

**Weekly Legislative Report
May 20, 2023**

GOVERNOR:

Governor Threatens Special Session on School Choice Legislation – On May 14th, Governor Greg Abbott released a statement saying, "Empowering parents to choose the best educational path for their child remains an essential priority this session. A majority of Texans from across the state and from all backgrounds support expanding school choice. The Senate's version of school choice makes about 5.5 million students eligible, while the House's version of that bill proposed last week would make about 4 million students eligible. The latest House version of school choice, which came out this weekend, only applies to about 800,000 students. It also provides less funding for special education students than the original House version of the Senate bill and denies school choice to low-income families that may desperately need expanded education options for their children. This latest version does little to provide meaningful school choice, and legislators deserve to know that it would be vetoed if it reached my desk. Instead, the original House version of the Senate bill provides a more meaningful starting point to begin House-Senate negotiations. As this session has progressed, the number of House members supporting school choice has continued to grow. The realization that the STAAR test will be eliminated if school choice is enacted is attracting even more legislators. No doubt other modifications can be made to the original House version of the Senate bill to attract even more legislators, as well as to bridge the divide with the Senate. Parents and their children deserve the time and effort this will take. My staff and I will continue to work around the clock with the legislature to reach that goal. However, failure to expand the scope of school choice to something close to the Senate version or the original House version of the Senate bill will necessitate special sessions. Parents and their children deserve no less."

Governor Requests Border Security Assistance from Other States – On May 16th Governor Greg Abbott urged the nation's governors to help support Texas' border security efforts in the wake of ending Title 42 last week. Governor Abbott requested support in responding to the ongoing border crisis through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, which enables states to provide assistance and share resources with another state in response to a disaster or emergency. The letter said, "The flood of illegal border activity invited by the Biden Administration flows directly across the southern border into Texas communities, but this crisis does not stop in our state. In the federal government's absence, we, as governors, must band together to combat President Biden's ongoing border crisis and ensure the safety and security that all Americans deserve. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact

empowers states to provide assistance to one another in times of disaster or emergency, both of which accurately describe the current border crisis. Join us in the mission to defend our national sovereignty and territorial integrity and send all available law enforcement personnel and resources to the Texas-Mexico border to serve alongside our thousands of Texas National Guard soldiers and Texas Department of Public Safety troopers.” In his letters, Governor Abbott highlighted the Texas taxpayer dollars the State of Texas has already allocated for border security operations along the Texas-Mexico border and requested his fellow governors also help provide funding for their state’s border security response. Texas has spent more than \$4.5 billion since 2021 on border security operations, with the Texas legislature currently looking to fund an additional \$4.6 billion for the next two years. However, the governor noted that Texas should not have to shoulder the financial burden of protecting our nation alone. Governor Abbott also thanked the states of Idaho and Florida, which have recently stepped up to offer assistance in securing the southern border with law enforcement support and assets.

[View Governor Abbott’s letter to governors.](#)

Texas is Busing Migrants to Denver – On May 18th, Governor Greg Abbott announced the arrival of the first group of migrants bused to Denver, Colorado from Texas. The migrants were dropped off near Civic Center Park at 14th Street and Court Place this afternoon. Governor Abbott said, "Texas' overwhelmed and overrun border communities should not have to shoulder the flood of illegal immigration due to President Biden's reckless open border policies, like his mass catch and release without court dates or any way to track them. Until the President and his administration step up and fulfill their constitutional duty to secure the border, the State of Texas will continue busing migrants to self-declared sanctuary cities like Denver to provide much-needed relief to our small border towns." In April 2022, Governor Abbott directed the Texas Division of Emergency Management to charter buses to transport migrants from Texas to Washington, D.C. The governor added New York City, Chicago and Philadelphia as additional drop-off locations last year. Since beginning the migrant busing strategy last spring, more than 19,000 migrants have been transported to these self-declared sanctuary cities while providing relief to Texas' overwhelmed border communities.

Governor Commemorates 75th Anniversary of Israel’s Independence – On May 18th, Governor Greg Abbott commemorated the 75th anniversary of Israel's independence at a celebration hosted by the Consulate General of Israel to the Southwest in Houston. Delivering the celebration's keynote address, the governor highlighted the strong connection between Texas and Israel and ways the State of Texas continues to stand with the people of Israel. He said, "There is an enduring bond between the people of Texas and Israel, sharing the blessings of freedom and burdens of vigilance. The history of Israel is intertwined with the history of Texas and America, and Texas recognizes that historical significance.

In Texas, we don't do business with regimes that seek to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. As governor, I signed anti-BDS legislation that bans state agencies from doing businesses with companies that boycott Israel and awarded \$10 million in grants to secure places of worship like synagogues. Freedom requires eternal vigilance, and I am honored to be here today as we celebrate 75 years of independence for Israel." The Governor was joined at the celebration by Consul General of Israel to the Southwest Livia Link-Raviv, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, KHOU Great Day Houston Host Deborah Duncan, and other state and local leaders.

Border Security Press Conference in Brownsville – On May 19th, Governor Greg Abbott thanked Texas National Guard soldiers and Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) troopers for their selfless service at the southern border and provided an update on Texas' response to the ongoing border crisis during a press conference in Brownsville. During the governor's visit to the Texas-Mexico border, he applauded the hardworking men and women of Operation Lone Star, serving as part of Texas' unprecedented response to fill in the gaps created by President Joe Biden's open border policies. Governor Abbott said, "I'm here in Brownsville to thank the hardworking men women who are defending our border for their bravery and courage. Their extraordinary efforts have had a direct effect of keeping illegal immigrants out of Texas. These men and women in uniform here today, they're considered to be heroes by their fellow Americans. They should be proud of what they've done. I'm proud of what they've done. I thank all the Texas Department of Public Safety troopers and Texas National Guard soldiers for working around the clock to hold the line and defend our border. Texas will never stop doing whatever it takes to respond to President Biden's border crisis to keep criminals, terrorist, and deadly drugs like fentanyl off our streets." During the press conference, Governor Abbott noted that he is working with the Texas legislature to crack down on border-related criminal activity by making it a felony for illegally entering Texas, a felony for operating a stash house, and a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence for smuggling illegal immigrants in Texas. The governor was joined at the press conference by DPS Director Steve McCraw, Texas Military Department Brigadier General Matthew Barker, and Texas Border Czar Mike Banks.

Update on Operation Lone Star – Also on May 19th, Governor Greg Abbott, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), and the Texas National Guard announced that they are continuing to work together to secure the border; stop the smuggling of drugs, weapons, and people into Texas; and prevent, detect, and interdict transnational criminal behavior between ports of entry. Since the launch of Operation Lone Star, the multi-agency effort has led to over 376,000 illegal immigrant apprehensions and more than 28,000 criminal arrests, with more than 25,000 felony charges reported. In the fight against fentanyl, Texas law enforcement has seized over 416 million lethal doses of fentanyl during this border mission. Texas has also bused more than 9,400 migrants to Washington D.C. since April 2022, over 6,700 migrants to New York City since August 5th more than 1,900 migrants to Chicago since August 31st, more than 1,000

migrants to Philadelphia since November 15th, and 40 migrants to Denver on the first bus that departed this week. Governor Abbott said, ‘Operation Lone Star continues to fill the dangerous gaps left by the Biden Administration’s refusal to secure the border. Every individual who is apprehended or arrested and every ounce of drugs seized would have otherwise made their way into communities across Texas and the nation due to President Joe Biden’s open border policies.’”

Total number of bills sent to the governor so far this session: 367
Total number of HB’s sent to the governor so far this session: 116
Total number of SB’s sent to the governor so far his session: 251

SENATE:

The Senate was in session Monday through Friday this week. **Some of the bills that the Senate passed this week are listed in this Senate section, but many more are included in the issue categories below.**

Lt. Governor Patrick Rejects Sports Betting Legislation – On May 15th, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick issued a Tweet saying, “I’ve said repeatedly there is little to no support for expanding gaming from Senate GOP. I polled members this week. Nothing changed. The senate must focus on issues voters expect us to pass. We don’t waste time on bills without overwhelming GOP support. HB1942 won’t be referred.” He added, Texas is a red state, yet the House vote on sports betting legislation was carried by a Democrat majority. The Texas Senate does not pass bills with GOP in the minority. The GOP majority guides our path. HB 1942 and HJR 102 will not be referred to committee. We cannot waste committee and floor time in the last days of session. The Senate must focus on issues voters expect us to pass and elected us to pass.”

On Monday, the Senate passed 48 bills including:

- **HB 1442** by Ann Johnson (D-Houston) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would make the offense of obstructing a highway or passageway if committed while operating a motor vehicle and engaging in a **reckless driving exhibition** subject to an enhanced criminal offense; and would make the property used in the offense subject to asset forfeiture. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **HB 1666** by Giovanni Capriglione (R-Keller) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would prohibit a **digital asset provider** from comingling customer funds with funds belonging to the digital asset provider including the provider’s operating capital, proprietary accounts, digital assets, fiat currency, or other property that is not customer funds; and would prohibit the use of customer funds to secure or guarantee a transaction other than a transaction for the customer. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0. The House concurred in Senate amendments on May 17, 2023 by a vote of 145 to 0.*

- **HB 1745** by Jeff Leach (R-Allen) and Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would require a claimant bringing a **personal injury action against a transportation network company** to file with the petition an affidavit by claimant’s counsel setting forth specifically each theory of recovery, the negligence or other action, error, or omission of the company and the factual basis for each claim. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 25 to 6.*
- **HB 2059** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would provide grants to local mental health authorities or local behavioral health authorities to cover **training costs** related to the risk factors and **warning signs for various mental illnesses**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **HB 2230** by Terry Canales (D-Edinburg) and Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would repeal Section 316.092 (b) and Sections 316.093 (c) and (d) removing the expiration dates on transfers of money from the **economic stabilization fund** to the **state highway fund**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0. The House concurred in Senate amendments on May 17, 2023 by a vote of 142 to 0.*
- **HB 2484** by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Morgan LaMantia (D-South Padre Island) would ban spectators, including parents of a student participant, from attending future **University Interscholastic League competitions** if the spectator engages in conduct that intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes bodily injury to a person serving as a referee or official. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0. It is now in conference committee.*
- **HB 2545** by Giovanni Capriglione (R-Keller) and Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) would require a direct-to-individual **genetic testing company** that possesses an individual’s **deidentified data** to ensure the data is not associated with a particular individual and publicly commit to maintaining and using data in deidentified form and refraining from making any attempt to identify an individual using the individual’s deidentified data. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0. It is now in conference committee.*
- **SB 1537** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would require institutions of higher education to annually report to the coordinating board on **funding received** by the institution from a **foreign entity** during the preceding year. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 25 to 6.*

They adopted one proposed constitutional amendment:

