Legislative Study Group (LSG) Floor Report — Calendar for Thursday, August 28, 2025

General State Calendar				
SB 8 Sponsor: Orr | Metcalf | Bonnen | Leach | Harris By: Middleton	Relating to the designation and use of certain spaces and facilities according to sex; authorizing a civil penalty and a private civil right of action.	State Affairs 9 Ayes 3 Nays 0 PNV 3 Absent	SB 8 would require political subdivisions and state agencies to require people to use restrooms and locker rooms on public property that match their sex assigned at birth. This legislation promotes discrimination, undermines personal liberty and puts all Texans — but particularly transgender Texans — at risk. Texas previously attempted to pass similar legislation, known as the “bathroom bill” in 2017, but failed. SB 8 is a revised and expanded version of that effort. It restricts access to multi-occupancy spaces — including restrooms, locker rooms, and changing rooms in schools, universities, and other government buildings — by requiring them to be designated for and used by individuals of one sex only, which the bill defines as "male" or "female" based on an individual's reproductive system. Additionally, unlike the previous "bathroom bill," SB 8 expands its scope to include other public spaces and services, such as criminal justice facilities and family violence shelters that are designed specifically to provide services to female victims. SB 8 holds state agencies and political subdivisions accountable for enforcing the law, imposing civil penalties of $5,000 for the first violation and $25,000 for each subsequent offense. It states that a political subdivision or state agency must take"every reasonable step" to ensure compliance — a vague and confusing requirement that could lead to over-enforcement and potential for abuse. SB 8 also allows any Texas resident to file a complaint with the Attorney General and creates a private right of action for an "affected person," enabling an “affected person” to sue violators for injunctive relief as well as recover court costs and attorney’s fees. It also grants sovereign immunity to the state, significantly limiting the ability to challenge government entities in court and making it far more difficult to block the law. It also contains a "fee-shifting" provision that could force a person or organization that loses a legal challenge to pay the government's legal fees, creating a significant financial risk for anyone who tries to oppose the law in court.	**Unfavorable**

J.E. Walle

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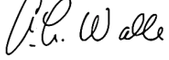
			SB 8 is fueled by a dangerous narrative that portrays transgender individuals as predators or threats when there's no evidence to support that. The vast majority of sexual assault incidents in Texas occur in private residences, not public buildings, and are committed by a perpetrator known to the victim. This bill does nothing to address the real threat. Not only are transgender individuals not a threat, but this bill puts them at a greater risk of harm. Forcing transgender people to use facilities inconsistent with their gender identity outs them publicly, making them targets for harassment, assault, or bullying. Additionally, transgender individuals may avoid using restrooms in public altogether to reduce conflict, leading to serious health problems. Lastly, the bill's application to family violence shelters is particularly cruel, as it would deny services to transgender individuals who are victims of violence, leaving them with no safe place to go.	
HB 7 By: Leach | Hickland | Troxclair | Pierson | Metcalf	Relating to prohibitions on the manufacturing and provision of abortion-inducing drugs, including the jurisdiction of and the effect of certain judgments by certain courts within and outside this state with respect to the manufacturing and provision of those drugs, and to protections from certain counter actions under laws other than the laws of this state;	State Affairs 8 Ayes 4 Nays 0 PNV 3 Absent	HB 7 aims to stop out-of-state physicians and other distributors from prescribing or mailing abortion-inducing drugs to Texans by giving any private person standing to bring a $100K lawsuit to enforce state law, with few exceptions. In 2021, Texas passed the Texas Heartbeat Act, which led to a legal battle when a New York doctor was sued for providing abortion medication to a Texas woman. Although a Texas court fined the doctor, a New York official refused to enforce the penalty, citing the state's shield law, prompting a lawsuit against the official. HB 7 (titled the "Woman and Child Protection Act") prohibits a person from manufacturing, distributing, mailing, transporting, delivering, prescribing, or providing abortion-inducing drugs, like mifepristone and misoprostol, to or from any person or location in Texas. This "to or from" language is a key difference from a similar bill filed during the regular session, SB 2880/HB 5510, and could target individuals within Texas who act as intermediaries in the mailing process. **Enforcement** HB 7 creates a "qui tam" enforcement mechanism, which allows private citizens to file lawsuits against anyone who “violates” or “intends to violate” the ban. Each violation carries a minimum award of $100,000. This provision essentially turns private citizens into "bounty hunters," as they are incentivized to file lawsuits based on suspicion rather than concrete evidence. If the claimant in the case is the pregnant individual who acquired the medicine, or the father, sibling or grandparent of the fetus, they can access the full amount of awarded damages. If the claimant is anyone else, they are awarded $10,000, and the rest will be donated to a charitable organization of the claimant’s choosing.	**<u>Unfavorable</u>**

