if it is held for the exclusive benefit of the municipal housing authority that formed the asset commission. The bill also allows an asset commission to delegate the powers and duties under HB 2625 to an agent or employee of the asset commission or the municipal housing authority that formed the asset commission.</p> <p>HB 2625 allows the city of El Paso municipal housing authority to form an asset commission to oversee their</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
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<p>HB 2266 By: Leach</p>	<p>Relating to judicial review of certain local laws applicable to state license holders.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>assets to ensure they are used keeping the city's best interests in mind.</p> <p>There has been a growing movement to limit the power of local governments. A statewide poll of Texas conducted by Baselice & Associates in 2019 found that 87% of Texas voters believe their local elected officials are more connected to their communities and are better able to pass policies that sufficiently address community needs. HB 2266 aims to restrict the ability of local governments to enforce certain local ordinances on individuals or entities with a license to conduct occupational or business activity in Texas.</p> <p>HB 2266 allows occupational license holders to bring an action to enjoin the enforcement of local law if it establishes requirements for, imposes restrictions on, or otherwise regulates the occupation or business activity of the license holder more stringently than state law or would result in an adverse economic impact on the license holder.</p> <p>HB 2266 allows a license holder to bring an action in a district court in a county that includes any territory of the municipality that adopted the local law, or in Travis County, to enjoin the enforcement of a local law that is more stringent than state law and would result in an adverse economic impact on them. The license holder would have to show, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the law is a local law and similar local laws in other jurisdictions inside or outside of this state resulted in an adverse economic impact.</p> <p>As soon as the license holder satisfies this burden of proof, the municipality then has the burden of proof to establish by clear and convincing evidence that the local law does not conflict with state law and is necessary and narrowly tailored to protect against actual and specific harm to the public's health or safety.</p> <p>The court may grant any prohibitory or mandatory relief warranted by the facts, including a temporary restraining order, or temporary or permanent injunction. If the license holder prevails in this action, the court must require the municipality to pay the license holder court costs and reasonable and necessary attorney's fees.</p> <p>HB 2266 has a broad scope and limits local governments from regulating the occupation or business activity of a license holder within a municipality or the municipality's extraterritorial jurisdiction, going beyond limiting licensing measures at a local level. HB 2266 would have many harmful impacts on local communities, including those that have implemented ordinances to target payday and auto-title lenders who engage in predatory lending practices that harm some of the most vulnerable Texans; this is an example of 49 Texas cities implementing beneficial ordinances for their communities for issues that the state government has not yet addressed. Additionally, HB 2266 could nullify local ordinances relating to hiring locally, paying living wages, offering workers' compensation insurance, additional safety training, and removing working protections, including rest breaks.. HB 2266 limits cities from providing incentives to workers regarding these issues, threatening the quality of jobs in Texas. There are also concerns that HB 2266 will result in expensive litigation against cities, counties, and Texans. Lastly, local license holders already have opportunities to provide input about local</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
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			ordinances through local processes, such as public meetings, which is a more beneficial avenue for all stakeholders. Proving similar laws in other areas may not shed light on that specific city’s situation. Every community has different needs, and restricting the ability of local governments to enforce ordinances relating to businesses will make it difficult for local governments to adequately address local issues affecting their communities.	
HB 2081 By: Klick	Relating to the registration of vision support organizations; imposing a fee; requiring an occupational registration; providing a civil penalty.	Business & Industry 9 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>The vision care industry is becoming consolidated, much like other healthcare industries. Optometrists are only able to work for themselves or other optometrists or physicians, and corporations cannot control optometry practices by law. However, corporations are increasing their control over many aspects of optometric practices through business agreements, which can obscure information from patients and the state, potentially prioritize financial interests over patients' well-being, and impact the use of government insurance programs.</p> <p>HB 2081 addresses these issues by defining the terms business support services and vision support organization (VSO). The bill also establishes and requires registration of VSO’s engaged in business agreements with optometrists. The following are exempted from such agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an accountant providing only accounting services; • an attorney providing only legal counsel; • an insurance company or insurance agent providing only insurance policies to a business; • entities providing only investment and financial advisory services; • an accredited college of optometry or college of medicine in Texas; • an optometrist or therapeutic optometrist who has an ownership interest in three or fewer locations; • a nonprofit community health center that is organized and operated as a federally qualified health center or a migrant, community, or homeless health center; and • a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that performs eye care services primarily for homeless, migrant, indigent, or medically underserved populations. <p>Additionally, if someone fails to register or update their registration , HB 2081 makes them liable to the state for a civil penalty up to \$1,000. Each day is an additional separate violation that will be addressed by the attorney general.</p> <p>Overall, HB 2081 creates transparency for the public and patients in addition to offering optometrists protections to prioritize patients' well-being and deliver high-quality care.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 2702 By: Guillen	Relating to payments associated with certain medical examinations under the workers' compensation	Business & Industry 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV,	<p>A designated doctor of the Texas Department of Insurance pays for their own travel expenses when traveling for examinations. The number of designated doctors has been decreasing in recent years, which threatens the program's sustainability.</p> <p>HB 2702 amends the Labor Code to add no-show fees for exams of employees under workers compensation. This is done if an employee doesn't show up for their scheduled examination without a valid reason determined by</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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	system; imposing a fee.	0 Absent	<p>the commissioner, a fee of at least \$100 will be charged to the designated doctor or insurance carrier-selected doctor.</p> <p>Additionally, HB 2702 would enact in 2025, the Texas Department of Insurance commissioner will adjust the fees required by insurance carriers for medical examinations, which will include inflation adjustments, as well as fees for employee no-shows. The commissioner will adopt rules for these adjustments and may use the Medicare Economic Index to determine the amount. In 2024, there will be a one-time inflation adjustment for certain medical examinations, and the commissioner will calculate the adjustment percentage.</p> <p>Overall, HB 2702 aims to support designated doctors by adjusting the payment amounts for medical examinations to account for inflation and instituting a no-show fee.</p>	