- **HJR 107** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) would propose a constitutional amendment raising the mandatory **retirement age for judges** from 75 to 79. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 28 to 3. It has been filed with the Secretary of State. It will be submitted to the voters on November 7, 2023.*

They gave preliminary approval to:

- **HB 1859** by Matt Schaefer (R-Tyler) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would add a career and technology education program in **air conditioning and refrigeration contracting** to the definition of certification training program for career and technology education program purposes. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21 to 10. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval by the same vote.*
- **HB 2024** by Jeff Leach (R-Allen) and Phil King (R-Weatherford) would require a person to bring a **claim** arising out of the design, planning, or inspection or a **new residence**, an alteration of **or repair** or addition to an existing residence against a registered or licensed architect, engineer, interior designer, or landscape architect no later than eight years after the completion of the improvement. *It passed to Third Reading on May 15, 2023 by a vote of 21 to 10. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval by a vote of 22 to 9.*
- **HB 2127** by Dustin Burrows (R-Lubbock) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would prohibit **municipalities and counties** from **adopting ordinances** related to agriculture, finance, insurance, labor, natural resources or occupations unless explicitly authorized by statute. *Three floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 18 to 13. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval by the same vote.*
- **HB 3993** by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would add students completing a nontraditional secondary education to the **Top 10 percent automatic admissions** statute. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 20 to 11. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval by the same vote.*

About HB 2127, the Texas AFL-CIO called HB 2127 the “Death Star bill,” and said it would destroy ordinances and rules and prevent future ones on worker rights, workplace safety, consumer protection, and much more. It would cut off future local payday lending rules, undermining borrowers who need protections most. Texas AFL-CIO President Rick Levy said, “This brazen power grab tramples on the voices of local voters and harms working families. Instead of solving local problems locally, local governments will have to come to Austin to seek permission to act from extreme state officials who have already shown that they have never met a worker protection measure they like. There are so few protections for workers in this state, we are the deadliest state to work in. The legislature has no business actively stripping away what protections we have and further threatening our health and safety. Texans want to be able to work with their city councils and commissioners courts to craft local solutions to real problems. This bill simply turns those bodies into note-takers for a power-mad state.”

On Tuesday, the Senate passed the Third Reading bills. They also approved one proposed constitutional amendment:

- **HJR 134** by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would propose a constitutional amendment to abolish the office of **County Treasurer of Galveston County**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 27 to 4.*

They passed 47 bills additional bills including:

- **HB 6** by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would set the **criminal penalties** for **manufacturing or delivery** of less than one gram of **fentanyl**; and would enhance the penalty if an individual dies from a fentanyl overdose. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **HB 1277** by Briscoe Cain (R-Deer Park) and Royce West (D-Dallas) would repeal Section 552.006(b) of the Transportation Code which provides that if a sidewalk is not provided, a **pedestrian walking on a highway** shall, if possible, walk on the left side of the roadway or the shoulder of the highway facing oncoming traffic. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **HB 2012** by Tom Olverson (R-Cypress) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require public schools and institutions of higher education to allow the **display of the national motto** “In God We Trust” in classrooms. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 29 to 2.*
- **HB 2271** by Kyle Kacal (R-College Station) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would state that it is the agricultural policy of the state recognizing **aquaculture is a type of agriculture** and entitled to the same rights, privilege, and protections as any other type of agricultural operation. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **HB 2453** by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would **authorize occupational licensing agencies to issue a digital license** if the digital license is in a secure format and readily accessible by the license holder on a wireless communication device; the public is able to view the digital license; and if a vendor issues the digital license, the license is in a verifiable format. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 26 to 5.*
- **HB 3075** by Kyle Kacal (R-College Station) and Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would make it an offense for a person to intentionally or knowingly operate an **unmanned aircraft** over a correctional or **detention facility** unless it is higher than 400 feet above ground level. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **HB 3447** by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would establish the **Texas Space Commission** to strengthen the state’s leadership in civil, commercial, and military aerospace activities and to promote innovation in the field of space operations and commercial aerospace opportunities, including integration of space, aeronautics, and aviation industries into the Texas economy. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 29 to 2.*

- **SB 379** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would institute a sales tax exemption for **wound care dressings** and **feminine hygiene products**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 29 to 2. It has been voted out favorably from the House Ways & Means Committee.*

They gave preliminary approval to:

- **HB 1391** by Matt Schaefer (R-Tyler) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would allow an applicant for a **license as a residential wireman** to successfully complete a career and technology education program instead of having the required hours of on-the-job training before passing a residential wireman examination. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21 to 10. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval by a vote of 20 to 11.*
- **HB 2022** by Jeff Leach (R-Allen) and Phil King (R-Weatherford) provides that a **contractor** would be **liable** only to the extent a defective condition proximately causes actual physical damage to a residence, an actual failure or lack of capability of a building component or an imminent danger to the safety of the occupants of the residents. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 20 to 11. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval by the same vote.*
- **HB 2729** by Cody Harris (R-Palestine) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would provide different qualifications for a **prekindergarten program supervisor** (must be a certified teacher) than for a prekindergarten teacher (have child development certification or child care or prekindergarten classroom experience). *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 20 to 11. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval by a vote of 20 to 11.*
- **HB 3053** by Jay Dean (R-Longview) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would establish a **procedure for an election to dis-annex** an area for which a municipal annexation was finalized between March 3, 2015 and December 1, 2017. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19 to 12. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval by the same vote.*

On Wednesday, the Senate passed some of the Third Reading bills; passed 95 bills on the Local & Uncontested Calendar; and passed 33 additional bills including:

- **HB 165** by Ann Johnson (D-Houston) and John Whitmire (D-Houston) would increase the penalty for a **mass shooting** to a First Degree felony and would allow the stacking of sentences. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **HB 916** by Claudia Ordaz (D-El Paso) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require health benefit plans that provide **benefits for a contraceptive drug** to provide for an enrollee to obtain up to a three-month supply for the first time the enrollee obtains the drug; and a 12-month supply for an enrollee that obtains the same drug on an ongoing

basis. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

- **HB 1515** by Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) and Drew Springer (R-Muenster) is the sunset bill for the **Governor's Office of Economic Development & Tourism**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 28 to 3.*
- **HB 1632** by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would require the secretary of state to provide a **standardized training program** in election law and procedure for presiding or alternate **election judges**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **HB 1885** by Terry Canales (D-Edinburg) and Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) would authorize Texas Transportation Commission to establish a **variable speed limit program** to allow the temporary lowering of a prima facie speed limit to address inclement weather, congestion road construction, or any other condition that affects the safe and orderly movement of traffic. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 25 to 6.*
- **HB 2804** by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would prohibit the use of an institution's facility, uniform, registered trademark, copyright-protected product, or official logo, mark, or other indicia in connection with a contract for the **use of a student athlete's name, image, or likeness**, unless the student athlete obtains the institution's express permission and the institution is compensated for the use in a manner consistent with market rates. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 23 to 7.*

And, they passed a couple of bills to Third reading including:

- **HB 246** by Valoree Swanson (R-Spring) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require the secretary of state to establish a pilot program requiring a county to use a **video recording** device to record **ballot counting activity** in at least 20 percent of precincts in the county. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 20 to 11. On May 18, 2023, it received final approval by a vote of 19 to 12.*

On Thursday, the Senate passed the Third Reading bills and gave final approval to 42 other bills including:

- **HB 9** by Trent Ashby (R-Lufkin) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would establish the **Broadband Infrastructure Fund** to finance projects relating to the development of broadband and telecommunications services. *(this is the enabling bill for HJR 125) The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **HB 54** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would increase the **personal needs allowance** for Medicaid recipients in long-term care facilities from \$60 to \$85 per month. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 27 to 4.*

- **HB 844** by Jared Patterson (R-Frisco) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would update the definition of **trafficking of persons** to include solicit or patronize another person. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **HB 1427** by Liz Campos (D-San Antonio) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would make it an offense for person to make **obscene, intimidating, or threatening** telephone calls or other **electronic communications** from a temporary or disposable telephone number provided by an Internet application or other technological means. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **HB 1631** by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would remove the time limit (five continuous hours) on the hours an **election watcher** can observe an election. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **HB 2194** by Claudia Ordaz Perez (D-El Paso) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require the comptroller to establish criteria for determining whether a product may use **“Made in Texas”** to represent that the product was made in whole or in substantial part in Texas. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*
- **HB 2416** by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) and Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) would require the comptroller to establish the **Gulf Coast Protection Trust Fund** to develop infrastructure for protecting the gulf coast within the territory of the Gulf Coast Protection District. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **HB 2454** by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would **prohibit straw purchases** of a handgun (purchasing a firearm with intent to deliver it to a person who is prohibited from possessing the firearm. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **HB 3553** by Shawn Thierry (D-Houston) and John Whitmire (D-Houston) would increase the criminal penalty for **human trafficking** if the offense is committed at an institution of higher education. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*
- **HB 3554** by Shawn Thierry (D-Houston) and John Whitmire (D-Houston) would increase the criminal penalty for **human trafficking** if the offense is committed at a shelter or residential treatment facility serving runaway youth, foster children, or the homeless. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

About HB 2454 - Senator Roland Gutierrez (D-San Antonio) proposed an amendment to HB 2454 to raise the age to purchase an assault style, semi-automatic rifle to 21. The amendment was killed on a point of order. Senator Gutierrez said, “Republican leadership in the Texas Senate has now joined Republican leadership in the Texas House to block the ‘Raise the Age’ bill from having a vote. Currently, it is against the law to sell a handgun to anyone under the age of 21. Semi-automatic rifles can still be purchased by those 18 years of

age or older. The 'Raise the Age' bill has bipartisan support in the Texas House and is popular among Texas voters according to a University of Texas poll taken earlier this month, with 76 percent of all voters in support, including 64 percent of Republicans. This is a cold hard fact - 19 beautiful babies and 2 amazing teachers would be alive today had this amendment been Texas law before May 24, 2022. Raising the age to 21 has the bipartisan support of Texans. It is a damn shame that this legislature lacks the political courage to stop the killing of our kids."

The Senate adopted one proposed Constitutional Amendment:

- **HJR 125** by Trent Ashby (R-Lufkin) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would propose a constitutional amendment creating the **Broadband Infrastructure Fund** to finance projects relating to the development of broadband and telecommunications services. *(the enabling bill is HB 9) The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*

And, they gave preliminary approval to one proposed Constitutional Amendment:

- **HJR 132** by Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would propose a constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual net worth or **wealth tax**. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21 to 10. On May 19, 2023, it received final approval in the SENATE by a vote of 22 to 9.*

Two bills were passed to Third Reading:

HB 2138 by Kyle Kacal (R-College Station) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would authorize a nonprofit **wildlife conservation association** to use the organization's website to sell charitable raffle tickets. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 22 to 9. It was not taken up on Friday for final passage.*

HB 5180 by Terry Wilson (R-Georgetown) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require the general custodian of election records to provide **public access** to anonymous **voted ballots** 60 days after the election. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 20 to 11. It was not taken up on Friday for final passage.*

On Friday, House Speaker Dade Phelan visited the Senate Chamber. He received a warm welcome. Lt. Governor Dan Patrick invited him up on the podium. Lt. Governor Patrick said they have been "meeting and are making a lot of good progress."