	authorizing qui tam actions.		This setup also risks rampant abuse of the lawsuit awards — nonprofit organizations could easily profit off of this system by finding individuals to file the claim and name that nonprofit as the awardee of the damages. By making enforcement a matter of private civil lawsuits rather than state action, the bill seems to be structured to bypass judicial review under federal constitutional law. This potential legal strategy shifts enforcement away from the State, which is a common target for legal challenges, and instead empowers private citizens to sue, using "wrongful death" claims to meet the legal criteria for a civil suit. HB 7 also creates a statute of limitations, allowing claims to be brought up to six years after an incident took place. HB 7 is also highly unbalanced — claimants who prevail can have attorneys' fees and court costs covered, but defendants who prevail cannot. **Rejects "Shield Laws"** It's already illegal in Texas to mail abortion-inducing drugs into the state or prescribe them through telehealth. However, several states have adopted "shield laws" that protect providers and manufacturers who prescribe and ship the medication to women who cannot access it in their own state. HB 7 also attempts to counteract these laws. These laws protect out-of-state healthcare providers who assist Texans in obtaining abortions and include a "clawback" provision, which allows these providers to recover damages if another state attempts to enforce its abortion ban against them. HB 7 states that Texas will not recognize nor enforce any out-of-state judgment that comes from one of these clawback provisions, unless a federal law or the Texas Constitution requires enforcement. Texans are also allowed to countersue in Texas court if they are sued and receive a judgment under another state's shield laws. In this case, they are eligible to recover double damages — or at least $100,000, plus attorney's fees, and injunctions against enforcement of the shield state judgment. **Impact** This legislation further restricts reproductive healthcare options for Texans, especially those in rural areas who may lack access to in-clinic care. This new legislation targets a specific, safe, and effective method of care that has been FDA-approved for years. HB 7 directly undermines the protections for doctors established in a previous bill (SB 31	

			89(R)), which was intended to clarify medical exceptions to the State's abortion ban. Because the language in the bill states “intent”, it could potentially make healthcare providers or pharmacists hesitant to prescribe or dispense certain medications if they fear a patient *may* use them to cause an abortion. Additionally, since drugs have multiple uses, a person mailing them for a purpose unrelated to abortion could be sued based on speculation instead of evidence. The bill includes narrow exceptions. The pregnant person is not subject to liability for having or seeking an abortion, and the bill allows for the use of abortion-inducing drugs for treating medical emergencies, ectopic pregnancies, or miscarriages. The bill also includes an exemption from a "qui tam" lawsuit for health care providers, pharmacies, drug manufacturers, distributors, physicians, and common carriers who use the drugs in general practice. To receive this protection, which applies both in Texas and nationwide, these entities must adopt a policy stating that they will not manufacture or use the drugs to induce abortions. The bill essentially coerces entities into a blanket prohibition to avoid legal action, even when the law might otherwise allow for the use of such drugs. By restricting access to a safe, FDA-approved medication and empowering private citizens to file lawsuits, HB 7 significantly erodes Texans' reproductive healthcare options and creates a legal climate that could endanger both patients and medical professionals. Ultimately, this bill extends Texas's near-total abortion ban by targeting a specific method of care and undermining out-of-state protections, all while discouraging doctors from providing essential care due to the threat of civil litigation.	
HB 15 By: Hefner | Ashby | Cook	Relating to certain files maintained by a law enforcement agency regarding certain employees of the agency.	Homeland Security, Public Safety & Veterans’ Affairs 7 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 4 Absent	HB 15 is the revised version of SB 781 (89R), a bill intended to restrict public access to police records. It is identical to SB 15 [89(2)], which was killed on a point of order on August 25, 2025. **The New "Department File"** HB 15 establishes a new, mandatory, and confidential system of record keeping for every TCOLE licensee, known as a "department file." Licensees include police, jailers, and public safety telecommunications staff. This file is different from an officer’s personnel file, which is public and includes disciplinary actions, annual reviews, and commendations. A “department file” would be confidential and include anything else that is not contained in a personnel file; most importantly, it would include documents related to alleged misconduct for which the law enforcement agency determines there is insufficient evidence (pursuant to the TCOLE definition of misconduct at Occupations Code	**<u>Unfavorable</u>**