<p>HB 3862 By: Goldman</p>	Relating to certain notices provided to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality by public water supply systems.	<p>Transportation</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>The use of temporary paper license plates in Texas has been associated with several problems, including difficulty in identifying and tracking vehicles, increased instances of toll violations, and higher rates of uninsured vehicles. When someone buys a new car in Texas, they have the option to transfer their old car's metal license plates to the new vehicle by filling out a form. This saves dealers from printing temporary paper tags and buyers from waiting for metal plates to be shipped. HB 3862 aims to make the process even simpler and to reduce the number of temporary paper plates on the roads in Texas by requiring an application form that allows the transfer of license plates from an old vehicle directly to the new one.</p> <p>HB 3862 modifies application forms for vehicle title and registration to include an option to transfer their license plates from another vehicle, thereby streamlining the process.</p> <p>By allowing the transfer of permanent metal license plates from the old vehicle to the new one, HB 3862 reduces the need for temporary paper license plates. HB 3862 makes it easier for car buyers to obtain permanent license plates quickly without waiting for them to be shipped or printed. Additionally, it reduces the inventory management burden on dealerships, which currently have to manage temporary paper tags, and the Texas DMV, which issues and tracks them.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
<p>HB 3810 By: Landgraf</p>	Relating to certain notices provided to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality by public water supply systems.	<p>Natural Resources</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Recent events like Winter Storm Uri and reviews conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have exposed weaknesses in communication and response protocols related to public water supply outages and advisories in Texas. HB 3810 aims to promote improved communication and coordination between public water supply systems, wastewater systems, and regulatory authorities during events that may interrupt the delivery of safe drinking water. This is achieved by requiring timely notification when water supply outages or advisories are present or anticipated.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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			<p>HB 3810 requires the person in charge of a public water supply system or a wastewater system to develop internal procedures for notifying the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) when conditions that could disrupt safe drinking water production or delivery are discovered. Specifically, this includes public water supply outages or advisories such as boil water notices, do-not-use advisories, or do-not-consume advisories. TCEQ is authorized to collaborate with the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to regulate the notification method.</p> <p>HB 3810 intends to ensure that the TCEQ is promptly notified of any issues that could impact the safety and quality of drinking water, and to improve communication and coordination between relevant parties during times of potential water supply disruption.</p>	
<p>HB 3949 By: Raney</p>	<p>Relating to arbitration of certain controversies involving members of certain nonprofit entities.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, the Civil Practice and Remedies Code does not address or specify the validity of arbitration or deals made in relation to disputes or controversies that may arise within certain nonprofit corporations involving its members or individuals. The aim of HB 3949 is to enhance the efficiency of the arbitration process for such controversies by providing clear guidelines and ensuring that any arbitration made within a corporation is binding, enforceable, and valid. This is intended to prevent any existing controversy from escalating and to mitigate the occurrence of any future controversy.</p> <p>HB 3949 amends provisions related to the arbitration of controversies involving members of certain nonprofit entities. The bill extends the coverage of its provisions to encompass associations and corporations, specifically incorporating a corporation under the Business Organizations Code provisions related to grand lodges. It also seeks to provide clarity by specifying that controversies should involve disputes between the corporation and its members. HB 3949 also establishes that provisions in the bylaws of a nonprofit corporation requiring a member to arbitrate a controversy at common law are valid, enforceable, and irrevocable.</p> <p>HB 3949 is intended to ensure all nonprofit corporations fall within the same category regarding the use of arbitration to solve internal disputes. This would give these nonprofits the same protections recognized by the Texas law of derived judicial immunity for those who participate in legal proceedings.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3752 By: Cain Patterson Cook</p>	<p>Relating to statutory damages in actions brought by social media users against social media platforms for prohibited censorship.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>HB 3752 builds on HB 20, passed during the 2nd special session of the 87th Legislature, which provides certain censorship protections to Texans if the social media platform has more than 50 million active users a month in the U.S. HB 20, among other things, allows applicable social media users to bring an action against a social media platform for censorship. If the user wins the suit, they are entitled to declaratory and injunctive relief. HB 3752 adds statutory damages, no less than \$750 and no more than \$30,000, to the list of remedies entitled by a user that proves censorship.</p> <p>HB 3752 seeks to entitle users to additional damages against social media platforms for censorship. There are concerns that this strengthens HB 20 from the 87th Legislative Session, which prohibits private businesses from</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>

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

			controlling their own content based on questionable claims that social media platforms are censoring certain viewpoints. Although HB 20 was found constitutional by the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals last year, it set a dangerous precedent of government overreach into private business practices. HB 3752 builds on that precedent.	