The Senate passed 65 bills including two of Speaker Dade Phelan's legislative priorities:

HB 8 by Gary VanDeaver (R-New Boston) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would implement the recommendations of the **Texas Commission on**

Community College Finance. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 17 by David Cook (R-Mansfield) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would add to the definition of “incompetency” for **district and county attorneys** to adopt a policy **prohibiting** or limiting the **enforcement of a criminal offense**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 20 to 11.*

Each chamber passed the other chamber’s redistricting plans. The Senate passed:

HB 1000 by Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) is the **redistricting** bill for **Texas House** Districts. *It passed by a vote of 20 to 11.*

They passed other conservative priorities including:

HB 1181 by Matt Shaheen (R-Plano) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require owners of an **Internet website** including a social media site to include a mechanism on the website that **prevents** a user from **accessing pornographic material** unless the user verifies that the user is 13 years of age or older. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 30 to 1.*

HB 2837 by Matt Schaefer (R-Tyler) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would prohibit **financial institutions** from surveilling, reporting, or tracking the purchase of **firearms and ammunition**. *It passed by a vote of 19 to 12.*

They gave preliminary approval to:

HB 2334 by DeWayne Burns (R-Cleburne) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would exempt **plumbing work performed on private property** in an area that extends from a public right-of-way or public easement to not less than five feet from a building or structure from plumbing licensing laws. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 24 to 7. It is on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar on May 21, 2023 for final passage.*

NOTE: The bills that passed on the Local & Uncontested Calendar are in the issue categories below.

Total number of bills reported out of Senate Committees this week:	375
Total number of bills passed by the Senate this week:	337
Total number of bills passed on the Local & Uncontested Calendar:	95
Total number of bills passed by the Senate this session:	1,001
Total number of HB’s and HJR’s passed by the Senate this session:	406

Next Week: The Senate recessed until 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 12, 2023 for a Local & Uncontested Calendar with 75 House bills. The full Senate will reconvene at 5:00 p.m. to take up bills from the Intent Calendar.

HOUSE:

The House was in session Monday through Friday this week. **Some of the bills**

that the House passed this week are listed in this House section. Many more are included in the issue categories below.

On Monday, the House gave final approval to **SB 14** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) and Tom Oliverson (R-Cypress), which would prohibit medical professionals from providing **gender transitioning medical interventions to a child** under 18. *It received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 87 to 56. It has been sent to the governor.*

They adopted one proposed Constitutional Amendment:

- **SJR 74** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and Armando Walle (D-Houston) would propose a constitutional amendment establishing the **centennial parks conservation fund** administered by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. (the enabling bill is SB 1648) *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 123 to 21.*

They gave preliminary approval to 28 bills including:

- **SB 22** by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) and Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would establish a grant program to provide **financial assistance to sheriff's departments** and district and county attorney's offices in **rural areas**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 139 to 0.*
- **SB 224** by Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) and Jeff Leach (R-Allen) would presume that an actor in possession of property consisting of two or more **catalytic converters** that have been removed from two or more motor vehicles is presumed to have unlawfully appropriated the property. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 142 to 0. It has been sent to the governor.*
- **SB 895** by Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) and Stan Lambert (R-Abilene) would be the **Texas Money Services Modernization Act** and would authorize the Texas Department of Banking to protect the interests of purchasers of money services and the public, preserve and protect the safety and soundness of money services businesses, and protect against drug trafficking, terrorist funding, and money laundering, structuring, or related financial crime. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 118 to 24. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 116 to 12.*
- **SB 989** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) would require health plan coverage for **biomarker testing**. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 114 to 24. It has been sent to the governor.*
- **SB 1145** by Royce West (D-Dallas) and James Talarico (D-Austin) would authorize the legislature to provide an ad valorem tax exemption for **property used to operate a child-care facility**. *(this is the enabling bill for SJR 64, which passed to Third Reading on May 18, 2023 and received final approval in the HOUSE on May 19, 2023) It passed to Third Reading*

by a vote of 71 to 69. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 109 to 33. It has been sent to the governor.

- **SB 1602** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Briscoe Cain (R-Deer Park) would provide that venue for an action involving **copyright by a social media platform** to be brought and maintained in Texas courts and that Texas law applies. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 81 to 63. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 86 to 55. It has been sent to the governor.*
- **SB 1648** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and Armando Walle (D-Houston) would establish the **centennial parks conservation fund** administered by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. *(this is the enabling bill for SJR 74, which passed the HOUSE on May 15, 2023) It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 127 to 15. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 120 to 19. It has been sent to the governor.*
- **SB 2173** by Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) and Jay Dean (R-Longview) would require the Texas State Board of Pharmacy to develop and implement a **controlled substance prescription drug safe disposal pilot program** to increase the number of locations where unused controlled substance prescription drugs are collected from the public for safe disposal. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 112 to 32. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 130 to 11. It has been sent to the governor.*

On Tuesday, the House passed 27 Third Reading bills and one proposed Constitutional Amendment:

- **SJR 75** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Tracy King (D-Batesville) would propose a constitutional amendment creating the **Texas Water Supply for Texas Fund** to assist in financing water projects. (the enabling bill is SB 28) *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 135 to 4.*

They also gave preliminary approval to 27 bills including:

- **SB 28** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Tracy King (D-Batesville) would establish the **New Water Supply for Texas Fund** to finance projects that will lead to the acquisition or creation of seven million acre-feet of new water supplies by December 31, 2033. *The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 139 to 1. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 136 to 8.*
- **SB 599** by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) and Charles “Doc” Anderson (R-Waco) would allow **district clerks with a license to carry a handgun** to carry a handgun in areas where handguns are restricted (including the courthouse). *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 91 to 53.*

- **SB 621** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and Giovanni Capriglione (R-Keller) would require the Department of Information Resources to employ a **Chief Information Security Officer** to oversee cybersecurity matters for the state. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 141 to 0. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 143 to 1.*
- **SB 728** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and Jeff Leach (R-Allen) would include children determined to have a mental illness or an intellectual disability under the Code of Criminal Procedure or an incapacitated adult that lacks the mental capacity to manage the person's affairs under the Health and Safety Code in **National Instant Criminal Background Check System**. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 116 to 28.*
- **SB 821** by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) and Keith Bell (R-Forney) would require the Sunset Advisory Commission to review, as part of its review of a **state agency** whether the agency **sells personal data** and to whom the personal data is sold. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 136 to 0. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 145 to 0.*
- **SB 1133** by Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) and Tracy King (D-Batesville) would require the attorney general to establish a grant program to compensate landowners who suffer **property damage on agricultural land** by a trespasser as a result of criminal activities related to human trafficking, resisting arrest, or substance abuse. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 141 to 1. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 144 to 0.*
- **SB 1397** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Keith Bell (R-Forney) is the sunset bill for **Texas Commission on Environmental Quality**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 142 to 2.*

On Wednesday, the House gave final approval to 29 bills and gave preliminary approval to 15 bills including:

- **SB 15** by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) and Valoree Swanson (R-Spring) would require a student of a public institution of higher education who competes in **intercollegiate athletic competitions** to do so based on the student's **biological sex**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 93 to 49. On May 18, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 95 to 50.*
- **SB 1245** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) would allow judges who took office after September 1, 2024 and who are not already members of the **Judicial Retirement System** to apply for a cash balance annuity based on the age and service requirements. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 144 to 1.*
- **SB 1361** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and Dustin Burrows (R-Lubbock) would make it a criminal offense to produce or distribute **sexually explicit**

- videos** using **deep fake technology** without consent of the person appearing to be depicted. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 143 to 0.*
- **SB 1932** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) and Ken King (R-Canadian) would authorize the Alcoholic Beverage Commission to register **wine collectors** and would allow them to lawfully sell wine owned by the collector to restaurants. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 129 to 15. On May 18, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 132 to 10.*
- **SB 2289** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) would provide a property tax exemption for **tangible personal property** held by a manufacturer of **medical or biomedical products** as a finished good or used in the manufacturing or processing of medical or biomedical products. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 126 to 13. On May 18, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 132 to 12.*

On Thursday, the House gave final approval to 16 Third Reading bills and adopted one proposed Constitutional Amendment:

SJR 3 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) and Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas) would propose a constitutional amendment increasing the school property tax **homestead exemption** and instituting an appraisal cap. *(the enabling bill is SB 3) The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 143 to 0.*

They gave preliminary approval to one other proposed Constitutional Amendment and 12 bills including:

- **SB 3** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) and Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas) would increase the **homestead exemption** on school property taxes cap appraisals at five percent per year. *(this is the enabling bill for SJR 3) The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 140 to 5. On May 19, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 147 to 0.*
- **SB 247** by Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) and Mary Ann Perez (D-Houston) would repeal Section 504.515 of the Transportation Code, which authorize specialty license plates for a person who is an **honorary consul** authorized by the United States to perform consular duties. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 137 to 7. On May 19, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 143 to 0.*
- **SB 629** by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) and James Talarico (D-Austin) would require the Commissioner of State Health Services to establish an advisory committee to examine and review the **administration of opioid antagonists** to a person experiencing an apparent opioid-related drug overdose. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 144 to 0.*
- **SB 796** by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) and Ann Johnson (D-Houston) would require a **surplus lines insurance contract** that contains an

arbitration agreement to provide that the arbitration will be conducted in this state and governed by the laws of this state. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 136 to 3.*

- **SB 1045** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and Andrew Murr (R-Junction) would **establish the 15th Court of Appeals** district based in Austin with jurisdiction over matters brought by or against the state or a state agency. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 83 to 60. On May 19, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 91 to 47.*
- **SB 1445** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) and Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) is the sunset bill for **Texas Commission on Law Enforcement**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 143 to 0.*
- **SB 1471** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) and Candy Noble (R-Lucas) would grant private schools access to the **registry of persons who are not eligible for employment in public schools**. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 146 to 0. On May 19, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 143 to 0.*
- **SB 1677** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Four Price (R-Amarillo) would require the Health & Human Services Commission, in cooperation with local mental health authorities located primarily in rural areas, to contract with nonprofit organizations to establish **behavioral health centers or jail diversion centers** to provide hospital beds and **competency restoration services**. *Two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 142 to 0.*
- **SJR 64** by Royce West (D-Dallas) and James Talarico (D-Austin) would propose a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide an ad valorem tax exemption for **property used to operate a child-care facility**. *(the enabling bill is SB 1145) It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 99 to 46. On May 19, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 114 to 31.*

About SB 3 and SJR 3 Speaker Dade Phelan said, “Thank you to Chair Morgan Meyer and the rest of my colleagues in the Texas House for working hard to pass a second property tax relief proposal that would deliver immediate and permanent relief to Texans. Our chamber looks forward to working with the Texas Senate in these final days of the 88th regular legislative session to send what would be the largest property tax cut in state history to Governor Abbott’s desk. SB 3 and SJR 3 will provide 15 cents of school district tax rate compression, leading to an over 25-cent compression when coupled with the 10-cent compression already contained in HB 1, the state’s proposed budget for the next biennium. Under the legislation, the state’s share of public education will increase to 54 percent - marking the first time in 13 years it’s over 50 percent - and reduce recapture payments, or local dollars sent back to the state for redistribution, by some \$7.4 billion over the next biennium. The legislation will inject approximately \$15.5 billion new state dollars into the public education

system, thanks to that compression and an increase to the amount of a home's value that cannot be taxed from \$40,000 to \$100,000 for all Texas homeowners. Texans over the age of 65 will see an even higher homestead exemption due to the \$10,000 exemption currently in place for elderly and disabled homeowners. SB 3 also provides a 5 percent annual cap on the taxable assessment of residential and commercial property, giving property owners more predictability and better protecting them from runaway appraisals. Under current Texas law, there is a 10 percent appraisal cap for homeowners and no cap for owners of commercial property. The owner of a \$350,000 home will see about \$2,800 in savings over the next two years, while Texas seniors who own a home of the same value will save at least \$3,000 over the same time frame."

