Legislative Study Group (LSG) Floor Report — Calendar for Tuesday, September 2, 2025

General State Calendar				
HB 18 By: Shaheen | Gerdes	Relating to the making to or acceptance of political contributions by, and the making of political expenditures by, a member of the legislature during certain absences from the state; authorizing a civil penalty.	Elections 5 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 4 Absent	HB 18 seeks to further punish Members of the Legislature who break quorum by placing certain prohibitions on campaign fundraising and expenditures, undermining the Legislature's existing authority to pass its own rules through resolution, and subverting the existing system for campaign finance violations at the Texas Ethics Commission. Under this bill, if a member of the Legislature is absent from the state without leave for the purpose of impeding the action of the house (i.e. breaking quorum), that member may not accept political contributions or make political expenditures related to their absence unless the total amount donated by an individual is less than a single day of legislative per diem. These prohibitions also extend to specific-purpose committees supporting or assisting the quorum break. A violation of this law is subject to a civil penalty up to $5,000. Each accepted contribution or expenditure would be assessed its own penalty. Further, individuals are also prohibited from knowingly making political contributions to or political expenditures for (or on behalf of) a member breaking quorum (or related specific-purpose committee) unless the donation in total is less than the per diem rate. Individuals found in violation of this law are also subject to a civil penalty of up to $5,000 for each contribution. If any of the above violations occur, a statement of facts may be filed with the President of the Senate or Speaker of the House. Then, the President or Speaker is required to certify the statement, and refer the incident to the district court for the county in which the individual resided at the time of violation. Within 72 hours, the court must provide the alleged violator notice of the allegations and give the violator an opportunity to defend themself against either the House or Senate at a hearing. The court will make a final judgement and impose penalties, if appropriate. The Fifteenth Court of Appeals is given exclusive intermediate appellate jurisdiction under this law. Legislators are not permitted to invoke "Legislative Continuance" under this law, which permits members of the Legislature to postpone a trial date if it conflicts with the Legislative session.	**<u>Unfavorable</u>**

J.E. Walle

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			Concerns HB 18 rewrites the way certain new campaign finance violations are prosecuted and punished, creating an unprecedented and politicized process for both legislators and the private individuals who donate. This legislation also sets up a clear "quid pro quo" issue (the only legislators who face a financial penalty for their campaigns are the ones who act in a specific way in their official capacity). Additionally, HB 18 seems a clear violation of an individual's free speech by restricting donations by private citizens to certain lawmakers. By making the House or Senate itself the plaintiff and funneling every appeal to the newly created Fifteenth Court of Appeals (a controversial court stacked with governor appointees, instead of regional duly-elected judges) this bill undermines impartial enforcement and the House and Senate's right to create its own rules. HB 18 weaponizes the campaign finance system to punish certain Members of the Legislature for engaging in lawful dissent.	
SB 54 Sponsor: Shaheen By: Hughes	Relating to election procedures regarding accepting a voter with a residence address that is not current and the immediate effect of a voter's registration after the registrar's receipt of certain change of address notices.	Elections 5 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 4 Absent	SB 54 repeals SB 2217, 89(R), which allows an individual to immediately update the address used for their voter registration if they have not moved counties. The bill is set to take effect September 1, 2025. Instead, it reiterates that a voter whose address has changed within a county must vote in the election precinct that matches their registration so long as they also still reside in either the political subdivision or territory covered by the election. The voter must still execute and submit a statement to the election officer that includes confirmation that they meet the residence requirements, and all information required on a voter registration application. The voter may no longer make a change of address request at the polling place. SB 2217, 89(R) was passed with broad, bipartisan support and would have helped eligible voters navigate Texas' exceptionally complex process for registering (and updating registrations) to vote. Notably, unless SB 54 passes by a two-thirds vote, it won't go into effect until 91 days after signing — in that case, the 2026 primary will be the first election impacted. While concerns from election administrators about having the bandwidth to immediately process changes-of-address at a polling place are understandable, there are other steps the Legislature should take before repealing the change. Delaying implementation of same-day address changes to give local governments a longer runway to incorporate these changes would have been a better way of keeping the improvements passed last session, while reducing strain on election administrators.	**<u>Unfavorable</u>**

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