HB 3346 By: Jones, Jolanda	Relating to the administration of medication to certain persons in the custody of a sheriff.	County Affairs 5 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent	<p>According to data from the Prison Policy Initiative, over 43% of incarcerated individuals have a diagnosed mental illness, 66% of these individuals do not receive any mental health treatment or medication while in custody. HB 3346 seeks to help address this issue by authorizing the sheriff to administer medication to certain defendants in custody.</p> <p>Under HB 3346, if a defendant is discharged from a facility, jail-based competency restoration program, or outpatient competency restoration program and placed in custody of the sheriff or deputy, then the sheriff or deputy must ensure the defendant is provided with the prescribed medication and dosage and compel the defendant to take the medication. If a defendant is being treated with psychotropic medication at the time of discharge, the sheriff or deputy must ensure the administration of medication continues unless directed otherwise by the jail’s physician. The jail’s physician must document the need to discontinue or change the medication after consulting with the physician who first treated the defendant. This bill requires the commissioner to reimburse a sheriff for the cost of providing the medication.</p> <p>Mental illness is more prevalent among incarcerated individuals compared to the general population, and their condition often worsens during incarceration. Access to mental health treatment is a basic human right, and it is essential to implement systemic measures to ensure that incarcerated individuals receive proper rehabilitation.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 3603 By: Anderson Murr	Relating to the payment of restitution by a person released on parole or to mandatory supervision.	Corrections 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	<p>Texas parole officers collect restitution payments from releasees but not court-ordered fees, fines, or reparations. Local court clerks are responsible for collecting the other costs, which can confuse clerks whether the costs have been covered and if the victim is receiving their restitution.</p> <p>HB 3603 seeks to address the need for a more centralized and efficient system for collecting and distributing court-ordered costs, including restitution. The bill aims to streamline the process by placing the responsibility for collecting and distributing these payments within the court clerk’s office.</p> <p>HB 3603 requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to transmit restitution payments to the court clerk instead of the victim. The court clerk then remits the payment to the victim. TDCJ must include the releasee’s information, cause number, and payment amount when transmitting the payment. Upon receiving the payment, the court clerk processes and accounts for it as if it were made directly to them. HB 3603 also transfers additional duties from TDCJ to the court clerk, including notifying unlocated victims, reporting and delivering unclaimed restitution payments, and filing property reports for unclaimed payments not held by the clerk.</p> <p>HB 3603 seeks to simplify collecting and distributing court-ordered costs, including restitution, in Texas.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>

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

<p>HB 3452 By: Jetton</p>	<p>Relating to complaints submitted to and sanctions issued by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 5 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Currently, judges who have been publicly reprimanded or censured by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct (SCJC) cannot serve as visiting or retired judges. Some contend that judges should be barred from serving if they received more than one public sanction that warranted a court review. Public sanctions include any admonition, warning, reprimand, or requirement that the person obtain additional training or education by SCJC. These sanctions are remedial in nature and issued prior to the institution of a formal proceeding to deter misconduct of judges. HB 3452 seeks to suspend judges who undergo formal proceedings and change the review of sanctions or censures by the SCJC.</p> <p>HB 3452 changes the requirement for written complaints by requiring a sworn statement from the person who filed the complaint to attest that the complaint content is true to the best of the person’s knowledge. This bill changes the process for judges to receive sanctions or censures to public sanctions or censures, including a public admonition or warning from the SCJC. HB 3452 adds that the SCJC reviews informal proceedings that resulted in the sanction or censure based on laws and facts presented in the proceedings, changing informal proceedings from a trial de novo to a review. HB 3452 allows the court’s decision under this section to be appealed by the SCJC to the Texas Supreme Court, whereas previously the court’s decision was not appealable.</p> <p>HB 3452 specifies that if the SCJC initiates formal proceedings against a judge, the SCJC must suspend the judge from office without pay for ten days, after the appointment of a special master, while pending final disposition of the formal proceedings unless a special master recommends against suspension. HB 3452 prevents retired or former judges from being eligible for assignment if the judge received more than one public sanction, including a public admonition or warning, from the SCJC that was determined to be warranted in a court of review. This adds an additional obstacle for judges to be appointed as retired or visiting judges, making these judges less available for courts who need them.</p> <p>HB 3452 would cause issues for people who file complaints, limit due process for judges who are subject to complaints, and be biased towards the SCJC. Requiring people who file complaints to provide a sworn statement may discourage people from filing reports, as they may want to remain anonymous. Additionally, the absence of a sworn statement could allow a judge to dismiss a complaint against them. HB 3452 also changes informal proceedings from trial de novos to reviews, limiting judges due process rights including the ability to challenge a public sanction, call their own witnesses, and potentially do discovery. Lastly, HB 3452 allows the SCJC to issue an appeal but not a judge, whereas before neither party could appeal, making this unfair for judges and potentially resulting in litigation due to the unfairness. HB 3452 would result in procedural issues for those involved in these processes, when there are already proper procedures in place.</p>	<p><u>Unfavorable</u></p>
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<p>HB 3184 By: Thompson, Senfronia</p>	<p>Relating to guardianships and the delivery of certain notices or other communications in connection with guardianship proceedings.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Texas guardianship laws inadvertently cause some challenges for legal professionals and families involved in guardianship situations. These challenges include inconsistent case notice delivery, ambiguous lawyer roles, confusion over legal terms and procedures, and unclear rules for appointing new guardians in certain financial situations. Additionally, small estates under \$20,000 face difficulties accessing funds due to the high costs of setting up financial guardianships, and nonresident minors or people with disabilities often struggle to obtain certain funds.