On Friday, the House passed 54 bills on the Local & Consent Calendar and passed 12 Third Reading bills.

They gave preliminary approval to 23 bills including three of Lt. Governor Dan Patrick's priority bills:

- **SB 12** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Matt Shaheen (R-Plano) would prohibit a municipality from authorizing a **sexually oriented performance** on public property or in the presence of a child; and would prohibit a sexually oriented performance on the premises of a commercial enterprise in the presence of a child (younger than 18). *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE by a vote of 88 to 12. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*
- **SB 17** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) and John Kuempel (R-Seguin) would **prohibit** institutions of higher education **maintaining a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) office** and would prohibit institutions from compelling or requiring any person to provide a DEI statement or give preferential consideration to any person based on a DEI statement. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE by a vote of 83 to 60. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*
- **SB 24** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) and James Frank (R-Wichita Falls) would be the **Thriving Texas Families Act** to consolidate services during pregnancy and early childhood including the Prevention and Early Intervention division and Department of Family & Protective Services and the Family Support Services division within the Health & Human Services Commission. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE on a voice vote. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*

They passed the Senate's redistricting plan to Third Reading about the time the Senate passed the House's plan:

- **SB 375** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) is the redistricting bill for **Texas Senate districts**. *It passed to Third Reading*

in the HOUSE by a vote of 82 to 61. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.

And, they gave preliminary approval to other measures including:

SB 129 by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) and Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas) would update **child pornography** laws to reflect current technologies; and would increase penalties if the person was in an official position of caring for the child at the time of the exploitation. *It passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE on a voice vote. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*

SB 1517 by Phil King (R-Weatherford) and Dennis Paul (R-Webster) would **prohibit academic boycotts** that would deprive students or faculty members of the ability to study or conduct research in or about a foreign country or to interact with its scholars or representatives; however, an academic boycott would be allowed if the target is a foreign country that is a state sponsor or terrorism. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE on a voice vote. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*

SB 1518 by Phil King (R-Weatherford) and Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would require the Department of Public Safety to establish a **terrorist offender registry** and require the department to supervise those terrorist offenders. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE on a voice vote. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*

SB 1900 by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) and Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would prohibit a **foreign terrorist organization** from purchasing or acquiring title to real property in Texas. *Two floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE on a voice vote. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*

NOTE: The bills that passed on the Local & Consent Calendar are in the issue categories below.

Total number of bills reported out of House Committees this week:	145
Total number of bills passed by the House this week:	142
Total bills passed this week on the Local & Consent Calendar	54
Total number of bills passed by the House this session:	1,642
Total number of SB's and SJR's passed by the House this session:	353

Next Week: The House adjourned until 1:00 p.m. on Monday, May 22, 2023.

BUDGET:

Senate Finance Committee – On Thursday, the Senate Finance Committee took up:

HB 2779 by Jeff Leach (R-Allen) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would increase the minimum **salary for a district judge** from \$140,000 to \$172,494, but would continue to base retirement benefits on the \$140,000 level. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 3461 by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would dedicate and rededicate revenue for use in **certifying the budget**. *It was reported favorably.*

HB 4041 by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) is the **miscellaneous claims and judgments** against the state bill. *It was reported favorably as substituted.*

HJR 2 by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would propose a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide on-time ongoing benefit **enhancements to annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

Passed the House:

SB 538 by Phil King (R-Weatherford) and Richard Raymond (D-Laredo) would allow the **Texas Military Department** to use appropriated money to recruit or retain service members, employees, or other personnel. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 144 to 0.*

SB 1246 by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and Greg Bonnen (R-Freindswood) would allow the comptroller to invest funds generated by a state agency's **investment in repurchase agreements**. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 132 to 9. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 129 to 11.*

Passed the Senate:

HB 2674 by Stan Kitzman (R-Pattison) would authorize an application for **designation as a state depository** to be sent to the comptroller electronically. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Senate Business & Commerce Committee – On Thursday, the Senate Business & Commerce Committee took up:

HB 5 by Todd Hunter (R-Corpus Christi) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would provide a temporary limited **property tax reduction** for businesses making **large capital investments**. *It was left pending.*

About HB 5, Todd Staples, President of the Texas Oil & Gas Association (TXOGA) said, “Texas has long been a business leader, recently winning Site Selection’s Governor’s Cup for the 11th year in a row and being named the Best State for Business for a record 19 years in a row by Chief Executive Magazine. Undoubtedly, businesses choose to relocate or expand in Texas because of our low taxes, reasonable regulations, and skilled workforce—but all of this is at risk. Other states and nations are competing fiercely to land large projects, and in the past year alone, Texas has lost out on major projects because we lack an economic development program. To remain competitive, attract investment, create jobs, and generate tax revenue for our local communities and school districts, Texas must use the tools that other states and countries are using. TXOGA supports the creation of a modern, transparent and accountable economic development program, and we look forward to working with the Senate

and House on a substitute for HB 5 to ensure that the end result is a meaningful economic tool that benefits all Texans,”

Passed the House:

SB 1340 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas) would rename the Chapter 380 and 381 Agreement Database as the **Local Development Agreement Database** and require economic development agreements of municipalities, counties, and school districts to be included in the database. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 147 to 0.*

Passed the Senate:

HB 4539 by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would provide that for the **moving image industry incentive program**, the minimum percentage of production crew, actors, and extras required to be Texas residents would be at least 55 (instead of 70) percent. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 24 to 7.*

HB 5174 by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would establish the **Semiconductor Innovation Consortium** to leverage the expertise and capacity of institutions of higher education, industry and non-profit stakeholders to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to ensure ongoing semiconductor innovation; and would establish the **Texas Semiconductor Innovation Fund** to provide matching funding for semiconductor manufacturing and design projects. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 29 to 2. The House concurred in Senate amendments on May 17, 2023 by a vote of 136 to 9.*

ELECTIONS:

House State Affairs Committee – On Monday, the House State Affairs Committee took up:

SB 1846 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would prohibit a manufacturer of **voting systems** from entering into a contract for software development services with an entity or individual located in China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, or Russia. *It was voted out favorably.*

Senate State Affairs Committee – On Monday, the Senate State Affairs Committee took up:

HB 315 by Philip Cortez (D-San Antonio) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require **mail ballot applications** to contain a statement prescribed by the secretary of state explaining the benefits of furnishing a telephone number including how it assists the early voting clerk. *It was reported favorably. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 1243 by Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would change the penalty for **illegal voting** from a Class A misdemeanor to a state jail felony. *It was left pending.*

House State Affairs Committee – On Wednesday, the House State Affairs Committee took up:

SB 610 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would make it a criminal offense (state jail felony) for a delegate or alternate to a federal **Article V convention** to knowingly cast an **unauthorized vote**. *It was voted out favorably.*

SB 1910 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would clarify that **election information** related to a general, primary, or special election is not exempt from the **Texas Public Information Act**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

SJR 35 by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would propose a constitutional amendment clarifying that a **voter must be a U.S. citizen**. *It was voted out favorably.*

Senate State Affairs Committee – On Thursday, the Senate State Affairs Committee took up:

HB 371 by John Bucy (D-Austin) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would set the date of **run-off elections** on the sixth Saturday after the date of the main election. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

HB 1299 by Candy Noble (R-Lucas) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require **signatures on a carrier envelope** for a mail ballot to be in ink on paper, and electronic signature or photocopied signature would not be permitted. *It was reported favorably. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 1848 by Emilio “Mano” DeAyala (R-Houston) and Bob Hall (R-Edgewood) would require the Secretary of State to study the feasibility of conforming each **central counting station** with the Sensitive Compartmented Information Facilities (SCIF) standards promulgated by the federal government. *It was reported favorably. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 2626 by Carl Tepper (R-Lubbock) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would require the governing body of a **political subdivision** to make **campaign finance reports** filed with the political subdivision available to the public within five business days after the report is filed. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 3046 by Kyle Kacal (R-College Station) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would allow the authority responsible for preparing ballots to omit the **name of a deceased candidate** from the ballot. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

HB 3159 by Jeff Leach (R-Allen) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would allow a voter with a disability to cast a ballot using an **accessible absentee mail system**. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

HB 4053 by Julie Johnson (D-Farmers Branch) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require a candidate’s **personal financial statement** that includes real property to list the name of a person with an interest in the property that holds a

mortgage on the property. *It was reported favorably. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 4621 by Salman Bhojani (D-Euless) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would authorize the authority that ordered **an election on a ballot proposition** to remove the measure from the ballot up to 90 days before an election. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 4780 by Reggie Smith (R-Sherman) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would allow a voter to provide a signature sheet in lieu of completing the carrier envelope certificate when **submitting a mail ballot**. *It was left pending.*

Senate Local Government Committee – On Friday, the Senate Local Government Committee took up:

HB 3613 by Briscoe Cain (R-Deer Park) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require **municipalities** with single-member districts to hold an election of the entire governing body after **reapportionment**. *It was voted out favorably.*

Passed the House:

SB 975 by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) and Mark Dorazio (R-San Antonio) would require the procedures adopted by the Texas Department of Transportation for the issuance of a **personal identification certificate** to a person who surrenders the person's driver's license to require that the person issued a personal identification certificate be provided a voter registration form to update the person's voter registration information to include the identification number of the newly-issued certificate. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 145 to 0.*

SB 994 by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Dustin Burrows (R-Lubbock) would allow the Secretary of State (in addition to party officers) to **declare a candidate ineligible** on the basis of failure to pay a filing fee or submit a petition in lieu of a filing fee. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 93 to 51.*

SB 1599 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and John Bucy (D-Austin) would require election officers to maintain a **register of ballots to be voted by mail** returned at a polling place including the name of each voter who returns a mail ballot and the ballot's number; and would establish a procedure for **correcting a defect in a mail ballot** and for tracking mail ballots. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 142 to 0. On May 18, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 144 to 0.*

About SB 1599, Katya Ehresman, Common Cause Texas' Voting Rights Program Manager said, "Modernizing our elections systems is a bipartisan priority that takes necessary steps to improve the vote by mail process after tens of thousands of Texans have been wrongfully disenfranchised by the antiquated process. We applaud the bipartisan partnership of these lawmakers to work across the aisle and put the people over politics."