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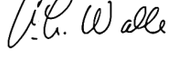
			1701.001) to sustain disciplinary action at the level of suspension, termination or demotion. This doesn't mean the complaint was false or that the alleged misconduct didn't occur. “Department file” access is limited to the officer, TCOLE, and another law enforcement agency during a hiring process. During this special session, access has been added for the Commission on Jail Standards, Sandra Bland investigators, District Attorneys pursuant to the Michael Morton Act, and any access required by law. This is a significant change from current law, which allows temporary exemption for ongoing investigations but generally makes records public after an investigation is complete. Supporters of the bill argue that it is necessary to standardize personnel file record-keeping practices, aligning with a model policy developed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement in response to its sunset review in 2023. However, record-keeping practices are largely standardized already among the vast majority of departments and jails pursuant to Government Code Ch. 552 and its broad exceptions to disclosure for law enforcement. **Broad and Vague Language** The bill’s vague language could be interpreted to seal nearly all records connected to law enforcement—including body camera footage, 911 calls, emails, and dispatch logs—far beyond its stated purpose of protecting unsubstantiated claims. By limiting disclosure to what is “required by law” without defining who that applies to, the bill creates ambiguity that could invite disputes and lawsuits. Moreover, relying on narrow safeguards like the Sandra Bland Act leaves much misconduct unaddressed, since it only triggers investigations in cases of deaths in custody, not other serious abuses. **Consequences for Law Enforcement** The bill could backfire on law enforcement by blocking the release of records that clear officers of wrongdoing, fueling public mistrust. It also risks giving small, elected law enforcement agencies the power to seal nearly any document, allowing officials to control what information about their own conduct becomes public and undermining accountability. **Uvalde Robb Elementary School Shooting Investigation** The Uvalde Robb Elementary School shooting investigation highlights the potential for this bill to delay or prevent the release of information to the public. Lengthy legal battles have been required to gain any public access to records. The passage of this bill would likely restart these legal challenges, potentially delaying the release of information for years. By requiring that any "document relating to a license holder" be placed in a sealed file not subject to the Public Information Act, the bill could permanently conceal records that families and the public have been fighting to access. This legislation	



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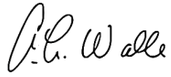
			could hinder public transparency and accountability, particularly in high-profile incidents where full disclosure is critical. **Hindering Public Accountability and Oversight** HB 15 does not solve the underlying issue of police accountability; instead, it makes it more difficult to achieve. The bill's negative consequences far outweigh its stated purpose of protecting officers from unsubstantiated claims. It blocks civilian oversight, hides potential patterns of abuse, prevents independent review of investigations, and ultimately erodes public trust in law enforcement.	
HB 265 By: Hull | Meyer | Slawson | Leo Wilson Leach |	Relating to governmental oversight of youth camps, including youth camp rules, duties, and the advisory committee.	Public Health 11 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 2 Absent	HB 265 is part of the Legislature's efforts to respond to the tragic July 4th Floods. This legislation adds guardrails and removes waivers in an effort to protect participants of regulated camps in Texas. Currently, the Youth Camp Advisory Committee may not exceed nine individuals, and currently includes two members of the general public and seven experienced camping professionals reflecting geographic diversity. HB 265 would make changes to the composition by expanding the membership to 11 individuals with varying backgrounds, including: • one emergency management director; • one law enforcement professional; • one pediatrician, primary care physician, pediatric advanced practice registered nurse, or pediatric physician's assistant; • one child psychologist; • one child abuse prevention expert; • one water safety expert; • two youth camp operators; • one parent or legal guardian of a child who was a camper at a youth camp in this state in the two years preceding the appointment date; and • two members of the general public. By introducing professional diversity to the committee's composition, HB 256 aims to reduce potential conflicts of interest when recommending camp regulations. There is also a provision to make individuals ineligible for appointment if they are related to anyone affiliated with any youth camp. The meetings of the advisory board would be subject to open government provisions (the same standard to which other governmental bodies are held).	**Favorable**



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			Additionally, HB 265 requires more proactive approaches to keeping campers safe, such as requiring the youth camp operator complete one hour of training in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. HB 265 introduces a requirement for all youth camp staff members and volunteers to immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect. This provision aligns with existing mandates under the Family Code and reinforces the responsibility of camp personnel to protect campers. There are multiple provisions of the Health and Safety Code repealed under HB 265 including: ● An exemption for camps operated on institutions of higher education; ● The waiver appeal process for certain religious organized camps; ● The requirement to solicit comments before the commissioner administers a fee; ● An mandatory exception for imposing a penalty if a violation is corrected during an investigation; and ● The provision mandating a penalty may not exceed $1,000 a day for each violation. Repealing these sections is an effort to tighten oversight and remove unnecessary exemptions to close potential loopholes. HB 265 compliments broader reforms from this special session to help ensure that safety rules are followed and corrective measures are both documented and meaningful. This bill is a step to a more resilient and accountable system for protecting participants at camps.	

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