</p> <p>HB 3184 aims to address these challenges by allowing alternative delivery methods for certain guardianship notices, broadening the types of notices that can be sent through qualified methods, allowing an attorney ad litem to accept services on behalf of a proposed ward, and allowing surviving parents who are guardians of the estate to appoint a successor guardian. HB 3184 modifies the sequence of requirements for a guardian to be deemed qualified, moving the step of filing the required bond with the clerk to after receiving the judge's approval. It also increases the caps on the net value of specific property types that can be sold or mortgaged with court approval and the amount certain resident and nonresident creditors can receive from a debtor in Texas from \$100,000 to \$250,000. Lastly, HB 3184 permits the court to limit a guardian's compensation to \$3,000 per year for those responsible only for the ward's personal care if it exceeds 5% of the ward's gross income. Guardians of estates need not notify claimants against the estate if another guardian has already done so.</p> <p>By improving guardianship laws and addressing existing challenges, HB 3184 seeks to better support families with children with profound disabilities once they turn 18, ultimately having a positive impact on the lives of Texans in guardianship situations.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3009 By: VanDeaver</p>	<p>Relating to the health care providers authorized to examine a person to determine whether the person is incapacitated for purposes of certain guardianship proceedings.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence 7 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Guardianship proceedings play a vital role in safeguarding individuals from abuse, neglect, and fraud, while also ensuring they receive necessary medical care and treatment. In these proceedings, a physician's evaluation certificate regarding the proposed ward's medical and mental care is required by the court. However, advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) or nurse practitioners, who spend more time with patients and possess comprehensive knowledge of their medical and mental needs through frequent interaction, are also recognized as healthcare providers. Despite this, Texas currently restricts the authority to issue evaluation letters or certificates for proposed wards solely to physicians, even if the physician has no prior history or interaction with the individual in question. HB 3009 seeks to grant judges the ability to consider letters or certificates from APRNs or nurse practitioners as part of their decision-making process in guardianship cases, enabling them to make more informed decisions.</p> <p>HB 3009 grants supervised APRNs the authority to act as a physician's delegation and perform examinations on proposed wards, which can establish probable cause for a court-initiated investigation into incapacity, determine a proposed ward's incapacity, assess intellectual disability, and evaluate a ward's capacity for the purpose of restoring their capacity or modifying the guardianship order.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>The bill establishes that an APRN, supervised by a physician, can provide their determination or opinion based on an examination of the proposed ward. This determination can relate to the ward's ability to operate a motor vehicle, make personal voting decisions, endorse a previous determination of intellectual disability, and provide a letter or certificate that may restore the ward's capacity or modify the guardianship. By allowing APRNs or nurse practitioners to conduct evaluations, HB 3009 also benefits rural areas where there may be a shortage of available physicians, providing opportunities to expedite the guardianship process.</p> <p>HB 3009 expands the involvement of APRNs or nurse practitioners in guardianship proceedings, allowing them to contribute their expertise and evaluations, thereby enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the guardianship system.</p>	
<p>HB 3220 By: Garcia Lopez, Ray Bumgarner Gates Anderson</p>	<p>Relating to an assessment on the use of surplus government property to provide housing to homeless veterans.</p>	<p>Defense & Veterans' Affairs</p> <p>6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>According to the Texas Coordinating Council for Veteran Services (TCCVC), homeless veterans typically earn federal benefits of \$1000 or less per month, making it difficult for them to obtain and maintain housing. Given the surplus of government buildings and properties, there is potential to repurpose them as housing for veterans. HB 3220 addresses this possibility by directing the TCCVC to conduct a study on utilizing surplus government property for the development of veteran housing.</p> <p>HB 3220 mandates the TCCVC to establish and supervise a comprehensive workgroup responsible for conducting the study. The workgroup's objectives include evaluating the availability and viability of converting surplus government property in Texas into housing units for homeless veterans. They will identify subpopulations of eligible veterans who would benefit most from the housing program and explore potential funding sources for developing these units, such as federal historic and housing tax credits and proposed tenant rent payments.</p> <p>This bill aims to conduct a comprehensive study that addresses the needs of homeless veterans and maximizes the use of vacant government properties.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 895 By: Muñoz, Jr. Cain</p>	<p>Relating to the use of extrapolation by a health maintenance organization or an insurer to audit claims.</p>	<p>Insurance</p> <p>6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>"Extrapolation" is a mathematical technique used by Health Maintenance Organization (HMOs) and insurers to estimate audit results for a larger group of unreviewed claims. Texas health care providers are concerned about insurers using extrapolation to estimate overpayments and demanding recoupment based on those figures.</p> <p>HB 895 aims to curb abusive audit practices by prohibiting HMOs and insurers from using extrapolation in audits of participating physicians, providers, or preferred providers. Under HB 895, payments or refunds must be based on actual overpayment or underpayment, not extrapolation. This would not apply to CHIP or Medicaid plans.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			Critics contend that without using extrapolation, it is nearly impossible to effectively identify fraud when a provider has tens of thousands of claims to review.	
HB 408 By: Collier	Relating to the eligibility requirements for a license to carry a handgun.	Community Safety-Select 11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent	Certain offenses can prevent individuals from obtaining a handgun license in Texas. However, there are exemptions for individuals who are not considered convicted (for the purposes of determining handgun license eligibility) if an order of deferred adjudication was entered against them for certain offenses at least ten years before a license to carry application. HB 408 narrows the list of robbery offenses to only aggravated robbery and removes a second degree felony burglary of a habitation from the list of exempted offenses. Supporters argue individuals who pay their debts to society and complete a deferred adjudication should not be permanently eligible for a handgun license.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1351 By: Hernandez Plesa	Relating to the distribution of funds designated for the low-income vehicle repair assistance, retrofit, and accelerated vehicle retirement program.	Environmental Regulation 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	Many counties participated in the LIRAP (Low Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Retirement Program), an air quality improvement program overseen by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). It helped low-income car owners repair their vehicles, retire old ones, and made sure they were eco-friendly. The program collected fees from car owners, which were allocated to counties based on their participation in air quality initiatives. However, when the program ended in 2018, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) didn't give back around \$176.2 million in fees to the participating counties. HB 1351 requires TCEQ to return the collected fees back to the counties. This will allow the counties to use the funds for making roads safer and improving air quality in programs authorized by existing statute. HB 1351 requires the TCEQ to distribute all the money collected before September 1, 2023 from certain vehicle emissions-related inspection fees that were designated for the low-income vehicle repair assistance, retrofit, and accelerated vehicle retirement program. TCEQ must distribute the money fairly, in proportion to the fees collected in each county or region where those counties are located. The money received by the counties can only be used to fund specific local initiative projects authorized by the Texas Clean Air Act.	<u>Favorable</u>