Passed the Senate:

HB 87 by Andrew Murr (R-Junction) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would establish a procedure for replacing **presidential electors** that withdraw or are unable to serve. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 367 by Jacey Jetton (R-Sugar Land) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would allow the of State Commission on Judicial Conduct to accept complaints, conduct investigations, and take other action with respect to a **judicial candidate**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*

HB 1217 by Valoree Swanson (R-Spring) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would remove the population threshold (a county with a population of 55,000 or more) to provisions related to **hours for early voting**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 2384 by Jeff Leach (R-Allen) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require a **judicial candidate's ballot application** to include the candidate's bar number; whether the candidate has been sanctioned or censured or disciplined in Texas or another state; and disclose the nature of the candidate's practice, legal specialization, and courtroom experience. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 2629 by Glenn Rogers (R-Graford) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would require reports of **direct campaign expenditures** by political committees to include the name of each candidate or officeholder for whom a direct campaign expenditure was made to support or oppose. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 2800 by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require **meetings** of a **county election board** to be held in person and open to the public; and would require 48 hours advance notice of the meeting to be posted on the county's Internet website. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 3372 by Krona Thimesch (R-Lewisville) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would require a **political candidate** or officeholder who accepts a political **contribution made using a credit card** to report the full amount as a political contribution including any amount deducted from the contribution by the credit card issuer as a processing fee. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 0.*

HIGHER EDUCATION:

House Higher Education Committee – On Monday, the House Higher Education Committee took up:

SB 55 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Mary Gonzalez (D-Clint) would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to conduct a study to determine best practices for **assisting students with autism spectrum disorder** who are enrolled at institutions of higher education. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 200 by Sarah Eckhardt (D-Austin) and Donna Howard (D-Austin) would allow institutions of higher education considering **students applying for an academic fresh start** to consider academic course credits or grades earned by the

applicant five (instead of 10) or more years before the starting date the student seeks to enroll. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 427 by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) and Mary Gonzalez (D-Clint) would require colleges or universities receiving state support that do not offer at least three semester credit hours or the equivalent in **Texas History** to undergraduate students to enter into an agreement with another postsecondary educational institution to offer the courses to the institution's students. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 458 by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) and Donna Howard (D-Austin) would require a **nursing educational program offered by a for-profit entity** to provide evidence that the program will not result in a decrease in the number of clinical practice positions available to students enrolled in nursing programs in institutions of higher education in the region in which the program will be offered. *It was left pending.*

SB 532 by Royce West (D-Dallas) and Rafael Anchia (D-Dallas) would reduce the **mental health** professional student loan **repayment assistance program** to three years (instead of five years). *It was voted out favorably.*

SB 999 by Royce West (D-Dallas) would prohibit a person from providing **active shooter training** to students or school employees unless the person is certified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement to provide active shooter training. *It was reported favorably.*

SB 1565 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Dennis Paul (R-Webster) would require institutions of higher education to establish a policy framework that addresses **research security**; and to designate a person to serve as a research security officer responsible for classified information, controlled unclassified information, and foreign influence reporting. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 1987 by Kevin Sparks (R-Midland) and Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would remove the **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools** from the definition of "recognized accrediting agency" for purposes of accreditation of postsecondary educational institutions. *It was reported favorably as substituted.*

Senate Education Committee – On Thursday, the Senate Education Committee took up:

HB 2158 by Trent Ashby (R-Lufkin) and Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would provide a tuition and fee exemption for **fire fighters with a volunteer fire department** that responds to 9-1-1 emergencies in a designated area and attends at least 20 hours of annual training. *It was left pending.*

HB 1361 by Penny Morales Shaw (D-Houston) and Sarah Eckhardt (D-Austin) would require institutions of higher education to designate at least one employee to act as a **liaison officer** for current or incoming **students who are the parent or guardian of a child** younger than 18 years of age. *It was reported favorably as substituted and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 3338 by Sheryl Cole (D-Austin) and Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) would require institutions of higher education to implement a policy providing for the availability of **opioid antagonists** at each residence hall and the training of resident advisors in the proper use of those devices. *It was reported favorably as substituted and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

Passed the House:

SB 526 by Royce West (D-Dallas) and David Cook (R-Mansfield) would require prior approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for an institution of higher education to offer a **degree or certificate program to persons who are incarcerated** or subject to involuntary civil commitment. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 646 by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) and John Kuempel (R-Seguin) would authorize formula funding for distance education provided by **Lamar State College–Orange** students who reside in another state that is contiguous to the county in which the college is located. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 867 by Royce West (D-Dallas) and Toni Rose (D-Dallas) would allow **opioid antagonists** to be provided to **institutions of higher education**. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 1429 by Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) and Abel Herrero (D-Robstown) would prohibit a standardized examination prepared by a private entity from being a graduation requirement for a **nursing education program**. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 138 to 1.*

SB 2538 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) and Oscar Longoria (D-Mission) would repeal Section 51.803(k) of the Education Code which allows institutions to not offer admissions under the **top 10 percent rule** if a final court order overturns **affirmative action policies**. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 128 to 9. On May 17, 2023, It received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 144 to 0.*

Passed the Senate:

HB 584 by Giovanni Capriglione (R-Keller) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require the Department of Information Resources to enter into an agreement with a public junior college district to offer a program leading to a **state information technology credential** to address shortages in the state information resources workforce. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 1114 by Kyle Kacal (R-College Station) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would expand the **Blinn Junior College District** service area to include the part of the Waller Independent School District that is located in Harris County. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 1912 by Angie Chen Button (R-Richardson) and Royce West (D-Dallas) would increase the student union and buildings fee at the **University of Texas at Dallas** from \$60 per semester to \$100 per semester. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 2920 by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require the information maintained by the Texas Education Agency regarding **postsecondary education and career opportunities** to include information to assist prospective postsecondary students in assessing the value of a certificate program, associate or baccalaureate degree program or other credential program. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 3287 by Charles “Doc” Anderson (R-Waco) and Morgan LaMantia (D-South Padre Island) would change location requirements for campuses of **Texas State Technical College System** from cities to counties. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 29 to 2.*

HB 4005 by John Raney (R-Bryan) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would establish the **Texas Competency-Based Education Grant Program** to provide financial assistance to enable eligible students to enroll in competency-based baccalaureate degree programs. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 26 to 5.*

SB 1148 by Royce West (D-Dallas) would limit terms for members of the state executive committee of the **University Interscholastic League** to two consecutive terms. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 2422 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would provide that **information** regarding a current, former, or prospective applicant of a **student** held by the **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board** for the purpose of providing assistance with access to post-secondary education shall be considered **confidential** and not subject to disclosure under open records laws. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

PUBLIC EDUCATION:

House Public Education Committee – On Monday, the House Public Education Committee took up:

SB 8 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would establish a **parental bill of rights** and school responsibilities regarding instructional materials; and would establish an **education savings account program**. *It was left pending.*

House Public Education Committee – On Tuesday, the House Public Education Committee took up:

SB 418 by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would allow **transfer and assignment of students between school districts** (current law requires the school districts to be adjoining); and would allow a school district to deny approval of a transfer if the district or school is at full student capacity, the student is suspended or expelled by the student’s current district, or approval of the transfer would supersede a court-ordered desegregation plan. *It was left pending.*

SB 1087 by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Cody Harris (R-Palestine) would authorize school districts to reimburse students and teachers for career and technology **certification examination fees**. *It was reported favorably.*

SB 1647 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would allow **dropout recovery education programs** to be operated by an

accredited education management organization and be offered in person, remotely, or through a hybrid option. *It was reported favorably.*

SB 2497 by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) and Harold Dutton (D-Houston) would increase the **bilingual education allotment** from 0.1 to 0.15 if the student is in an alternative language method offered by a school district. *It was reported favorably as substituted.*

Senate Business & Commerce Committee – On Tuesday, the Senate Business & Commerce Committee took up:

HB 4246 by Angelia Orr (R-Itasca) and Morgan LaMantia (D-South Padre Island) would remove the \$2 million cap on the amount of surplus revenue that a nonprofit electric cooperative can contribute to a **scholarship fund for rural students**. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

Senate Education Committee – On Wednesday, the Senate Education Committee took up:

HB 699 by James Frank (R-Wichita Falls) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require the **University Scholastic League** to use the same **student enrollment calculation** formula for a school that allows a non-enrolled student to participate in a league activity as the formula used to determine the student enrollment of a school that does not allow a non-enrolled student to participate in the league activity. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 1211 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would add **licensed specialists in school psychology** to the list of mental health professionals for whom higher education **repayment loan assistance** is available. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 1590 by DeWayne Burns (R-Cleburne) and Royce West (D-Dallas) would establish the **Texas Leadership Scholars Program** to assist Top 10 Percent students who are economically disadvantaged. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 1614 by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) and Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would make **free prekindergarten** for children who are at least three years of age if the school district or charter partners with a community-based child-care provider. *It was left pending.*

HB 1794 by Matt Schaefer (R-Tyler) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would authorize formula funding for the **University of Texas at Tyler's school of pharmacy**. *It was reported favorably. It is set on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 1883 by Salman Bhojani (D-Fort Worth) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would require the State Board of Education to ensure that **assessment instruments are not administered on a religious holy day** including All Saints Day, Christmas, Diwali, Eid as-Adha, Eid al-Fitr, Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Vaisakhi, Vesak, and Yom Kippur. *It was reported favorably and recommended*

for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar on May 21, 2023.