HB 1529 By: Campos	Relating to procedures in certain suits affecting the parent-child relationship filed by the Department of Family and Protective Services.	Criminal Jurisprudence 5 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent	According to current Texas law, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is obligated to inform individuals accused of committing child abuse or neglect about their right to record interviews and request an administrative review. However, there are concerns that these standards are not consistently met. To address this issue, HB 1529 aims to ensure that DFPS upholds these standards and notifies alleged perpetrators of their rights. HB 1529 requires a court to confirm in writing prior to a hearing considering a suit affecting a parent child relationship; that before any interview was held, the alleged perpetrator was informed of their right to record audio or video of the interview and to request an administrative interview of DFPS' finding. Additionally, if this standard is not met, the court will be prohibited from considering any information gathered during the interview or investigation.	<u>Favorable</u>

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

			<p>HB 1529 will ensure that all individuals alleged to have committed child abuse or neglect will be notified of their rights, further edifying the justice process. Additionally, the bill will aid DFPS in collecting data for an administrative review findings report, which provides insight into specifics regarding child removals. Overall, the bill will further strengthen public trust, ensure the safety of families and children, and allow the state to gain needed information.</p>	
<p>HB 1985 By: Vasut</p>	<p>Relating to the service credit used in calculating longevity pay for certain judges and justices with prior full-time service as an associate judge.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Under current law, state judge and justice salaries may be increased based on the number of years served in certain courts, such as a statutory county court, multicounty statutory county court, or statutory probate court. However, full-time associate judges of district courts are not eligible for these salary enhancements, even though they are also lawyers with significant judicial responsibilities. HB 1985 would allow prior service as a full-time associate judge of a district court to be used to calculate the judge’s or justice’s annual salary.</p> <p>HB 1985 provides full-time associate judges of district courts with the same salary benefits as state judges and justices, ensuring that the hard work of these judges is recognized.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2327 By: Goldman</p>	<p>Relating to an exception to the renewal requirement for agricultural and timber tax exemption registration numbers issued to or held by persons who are at least 65 years of age.</p>	<p>Ways & Means</p> <p>11 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Farmers, ranchers, and timber producers can claim some tax exemptions for purchasing certain items used to produce agricultural and timber products for sale. Currently, agricultural and timber sales and use tax exemption registration numbers issued by the comptroller’s office must be renewed every four years. This can burden senior citizens who are well-seasoned in their profession and need not perform this task so frequently.</p> <p>HB 2327 makes an exemption providing that registration numbers issued to individuals 65 or older will not expire and do not need to be renewed. However, this provision does not apply to registration numbers that expired before the effective date of the Act and were not renewed.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2019 By: Neave Criado Cook</p>	<p>Relating to the statute of limitations for certain burglary offenses.</p>	<p>Criminal Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Recently, Texas has been contending with a backlog of untested rape kits around the state, with the Department of Safety reporting roughly 4,000 untested kits in 2020, not including the 231 agencies that did not respond to the statewide audit. These untested kits represent victims who have not had their cases fully investigated and deserve justice. The number of untested kits has been decreasing due to the passing of the Lavinia Masters Act in 2019, which provided more funding for testing. However, many of these kits have been sitting on shelves for a number of years, allowing the statute of limitations to pass and the kit to be rendered useless for offenses such as burglary of a habitation with intent to commit sexual assault. The statute of limitations for this offense is five years, which limits a prosecutor’s ability to properly charge an alleged offender. HB 2019 seeks to address this issue.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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

			<p>HB 2019 removes the statute of limitations for the offense of burglary if the offense is punishable by a first degree felony because the offender entered the home with the intent to commit sexual assault and DNA is collected during the investigation for the offense but has not yet been tested or does not match the victim or another individual.</p> <p>HB 2019 is a step towards ensuring that all survivors of sexual assault are able to pursue justice.</p>	
<p>HB 2297 By: Holland</p>	<p>Relating to compensation and leave for certain peace officers.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p> <p>6 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Even though the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) is one of many state agencies that commission licensed peace officers to execute its mission, it does not compensate officers through the approved salary schedule.</p> <p>HB 2297 includes TCOLE in the list of state agencies that commission peace officers, as investigators, allowing law enforcement officers to be compensated according to Schedule C positions in the classification salary prescribed by the General Appropriation (GAA). The bill also ensures that officers commissioned by TCOLE are entitled to state hazardous duty pay and special injury leave.</p> <p>HB 2297 aims to establish parity in compensation between peace officers commissioned by TCOLE and those employed by other state agencies. Furthermore, it provides additional benefits to entitled LEOs, with the hope that the increase in salary will help attract and retain more law enforcement officers.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2043 By: Bowers</p>	<p>Relating to a criminal justice system pretrial and sentencing database established by the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System.</p>	<p>Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>The pretrial system in Texas, which serves as the starting point of the criminal justice process, lacks comprehensive data due to the fragmented, insufficient, or unobtainable nature of the available information. As a result, policymakers face challenges in making informed decisions to enhance the pretrial system. HB 2043 broadens pretrial data collection and reporting endeavors by incorporating essential and standardized data.</p> <p>HB 2043 requires the Office of Court Administration (OCA) of the Texas Judicial System to establish and maintain a database that collects and analyzes pretrial and sentencing information for each defendant arrested for an offense in Texas. HB 2043 requires the database to include specific information, such as the offense for which the defendant was arrested, the date and county of arrest, information regarding bail, and the disposition of the case, among others. The law enforcement agency and clerk of each court in Texas with criminal jurisdiction are required to submit the information to OCA, which will publish deidentified pretrial and sentencing data from the database on OCA's website. The data will be searchable and updated annually. HB 2043 prohibits disclosing the name or identifying information of a defendant and publishing data at the offense level for any offense for which there are fewer than five arrests during a year.</p> <p>HB 2043 helps legislators recognize possible problems, tension points, and remedies in the pretrial system at both the local and state levels.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 2646</p> <p>By: Johnson, Jarvis</p>	<p>Relating to the payment of certain fines and court costs by an inmate during a term of imprisonment or following release from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.</p>	<p>Corrections</p> <p>9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Incarcerated individuals in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) often face financial challenges upon release, as they typically earn low wages during their imprisonment and struggle to find housing and employment after being released. In addition, legal financial obligations (LFOs) in Texas, such as fines and court costs, add to this burden and can lead to additional legal penalties if unpaid.</p> <p>HB 2646 aims to alleviate some of this financial pressure by changing the rules around when inmates must pay fines and court costs. Under this bill, individuals in prison or confined in a county jail do not have to pay these fees while incarcerated or for the first 180 days after release. However, they are required to set up a payment plan with the court clerk within 30 days of being released. This rule does not apply to restitution or supervision fees owed as a condition of release.</p> <p>By providing a grace period for payment of fines and court costs, HB 2646 offers Texans leaving prison a better chance at financial stability and successful reintegration into society.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 5081</p> <p>By: Wilson</p>	<p>Relating to certain motor vehicle safety inspection fees.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p> <p>6 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>Automobile inspection stations are facing staffing challenges and long wait times as inspectors leave due to inadequate compensation. The state has established a set fee for conducting motor vehicle inspections that is often lower than the actual cost of conducting the inspection, resulting in a negative profit margin for these stations. HB 5081 aims to address this issue by granting the Department of Public Safety (DPS) the authority to establish a set fee that inspection stations may charge.</p> <p>Under HB 5081, DPS is authorized to determine the general safety inspection fee. The bill also eliminates the statutory fee of \$12.50 and requires DPS to calculate a price yearly that allows each inspection station to retain an amount equivalent to one hour of minimum wage as prescribed by the General Appropriations Act for salary group A6 in the classification of each inspection.</p> <p>By enabling inspection stations to afford to pay their employees at least the minimum wage, HB 5081 will assist businesses in retaining qualified personnel and improving their compensation.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 3957</p> <p>By: Smith</p>	<p>Relating to the establishment of a rapid DNA analysis pilot program in certain counties.</p>	<p>Homeland Security & Public Safety</p> <p>7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 2 Absent</p>	<p>The Department of Public Safety (DPS) faces delays with current DNA testing practices. When arrested individuals provide a mouth swab in booking stations for DNA testing, there are delays in processing as the samples must be sent to state labs, resulting in a backlog that can hinder DNA-based investigations. It takes up to 30 days for DPS to process a swab and download it to the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database to receive results. In contrast, a rapid DNA test takes 90 minutes to get results. HB 3957 seeks to address this issue by defining rapid DNA analysis and establishing a DNA analysis pilot program.</p> <p>HB 3957 establishes a pilot program to streamline the reporting of DNA records by law enforcement agencies and expedite DNA analysis for samples collected under the applicable law. The bill defines "rapid DNA analysis" as the fully automated processing of a reference buccal swab sample to generate a DNA record eligible for comparison in the CODIS database within 24 hours. The pilot program, slated to commence on September 1, will</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			<p>be implemented in two rounds. The first round will involve law enforcement agencies in El Paso, Galveston, Montgomery, Tarrant, and Travis Counties, while the second round, starting on September 1, 2024, will expand the program to agencies in Bexar, Dallas, Collin, Harris, and Hidalgo Counties. DPS and other law enforcement agencies may seek guidance from the FBI on rapid DNA analysis and best practices.</p> <p>HB 3957 mandates that DPS review the pilot program and submit a written report to the legislature by January 1, 2026, detailing the progress, processes, and any recommendations for expansion. Additionally, the bill authorizes DPS to accept gifts, grants, and donations from public or private sources to fund the program.</p> <p>By implementing HB 3957, more police stations and departments will have the opportunity to utilize rapid DNA analysis. While this approach offers greater efficiency and quicker results, its accuracy may vary depending on the monitoring and operation of the technology. Therefore, initiating a pilot program is a prudent step, as long as agencies consult and employ best practices and recommendations provided by the FBI to mitigate risks associated with transferred DNA.</p>	
<p>HB 4540 By: Longoria</p>	<p>Relating to certain benefits payable by the Judicial Retirement System of Texas Plan One and the Judicial Retirement System of Texas Plan Two.</p>	<p>Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services</p> <p>8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>Texas has two judicial retirement systems: the Judicial Retirement System of Texas Plan One (JRS-1) and the Judicial Retirement System of Texas Plan Two (JRS-2). Membership in these retirement plans is based on the date a judge began their service. A majority of active and retired judges belong to JRS-2. The annuity increase for retired judges is based on the salary of a judge in the same category as the one they retired from, with the difference in increases depending on the retirement system. However, when the state increased judges' salaries in September 2019 based on years of service, retired judges did not receive the corresponding annuity increases. HB 4540 seeks to address this by connecting retired judges annuities to the pay of active judges.</p> <p>If the 88th legislature enacts legislation that increases the state salary used to compute a judge's service retirement annuity, HB 4540 requires the Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) to recalculate certain retirement benefits, including service, disability, and death benefits, for judges using the new applicable salary. Accordingly, ERS will adjust the service retirement annuity of judges under both JRS-1 and JRS-2. However, if no such legislation is passed, ERS will recalculate these benefits using the applicable salary increase that took effect on September 1, 2019.</p> <p>HB 4540 seeks to rectify the need for increased retirement benefits for retired judges under JRS-1 and JRS-2.