HB 1905 by James Talarico (D-Austin) and Royce West (D-Dallas) would require school districts to make **school safety training courses** available to employees of **child-care facilities** and other organizations providing out-of-school-time care to children who reside in the district. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 1960 by Eddie Morales (D-Eagle Pass) and Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) would change the name of Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College to **Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande Region** and would allow it to offer all higher educational courses (instead of upper-level courses). *It was left pending.*

HB 2102 by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would allow charter holders to provide written **notice** of the establishment of a **new open-enrollment charter school campus** up to 36 months (instead of 18 months) before the date on which the campus is anticipated to open. *It was reported favorably. It is set on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 3623 by Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would allow school districts and charters to enter into a memorandum of understanding between schools authorizing the **school marshals** of each school to provide services at an event at which both schools participate. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 4372 by Tom Oliverson (R-Cypress) and Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would allow **private schools** to **commission peace officers** to enforce state and local law on a campus of the school. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 4437 by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would clarify that **information** regarding current, former, or prospective applicant or student of an institution of higher education that is obtained, received, or **held by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board** to be considered **confidential** and excepted from disclosure as an educational record. *It was left pending.*

HB 4997 by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) and Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would add a campus or campuses in Comal and Guadalupe Counties to the **Texas State Technical College System**. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 5167 by Terry Wilson (R-Georgetown) and Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would extend educational opportunities for **military-connected students** to children of veterans up to four years after retirement if the veteran returns to home of record on military orders. *It was left pending.*

Senate Education Committee – On Thursday, the Senate Education Committee took up:

HB 681 by Keith Bell (R-Forney) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would remove the sunset date on provisions allowing a **teacher certification** candidate

to satisfy certification requirements through an internship that provides the candidate employment as a teacher for courses offered through a local remote learning program or the state virtual school network. It would also remove the sunset dates for **student remote learning options**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 890 by Keith Bell (R-Forney) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would require the process through which a **school district** conducts **hearing of complaints** by personnel, students and parents to include an initial administrative hearing and an opportunity to appeal the administrative decision. *It was reported favorably as substituted.*

HB 1157 by J.M. Lozano (R-Kingsville) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require **excused absences** for a student to attend an appointment with a **mental health professional**. *It was left pending.*

HB 1206 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would include recapture in determining a school district's **ratio of assets to liabilities** under the public school financial accountability rating system. *It was left pending.*

HB 1662 by DeWayne Burns (R-Cleburne) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require **school districts** to post on the district's website the **employment policy** adopted by the district's board of trustees including compensation plans, employee leave conditions and procedures, and professional development requirements. *It was left pending.*

HB 1926 by Lacey Hull (R-Houston) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would repeal Section 29.050 of the Education Code, which sunsets the **supplemental special education services and instructional materials program** on September 1, 2024. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 2120 by Keith Bell (R-Forney) and Bob Hall (R-Edgewood) would allow a secondary school to obtain an establishment license to operate a **barbering and cosmetology** establishment on the school campus. *It was left pending.*

HB 2162 by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would eliminate instructional practices that are not aligned to the **science of teaching reading** and providing for **reading interventions** to struggling students. *It was left pending.*

HB 2273 by Tom Oliverson (R-Cypress) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would require the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to include skills that develop each student's civic knowledge including an **understanding of political ideologies**. *It was left pending.*

HB 2673 by Lacey Hull (R-Houston) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require Texas Education Agency to adopt **standards for permissible electronic devices** and software applications used by a school district or charter that minimizes data collection conducted on students. *It was left pending.*

HB 3315 by Keith Bell (R-Forney) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would establish a procedure for school districts to handle complaints concerning a violation of **parental rights**. *It was left pending.*

HB 3708 by Brad Buckley (R-Salado) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would provide an annual **allotment** of \$1,500 for each **student who is not enrolled in**

the school district **but is allowed to participate** in the University Interscholastic League (**UIL**) **activities** of the district. *It was left pending.*

HB 3908 by Terry Wilson (R-Georgetown) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would require school districts to annually provide at least 10 hours of research-based instruction related to **fenntanyl prevention** and **drug poisoning awareness** to students in grades 6 through 12. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 4358 by Steve Allison (R-San Antonio) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would include **digital teaching** in the **micro-credential certification** program as an option in the continuing education process for teachers. *It was left pending.*

HB 4656 by Kronda Thimesch (R-Lewisville) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would establish a **temporary teaching certificate** for classroom teachers certified by other states. *It was left pending.*

Senate Criminal Justice Committee – On Friday, the Senate Criminal Justice Committee took up:

HB 3917 by Brad Buckley (R-Salado) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would require a county, justice, or municipal court to dismiss a charge against a **parent alleged to have contributed to truancy of a student** if the parent completes the terms of an agreement with the school district and the child attends school. *It was voted out favorably.*

Passed the House:

SB 798 by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) and Brad Buckley (R-Salado) would prohibit the qualifications for certification as a **school counselor** from including a requirement that a candidate for certification have experience as a classroom teacher. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 85 50 52. On May 17, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 91 to 52.*

Passed the Senate:

HB 473 by Lacey Hull (R-Houston) and Kevin Sparks (R-Midland) would provide that before a threat assessment and safe and supportive school team may conduct a **threat assessment of a student**, the team must notify the parent of the student regarding the assessment and provide an opportunity for the parent to participate in the assessment. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 621 by Matt Shaheen (R-Plano) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require the State Board of Educator Certification to provide for the issuance of a **temporary teaching certificate** to a person who has served in the **armed services**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 25 to 6.*

HB 1212 by Jacey Jetton (R-Sugar Land) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would prohibit school districts from requiring documentation from a clergy member of other religious leader for purposes of excusing a student from attending school to observe a **religious holy day**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 1225 by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require **assessment instruments** to be administered in **paper format** to any student

whose parent or guardian requests the assessment to be administered in paper format. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 1263 by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) and Borris Miles (D-Houston) would prohibit a local authority from adopting or enforcing an order that prohibits or precludes the designation of a **school crossing zone** or school crosswalk at a high school campus located in a municipality with a population of two million or more. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 1297 by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would allow **vision screening** for public and private school students using an electronic eye chart as a substitute for a printed eye chart to assess visual acuity. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*

HB 1416 by Keith Bell (R-Forney) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would provide flexibility and local control for schools to design **accelerated instruction** for students recovering from COVID learning loss. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 1789 by Brad Buckley (R-Killeen) and Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would exempt school **bus drivers** from nepotism prohibitions. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 1825 by Chris Turner (D-Grand Prairie) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would allow consumption, possession and **sale of alcoholic beverages** at **performing arts facilities** owned by **school districts** in a county in which two or more stadiums with a capacity of at least 40,000 people are located. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 27 to 4.*

HB 1959 by Candy Noble (R-Lucas) and Phil King (R-Weatherford) would authorize a **peace officer** to request a transfer of the officer's student to another school district or district campus. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*

HB 2892 by Brad Buckley (R-Salado) and Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would require school districts to transfer a student to another district or campus upon require of a **military parent** who is a member of the U.S. military or Texas National Guard. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 2929 by J.M. Lozano (R-Kingsville) and Royce West (D-Dallas) would remove special education and bilingual education from the list of **continuing education** items for classroom teachers that no more than 25 percent training can include. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 3803 by Charles Cunningham (R-Humble) and Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would authorize **parents to elect for a student to repeat** any **course or grade** the student was enrolled in during the previous school year unless the school or charter determines the student has met all of the requirements for graduation. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 3813 by Mano DeAyala (R-Houston) would allow individuals **retiring** from **Windham ISD** to participate in the Texas Employees Group Insurance Program. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 3928 by Steve Toth (R-The Woodlands) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would require school districts to obtain parental consent before **evaluating a student for dyslexia** and related disorders. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 4210 by John Lujan (R-San Antonio) and Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would increase the terms from two to three years for **board members of military reservation school districts**; and would allow a board member who retires from active duty or civilian service to continue to serve on the remainder of their term on the board. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 2428 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would allow, but not require, a student to be removed from class and placed in a disciplinary alternative education program for possession or **use of an e-cigarette**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 30 to 1.*

SB 2518 by Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) and Mary Gonzalez (D-Clint) would allow an application for an **exception** to a **bilingual education program** to be for the same teacher or a different teacher as in a preceding period. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 31 to 0. It was voted out favorably from the House Public Education Committee on May 18, 2023.*

STATEWIDE:

House State Affairs Committee – On Monday, the House State Affairs Committee took up:

SB 1104 by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) and Shelby Slawson (R-Stephenville) would provide that during a **declared state of disaster**, only the legislature has the authority to restrict the operation of businesses by category or region; and would require the governor to convene the legislature in special session to respond to a declared state of disaster. *It was reported favorably.*

House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee – On Tuesday, the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee took up:

SB 1011 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and David Cook (R-Mansfield) would increase the penalty for **human trafficking** if the actor recruited the trafficked person from a correctional facility. *It was reported favorably.*

SB 1267 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and David Cook (R-Mansfield) would enhance the penalties of **operating a stash house** and increase them even more if the offense leads to an individual becoming a victim of sexual assault or suffered serious bodily injury or death. *It was reported favorably.*

House Human Services Committee – On Tuesday, the House Human Services Committee took up:

SB 1098 by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would give **parents with a child in a child-care facility** the right to enter the facility without advance notice. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 1327 by Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) and Toni Rose (D-Dallas) would allow **day care centers** to employ an **interim director** for up to 12 months while he/she is

completing the education requirements. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Consent Calendar.*

Senate Business & Commerce Committee – On Tuesday, the Senate Business & Commerce Committee took up:

HB 4012 by Stan Kitzman (R-Pattison) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require the comptroller to operate the **electronic state business daily** for state agencies and other eligible entities to advertise pre-solicitation notices, solicitations, and contract awards. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Local & Uncontested Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

Senate Criminal Justice Committee – On Tuesday, the Senate Criminal Justice Committee took up:

HB 2670 by Donna Howard (D-Austin) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would add a representative of the Department of Family and Protective Services, an adult survivor of child sexual abuse and a survivor of adult sexual assault to the **Sexual Assault Survivors' Task Force**. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

HB 2700 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would add visual material that includes a computer-generated recognizable child's image, likeness, or other distinguishing characteristic to the list of prohibited **sexually explicit visual material involving children**. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

Senate Local Government Committee – On Tuesday, the Senate Local Government Committee took up:

HB 2738 by Ed Thompson (R-Pearland) and Borris Milles (D-Houston) would require the General Land Office to enter into indefinite quantity contracts with vendors to provide services necessary to construct, repair, or rebuild property or infrastructure in the event of a **natural disaster**. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar on May 21, 2023.*

House State Affairs Committee – On Wednesday, the House State Affairs Committee took up:

SB 1884 by Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would require the Secretary of State to report **foreign nationals** the secretary determines to have knowingly engaged in actions that **undermine the security and sovereignty of the state** or corruption if the person's home country. *It was left pending.*

Senate Jurisprudence Committee – On Wednesday, the Senate Jurisprudence Committee took up:

HB 4183 by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Kevin Sparks (R-Midland) would allow justices of the peace to waive the waiting period for a **marriage ceremony**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

House State Affairs Committee – On Thursday, the House State Affairs Committee took up:

SB 1404 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would create a work group to study the benefits of **coal-to-nuclear** generating facility **conversion**. *It was voted out favorably.*

SB 2018 by Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) and Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would authorize the Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Public Safety to initiate an action to enforce the **prohibition against public camping**. *It was left pending.*

Senate Border Security Committee – On Thursday, the Senate Border Security Committee took up:

HB 7 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would allow the commissioners court of a county located in a border region to establish a **border protection court program**. *It was reported favorably as substituted.*

HB 800 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would increase the penalties for **human smuggling** and operating a **stash house**. *It was reported favorably.*

HB 4635 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would create civil remedies and enforcement actions related to **racketeering** and **unlawful debt collection**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

Senate State Affairs Committee – On Thursday, the Senate State Affairs Committee took up:

HB 1422 by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) and Brian Hughes (R-Mineola) would require the state observe **daylight saving time** year-round. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 4507 by Joe Moody (D-El Paso) and Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) would give a county attorney concurrent jurisdiction with the attorney general to file **price gouging lawsuits** in a **declared emergency**. *It was left pending.*

Senate Business & Commerce Committee – On Friday, the Senate Business & Commerce Committee took up:

HB 139 by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) and Bob Hall (R-Edgewood) would require the **notice of state agency rules** to include the bill number for the legislation that enacted the statutory authority under which the rule is proposed to be adopted. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

HB 1620 by Justin Holland (R-Rockwall) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would adjust the **sunset dates** for 2023 state agencies to 2015. *It was left pending.*

HB 3033 by Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require the attorney general to rule on **public information requests** within 30 (instead of 45) business days; and would require governmental bodies to produce the information within 15 days after the attorney general's authorization. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 3772 by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would require the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation to establish an **Anti-Trafficking Unit**. *It was voted out favorably.*

Senate Criminal Justice Committee – On Friday, the Senate Criminal Justice Committee took up:

HB 55 by Julie Johnson (D-Farmers Branch) and Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would increase the criminal penalty for re-offenders of **indecent assault**. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 1730 by Matt Schaefer (R-Tyler) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would increase the penalty for a second **offense of indecent exposure** from a Class B to a Class A misdemeanor; and would increase the penalty for a third or consecutive offense(s) of indecent exposure to a state jail felony. *It was voted out favorably.*

Passed the House:

SB 182 by Borris Miles (D-Houston) and Toni Rose (D-Dallas) would require employees and contractors of the **Department of Family and Protective Services** and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department to report known **criminal offenses** committed by fellow agency employees and contractors against those receiving services to Texas Department of Public Safety. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 126 to 14.*

SB 467 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) and Jeff Leach (R-Allen) would increase the criminal penalty to a Third Degree felony for the offense of criminal mischief involving **impairment of a motor fuel pump**. *It passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE on a voice vote. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*

SB 493 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would provide that a veteran of the armed forces who received a less than honorable discharge due to the individual's **refusal to receive a vaccination against COVID-19** would be considered to have received an **honorable discharge**. *It passed to Third Reading in the HOUSE on a voice vote. It will be on the calendar for final passage on May 21, 2023.*

SB 496 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) would require the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, in consultation with Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, to conduct a study to identify potential improvements to **training** provided to **9-1-1 emergency service call takers** and dispatchers. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 576 by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) and Shawn Thierry (D-Houston) would add to the definition of exploitation for purposes of **exploitation** by providers against **elderly individuals**, providing a monetary or property loan to a

provider by an individual receiving services. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 143 to 0.*

SB 1054 by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) and Dustin Burrows (R-Lubbock) would require a trial in the **contest of an election on a proposed constitutional amendment** to be between 45 and 180 days after the date of the contested election, although it could be earlier than 45 days at the request of the contestant. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 142 to 1. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 139 to 1. It has been sent to the governor.*

SB 1300 by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) would align the order of persons who can consent to remove a **decedent's remains** to be the same as the order of those who can initially dispose of a decedent's remains. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 141 to 0.*

SB 1414 by Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) and Justin Holland (R-Rockwall) is the **sunset bill for veterinary medicine practice** by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 140 to 2.*

SB 1653 by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and David Cook (R-Mansfield) would enhance the penalty for **promotion of prostitution** if the actor engages in conduct involving a person younger than 18 years of age. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 1659 by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Justin Holland (R-Rockwall) would set the schedule for state agencies to undergo **sunset review**. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 136 to 8.*

SB 1727 by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Terry Canales (D-Edinburg) is the sunset bill for the **Texas Juvenile Justice Department**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 141 to 2.*

Passed the Senate:

HB 608 by Matt Shaheen (R-Plano) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would authorize counties to allow the **sale of fireworks** during the five days preceding the Hindu religious **holiday of Diwali**. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 671 by Mary Gonzalez (D-Clint) and Sarah Eckhardt (D-Austin) would require the Texas Veterans Commission to conduct a suicide prevention campaign to provide **veterans** with information regarding **suicide prevention**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*

HB 907 by Joe Moody (D-El Paso) and Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen) would allow a current, former, or retired federal or state judge to perform a **marriage ceremony**. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 1740 by Jeff Leach (R-Allen) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would require the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department to **waive the park entrance fee** for **first responders** and active-duty members or veterans of the **armed services**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 1989 by David Cook (R-Mansfield) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would prohibit districts clerks from charging a fee for a copy of a document relating to an **individual's criminal history**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 2499 by Cecil Bell, Jr. (R-Magnolia) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would designate June 28th as **Special Forces Day** in honor of the men and women who have served in the special operations forces of the United States armed forces. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 2660 by Tom Oliverson (R-Cypress) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require a law enforcement agency **responding to a missing child or person report** to electronically submit to each municipal or county law enforcement agency within 200 miles of the report any information that may help determine the location of the child or person within 48 hours. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*

HB 3223 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would require the chair of the Emergency Management Council to appoint a chair of each **disaster district committee** based on the declared disaster and phase of disaster response. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*

HB 3599 by Shawn Thierry (D-Houston) and Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen) would allow a **non-profit food bank** to claim a refund on gasoline and diesel taxes paid. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 30 to 1.*

HB 4559 by Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would update **statutory population brackets** to reflect the 2021 census figures. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

TAX:

House Ways & Means Committee – On Monday, the House Ways & Means Committee took up:

SB 719 by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) and Shawn Thierry (D-Houston) would include an ad valorem tax exemption for **charitable organizations** providing services for placing children in **foster or adoptive homes** or providing support for women who are pregnant and considering placing their unborn child for adoption. *It was reported favorably.*

SB 1000 by Royce West (D-Dallas) would **decrease** the **sales tax rate** by one-half cent. *It was voted out favorably.*

SB 1814 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would change the definition of **current debt service** to the minimum dollar amount required to be expended for debt service in the current year. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

SB 1999 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would provide a calculation transitioning from a rate-based unused increment calculation to a **dollar-based unused increment calculation**. *It was voted out favorably.*

SB 2350 by Paul Bettencourt would clarify that once the **voter-approval tax rate** is adopted by the taxing entity, that rate and the truth-in-taxation worksheets may not be changed or adjusted. *It was voted out favorably.*

Senate Finance Committee – On Thursday, the Senate Finance Committee took up:

HB 4865 by Cody Harris (R-Palestine) and Morgan LaMantia (D-South Padre Island) would tax remote sellers outside the state selling **cigars or pipe tobacco** to a consumer in this state. *It was left pending.*

Senate Business & Commerce Committee – On Friday, the Senate Business & Commerce Committee took up:

HB 1518 by Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would require a person who examines the work of appraisers performing appraisal services for an **appraisal management company** to be knowledgeable of appraisal practice. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

Senate Local Government Committee – On Friday, the Senate Local Government Committee took up:

HB 3207 by Andrew Murr (R-Junction) and Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would remove the residency requirement to serve on the **agricultural advisory board** of an appraisal district. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 4082 by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would authorize cities and counties to issue **tax anticipation notes** to be issued for transportation, utility, first responder, and parks and recreation expenses. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 4456 by Cody Harris (R-Palestine) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would change the **no-new-revenue maintenance and operations tax rate** to an amount that would provide the same funding available to the district in the preceding school year. *It was voted out favorably.*

HB 4645 by Lulu Flores (D-Austin) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would allow a property tax exemption for improvements made by an organization that leases land to provide **low-income housing**. *It was voted out favorably.*

Passed the House:

SB 61 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would allow the comptroller to serve **notice of permit revocation** hearings electronically. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 143 to 0.*

SB 348 by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) and Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas) would allow **appraisal districts to post an arial photograph**, a street level photograph only of the exterior of a building, a field record or over-head sketch, the outline of one or more buildings on the property, the general landscape features, and the dimensions of or distances between buildings of a residential property on the district's Internet website. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 361 by Sarah Eckhardt (D-Austin) and Hugh Shine (R-Temple) would allow teachers to serve on an **appraisal review board**. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 539 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) and Tom Craddick (R-Midland) would require taxing units to indicate on each **delinquent tax roll** that a

delinquent tax included on the roll is deferred or abated on the residence homestead of elderly, disabled or veteran homesteads. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 1237 by Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) and Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) would require the comptroller to ensure that a security officer or **investigator commissioned as a peace officer by the comptroller** is compensated according to the commissioned officer classification salary schedule prescribed by the General Appropriations Act. *It passed the HOUSE by a vote of 135 to 4.*

SB 1439 by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) and Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would allow an **appraisal district** to finance the purchase or construction of improvements necessary for its **facilities**. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 1614 by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Four Price (R-Amarillo) would clarify that a business whose principal business activity is **television or radio broadcasting** would be treated the same as a taxable entity whose principal business is film or television production for purposes of computing cost of goods sold. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 2091 by Royce West (D-Dallas) and Carl Sherman, Jr. (R-DeSoto) would allow a taxing unit to sell **seized or foreclosed property** that is landlocked or is a narrow strip of land that cannot be used independently under its current zoning classification ordinance to an abutting property owner, without the need for a public sale. *It passed the HOUSE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

Passed the Senate:

HB 260 by Andrew Murr (R-Junction) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would require the chief appraiser to take into consideration for land defined as **wildlife or livestock disease or pest area**, the effect that the pest or the designation of the area has on the net income from the land. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 1285 by Hugh Shine (R-Belton) and Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would authorize the central appraisal district board to appoint one or more deputy taxpayer liaison officers to assist the taxpayer liaison officer; and would establish that the **taxpayer liaison officer** is the taxpayer assistance officer for the district. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 1689 by Andrew Murr (R-Junction) and Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would require a county that uses revenue derived from hotel occupancy tax revenue to create, maintain, operate, or administer an **electronic tax administration system**. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