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 4771 By: Bhojani</p>	<p>Relating to the creation of tenant legal services offices by local governments to assist low-income residential tenants in eviction cases and in</p>	<p>County Affairs</p> <p>6 Ayes, 3 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>Low-income and disabled individuals often lack the means to defend their housing rights and may struggle to secure legal assistance during eviction cases. HB 4771 seeks to address this issue by authorizing the creation of tenant legal services offices by local governments to assist low-income residential tenants in eviction cases and in cases involving discrimination based on the tenants' disabilities.</p> <p><i>Tenant Legal Services Office</i></p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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	<p>cases involving discrimination based on the tenants' disabilities.</p>	<p>HB 4771 authorizes local governments to create a tenant legal services office to provide legal representation and services to tenants. These offices may provide full legal representation for an indigent tenant with an eviction case or a case involving a violation of disability discrimination from the Texas Fair Housing Act if the tenant is low-income and disabled. These offices may provide brief legal assistance to a low-income tenant in an eviction case. The local government may establish a department or contract with a nonprofit corporation to provide these legal services. Municipalities or counties may enter into an interlocal contract to work jointly on the implementation and administration of a tenant legal services office.</p> <p>The director of the tenant legal services office must be a member of the State Bar of Texas, practiced law for at least three years with substantial experience in landlord-tenant law. The director must also hold a yearly public hearing to receive recommendations about the office. At least 30 days before the hearing, the director must provide notice of the hearing for distribution and posting to a newspaper, local departments responsible for social services, and courthouse of the local court officer or employee that has original jurisdiction over eviction cases regarding violations of disability discrimination provisions of the Texas Fair Housing Act. The director must also produce a transcript of the hearing and post it on the local government's website within 30 days of the hearing.</p> <p>The director must submit a report to the governing body of the local government and post the report on their Internet website by September 1 of every even-numbered year. The report must be on information for the preceding two year and must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The estimated number of tenants the office manages who are eligible for legal services, • The number of tenants that received legal services, broken down by household size, length of tenancy, approximate household income, disability, and types of reasonable accommodations or modifications needed, • Types of legal services provided, • The outcomes following the full legal representation, including the following numbers: case dispositions in which tenants remained housed, tenants who were evicted, tenants with disabilities who remained house, and tenants with disabilities who were evicted; case dispositions regarding approved and disapproved reasonable accommodations or modifications for tenants with disabilities; and cases the attorney was discharged or withdrew • The expenditure for the office, and • Any other information required by local government. <p>These offices may hire attorneys and any other necessary employees for operations. The director must designate at least one employee to assist tenants with disabilities in obtaining compliance with applicable laws regarding housing. A tenant legal services office may not represent a tenant if there is a conflict of interest that has not been waived by the client, there is insufficient resources for adequate representation, the office is incapable of</p>	
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			<p>providing services due to professional conduct rules, or the office shows other good cause for not accepting the request from the tenant. An office may investigate the financial status of a tenant who requests representation.</p> <p>A tenant legal services office is entitled to receive funds for operation determined by the local government and paid out of the appropriate local fund. Funds from the basic civil legal services account may not be used for these purposes.</p> <p>Proposals by Nonprofit Corporations The local government must solicit proposals before contracting with a nonprofit corporation to serve as a tenant legal services office. A local government must require a written plan from nonprofit corporations that wish to serve as tenant legal services. The written plan must include a budget for the office, including salaries, a description of each position within the office including the director, the maximum allowable caseload for each attorney in the office, provisions for training, a description of anticipated overhead office costs, and a policy to ensure the representation provided the office would not create a conflict of interest that has not been waived by the client. The local government may not select a proposal based solely on the total cost, but rather select a proposal that demonstrates the services office will provide adequate quality representation.</p> <p>Conclusions Access to legal representation increases the likelihood of tenants remaining in their homes. Beyond a loss of housing, evictions may result in loss of employment and education, further exacerbating economic damages to the individual.</p>	
<p>HB 649 By: Hinojosa</p>	<p>Relating to consideration of education-related income in determining eligibility of applicants for residential tenancies.</p>	<p>Business & Industry 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>According to a study by Temple University, two out of three Texas college students experience basic need insecurities. Which includes more than 55% of Texas college students that have experienced housing insecurity and 16% have experienced homelessness. This is due to the fact that, oftentimes landlords do not take educational related income, such as scholarships and Federal student grants and loans, into account when determining proof of income. Even though Federal grants and loans are able to be utilized for housing. This creates further obstacles for students and leads to additional fees when they have to find cosigners or guarantors. Or leaving students that do not have means of a guarantor left with limited to no options of housing.</p> <p>HB 649 amends the Property Code to rectify this by enabling education-related income to be factored into the calculation of students' current income for the purpose of a landlord's application approval process. Additionally, landlords who fail to comply with these requirements are liable for fees and penalties. If a landlord violates this requirement they must pay a penalty consisting of \$100 plus three times the amount of any application fee or deposit, as well as the reasonable attorney's fees for the applicant.</p> <p>Ultimately, HB 649 allows students who receive college funding intended for the use of housing to have greater housing security.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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<p>HB 2242 By: Howard Geren</p>	<p>Relating to the use of dynamic message signs for the Keep 'Em Safe Texas Gun Storage Campaign.</p>	<p>Community - Safety-Select 9 Ayes, 1 Nay, 0 PNV, 3 Absent</p>	<p>In 2019, the "Keep 'Em Safe Texas" campaign was launched statewide to promote safe gun storage practices. Its aim was to educate the public on proper firearm storage in order to prevent avoidable accidents and reduce the rising suicide rates in Texas. Disturbingly, reports indicate that a gun is stolen from a car approximately every 15 minutes, with over 4,100 firearms reported stolen from vehicles in Houston alone. HB 2242 aims to enhance the campaign's impact by requiring the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to broadcast relevant firearm storage information to all Texas drivers along the highways.</p> <p>HB 2242 mandates that the Department of Transportation (TxDOT) collaborate with DPS to develop a plan for disseminating the campaign's firearm storage information through the existing system of dynamic message signs positioned along the highways. However, if TxDOT receives notification from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration that using these signs would result in funding loss or other sanctions, TxDOT is not obligated to utilize the existing messaging system. By expanding the reach of the safe gun storage campaign, HB 2242 serves as a reminder to firearm owners to secure their weapons in vehicles, which can help prevent theft and potentially save lives.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>
<p>HB 2476 By: Garcia</p>	<p>Relating to the adoption of a veterans' land bank program by the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation.</p>	<p>Defense & Veterans' Affairs 6 Ayes, 2 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent</p>	<p>With the rise in housing costs, it is crucial to provide affordable housing options for low-income and homeless veterans. HB 2476 aims to address this issue by utilizing vacant or tax-delinquent properties through the establishment of a veterans' land bank program.</p> <p>HB 2476 mandates the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporations (TSAHC) to create a veterans' land bank program, which will acquire, hold, and transfer real properties for the purpose of developing affordable housing for eligible low-income veteran households. The bill allows for the sale of foreclosed properties to the veterans' land bank at a price below market value or the amount of taxes and penalties owed, subject to approval by taxing parties, with the deed transferred to TSAHC. TSAHC is required to operate the program based on the land bank's annual plan, which can be amended, and take into account any other housing plans adopted by municipalities or counties that TSAHC intends to implement. The veterans' land bank must be considered as an option within the state's low-income housing initiatives.</p> <p><i>Resale of Property, Deed Restrictions, and Exemption</i></p> <p>Resale of properties acquired by TSAHC is subject to certain requirements outlined in HB 2476. Within 10 years of acquiring a property, TSAHC must sell it to a low-income veteran household member. If this requirement is not met within the specified timeframe, TSAHC shall transfer the property to the taxing units involved. Additionally, TSAHC is required to impose deed restrictions on properties sold to low-income veterans.</p> <p>HB 2476 establishes that acquiring, holding, and transferring unimproved real property under the veterans' land bank program is considered a charitable function and is therefore tax-exempt. This exemption applies to property tax years beginning on or after September 1, 2023.</p>	<p>Favorable</p>

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			<p>Annual Performance Report The bill also includes provisions for an annual performance report by TSAHC. This report should provide a detailed account of funds and properties received and disbursed through the program, as well as relevant information set in the bill about each property acquired and sold by TSAHC.</p> <p>By transforming unused properties into affordable rental housing for veterans, HB 2476 offers a fresh start and a sense of community. It is believed that this bill can provide an opportunity for veterans and their families in low-income households to support each other and be given a second chance.</p>	
<p>HB 2234 By: Thompson, Senfronia</p>	<p>Relating to certain policies and procedures for the placement and use of video cameras in certain classrooms, including classrooms that provide special education services.</p>	<p>Public Education</p> <p>13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 PNV, 0 Absent</p>	<p>The 84th Legislature passed SB 507, the “Cameras in Classrooms” law which authorized video surveillance of certain special education classrooms to help deter mistreatment of students with disabilities. HB 2234 seeks to enhance these measures by increasing parents' and districts' awareness of this law and allowing funds from the school safety allotment to be used to purchase cameras.</p> <p>HB 2234 expands parents' ability to request information regarding the use of video cameras in special-education classrooms or other special education settings, including a self-contained classroom. Written notice of the placement of a video camera in a special education setting, including a self-contained classroom, must be provided by the school to all school and campus staff and to the parents of each student attending class or engaging in school activities in the setting, not later than the 10th instructional day after the first day the school or campus activates the camera.</p> <p>This bill also creates a deadline for written notice to be provided within the first 10 days of the school activating the camera. HB 2234 also extends the time video recordings from these cameras must be kept from three months to six.</p> <p>Should a parent request a video recording, the school has 7 days to either release the recording for viewing or provide a written response justifying the denial of request, including information regarding how the parent may appeal this denial. Within 10 days of the start of the fall semester, schools must provide parents of special education students who are in these classrooms, either full-time or for 50% of the instructional day, with written information about the policy regarding the placement, operation, or maintenance of any video camera. The commissioner must develop a model form for a school to use to notify parents and post it on the Texas Education Agency's website.</p> <p>Under HB 2234, permissible use of funds under the school safety allotment is expanded to include video surveillance of these classrooms.</p>	<p><u>Favorable</u></p>

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			It is important that efforts are made to increase the voice of vulnerable students and parents in cases of suspected abuse. Video surveillance can provide information that would otherwise be unavailable, helping bring justice to special education students and their families who may be experiencing abuse and neglect.	
HB 3266 By: Frazier Plesa Bowers Harless	Relating to the prosecution of the criminal offense of the possession, manufacture, transport, repair, or sale of certain devices intended to modify handguns.	Community Safety-Select 8 Ayes, 4 Nays, 0 PNV, 1 Absent	<p>The use of auto sears, commonly referred to as "Glock Switch," is increasingly prevalent in violent crimes. These small devices, which can be produced using a 3D printer, alter the functionality of a handgun, transforming it into a fully automatic weapon capable of firing over 1,000 rounds per minute. The sheer volume of rounds discharged by such weapons can penetrate kevlar vests worn by law enforcement officers and soldiers. Despite being illegal under federal law, local and state law enforcement lack the authority to prosecute individuals found in possession of these devices.</p> <p>In response, HB 3266 seeks to prohibit the possession, manufacture, transport, repair, or sale of auto sears under local and state law. The bill expands the definition of a third-degree felony offense to include the intentional or knowing possession, manufacture, transport, repair, or sale of a device designed to enable a handgun to discharge multiple rounds automatically, without requiring manual reloading through a single trigger function. This provision applies to offenses committed on or after the effective date of the bill.</p> <p>By enacting HB 3266, local and state law enforcement agencies will be empowered to levy charges and confiscate these dangerous weapons, which pose a threat to both communities and law enforcement personnel throughout Texas.</p>	<u>Favorable</u>