HB 2121 by Dennis Paul (R-Webster) and Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would eliminate the requirement that a property rendition report must be sworn as true and accurate if the property owner who is rendering **business personal property** has a good faith estimate of the market value of that property that is not more than \$500,000. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 2354 by Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) and Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would provide that ownership of land appraised as **qualified open-space land** for ad valorem tax purposes would not be considered to have changed

ownership if the land is transferred from the former owner to the surviving spouse or a surviving child of the former owner. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0. A conference committee was requested by the House on May 17, 2023.*

HB 3104 by Charles “Doc” Anderson (R-Waco) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would expand qualifications for the sales tax exemption for equipment necessary to operate a **data center**. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the SENATE by a vote of 26 to 5.*

HB 4077 by Candy Noble (R-Lucas) and Sarah Eckhardt (D-Austin) would allow a person who will become 65 years of age in the next tax year to file a **homestead exemption application**. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

HB 4101 by Hugh Shine (R-Temple) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would limit **binding arbitration requests** to include complying with model hearing procedures prepared by the comptroller. *It passed the SENATE by a vote of 31 to 0.*

SB 2526 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would prescribe a method for appraisal of property comprising a **regulatory “buffer zone.”** *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31 to 0.*

Sales Tax Holiday for Energy-Efficient Products – On May 17th, Comptroller Glenn Hegar reminding families and businesses that they can save on the purchase of certain water- and energy-efficient products during the state’s Water-Efficient Products and ENERGY STAR® sales tax holidays. The holidays, created by the Texas legislature, both take place Saturday, May 27, through Monday, May 29, 2023. The Texas Comptroller's office estimates shoppers will save \$14.3 million in state and local sales tax. Comptroller Hegar said "Older, inefficient appliances and outdated water systems can put a tremendous strain on our power grids and water supplies. By taking advantage of these sales tax holidays, Texans can make upgrades that will help alleviate those pressures and lower their utility bills - while saving money on state and local sales taxes." This is the eighth year for the Water-Efficient Products Sales Tax Holiday. Products displaying a WaterSense® label or logo can be purchased tax free for personal or business use. These include showerheads, bathroom sink faucets and accessories, toilets, urinals and landscape irrigation controls. The sales tax holiday also applies to lawn and garden products that help conserve water outdoors. Items qualifying for the exemption include soaker or drip-irrigation hoses; moisture controls for sprinkler or irrigation systems; mulch; and plants, trees and grasses. These items can be purchased tax free for residential use only. There’s no limit to the number of water-efficient or water-conserving products you can purchase tax free. During the ENERGY STAR Sales Tax Holiday, certain energy-efficient products displaying the ENERGY STAR logo can be purchased tax free, including air conditioners priced at \$6,000 or less, refrigerators priced at \$2,000 or less, ceiling fans, compact fluorescent light bulbs, integral LED bulbs, dishwashers, dehumidifiers and clothes washers.

[View more information](#) about the energy-efficient product sales tax holidays.

WORKFORCE:

Senate Natural Resources & Economic Development Committee – On Wednesday, the Senate Natural Resources & Economic Development Committee took up:

HB 1703 by Claudia Ordaz Perez (D-El Paso) and Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) would require the Texas Workforce Commission to maintain an **automated follow-up and evaluation system** that includes **unemployment wage records and student follow-up information** available through the Texas Education Agency and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is set on the Local & Uncontested Calendar for May 21, 2023.*

HB 2466 by Angie Chen Button (R-Richardson) and Royce West (D-Dallas) would establish the **Small Business Innovation Research and Technology Transfer Grant Matching Program** to foster job creation and economic development by matching or supplementing money received by a business entity through the federal funding program. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

HB 2975 by Ryan Guillen (R-Rio Grande City) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would require the Workforce Commission to maintain on its website information and resources for employers who are considering implementing **work and family policies**. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar for May 21, 2023.*

HB 4390 by Angie Chen Button (R-Garland) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would update the **Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs Grant Program** by allowing the commission to certify industry-recognized apprenticeship programs (instead of the U.S. Department of Labor); and would require the commission to establish which occupations are recognized as an apprenticeable occupation. *It was reported favorably as substituted. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar for May 21, 2023.*

HB 4451 by Salman Bhojani (D-Eules) and Pete Flores (R-Pleasanton) would require Texas Workforce Commission, in consultation with local workforce development boards, to prepare a report on **available apprenticeship programs** and make recommendations to expand the availability of apprenticeship programs in emerging and high-demand industries. *It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar. It is on the Local & Uncontested Calendar for May 21, 2023.*

HB 5264 by Rheta Andrews Bowers (D-Rowlett) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would require the Texas Workforce Commission to adopt a set of performance indicators to measure and evaluate the quality of learning and achievement of students enrolled in **career school or college programs**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

Passed the House:

SB 2032 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) and Brad Buckley (R-Salado) would allow school districts, junior colleges, universities, and governmental entities to contract with a nonprofit entity to operate an **adult charter school**. *It passed to*

Third Reading by a vote on 143 to 1. On May 16, 2023, it received final approval in the HOUSE by a vote of 139 to 0.

SB 2139 by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and Oscar Longoria (D-Mission) would establish the **Opportunity High School Diploma pilot program** in up to five public junior colleges to offer an alternative competency-based high school diploma program for adult learners. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the HOUSE by a vote of 142 to 3.*

Passed the Senate:

HB 1615 by Angie Chen Button (R-Garland) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would require the Texas Workforce Commission to establish and administer a **prekindergarten partnership program** to assist Texas Rising Star program providers in partnering with local school districts and charters to provide the required prekindergarten classes. *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

SB 2029 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would transfer administration of the **Texas Innovative Adult Career Education (ACE) Grant Program** to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (instead of a junior college and an advisory board). *It passed the SENATE on the Local & Consent Calendar.*

JET Grants Announced – On May 17th, Governor Greg Abbott announced 17 Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) grants totaling more than \$7.7 million have been awarded to 12 Coastal Bend-area educational institutions by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The JET grants will support career and technical education (CTE) training programs by helping the schools purchase and install equipment to train initially more than 1,700 students for high-demand occupations. Governor Abbott said, “The State of Texas continues to be able to provide the resources and training needed for our highly skilled, diverse workforce to excel and support our state’s booming economy thanks to grants like these. I thank the Texas Workforce Commission and Texas’ strong educational institutions for working together to ensure Texas students are set for success with thriving careers in high-demand industries. The future of Texas remains bright because of today’s talented students.” TWC Chairman Bryan Daniel added, “Career and technical education programs supported through JET grants provide students with the skilled training they need for in-demand jobs while learning to use the same types of equipment they will find on the job. This is an exciting day for Texas and Coastal Bend communities as we celebrate their success and future opportunities.”

TWC Chairman Daniel presented the awards at a ceremony attended by state and local officials, school staff, and CTE students at Del Mar College’s Oso Creek Campus. The 17 JET grants include:

- **Alice Independent School District (ISD)** - a \$216,716 grant to purchase and install equipment to initially train 126 students as nurses, with additional students to be trained in the future in partnership with Coastal Bend College
- **Aransas Pass ISD** - two grants in partnership with Del Mar College:

- \$705,255 to purchase and install equipment to train an initial 99 physician assistants
- \$712,500 for equipment to train an initial 52 students in welding professions
- **Aransas County ISD** - a \$657,089 grant to train an initial 88 students as pilots of water vessels in partnership with Del Mar College
- **Bloomington ISD** - a \$54,806 grant to initially train 30 students as chefs in partnership with Victoria College
- Brooks County ISD - three grants:
 - \$712,500 for equipment to train an initial 126 students in welding in partnership with Del Mar College
 - \$301,406 for equipment to train an initial 126 students in nursing in partnership with Del Mar College
 - \$192,182 for equipment to train an initial 126 students in HVAC installation in partnership with Lamar Institute of Technology
- **Coastal Bend College** - a \$333,352 grant for equipment to train an initial 80 students in nursing
- **Corpus Christi ISD** - a \$389,253 grant for equipment to train an initial 65 students as pilots of water vessels in partnership with Del Mar College
- **Gregory-Portland ISD** - a \$164,554 grant for equipment to train an initial 100 students in welding in partnership with Del Mar College
- **Skidmore-Tynan ISD** - a \$509,101 grant for equipment to train an initial 65 students in welding in partnership with Del Mar College.
- **Tuloso-Midway ISD** - two grants:
 - \$712,500 for equipment to train an initial 225 students as medical assistants in partnership with Del Mar College
 - \$687,738 for equipment to train an initial 152 students in welding in partnership with Del Mar College
- **West Oso ISD**- a \$90,108 grant for equipment to train an initial 130 students as radiologic technicians in partnership with Del Mar College
- **Woodsboro ISD** - two grants:
 - \$682,237 for equipment to train an initial 76 students as medical assistants in partnership with Del Mar College
 - \$665,394 for equipment to train an initial 76 students in welding in partnership with Del Mar College

Through funding provided by the Texas Legislature each biennium, TWC uses JET grants to defray start-up costs to develop career and technical education programs for the public community, state and technical colleges, school districts, and charter schools. Equipment funded through JET grants must be used to train students for jobs in high-demand occupations.

Summer Earn and Learn Program for Students with Disabilities – On May 16th, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) announced the kickoff of this year’s Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) program for students with disabilities aged 14-22. Through work-based learning, students earn a paycheck while acquiring new skills and gaining professional experience. Employers participating

in SEAL benefit from the addition of engaged and enthusiastic team members. SEAL, is a partnership between TWC, Workforce Solutions Boards, and local employers who partner to create meaningful work opportunities. Students participating in SEAL attend work readiness training to prepare them for successful employment through the summer program. TWC Chairman Bryan Daniel said, "Most of us can remember the excitement of our first summer job and the beginnings of our career, TWC provides students with disabilities a rewarding experience of a first job with a well-earned paycheck with the Summer Earn and Learn program." In the summer of 2022, the SEAL program hosted 2,516 students across the state at 1,263 employer sites. TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Aaron Demerson said, "Texas employers continue to participate in Summer Earn and Learn and other valuable vocational rehabilitation programs because it is a rewarding experience to work with the true problem-solvers of our society. A broad range of Texas employers, large and small, participate in these pre-employment programs, in order to find their hardworking workforce." The SEAL program has grown to include a variety of both private and public sector employers, such as Typhoon Texas in Houston, Kalahari Resort in Round Rock, the City of Shepherd, Odessa College in Odessa, San Benito Chamber of Commerce, Sea World San Antonio and Ripley's Believe It or Not in Grand Prairie. Through the program, students learn about the employer's industry and develop specialized knowledge and talents. Upon completion of the work experience, some students have had the opportunity to become employed full time. WC Commissioner Representing Labor Alberto Treviño III said, "Summer Earn and Learn is an exciting and beneficial program for students with disabilities to experience their first job and expand their future career opportunities. This is another excellent example of how an earn-while-you-learn path helps build skills and confidence for youth."

April Unemployment Numbers – On May 19th, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) announced that Texas achieved 26 consecutive months of growth in total nonfarm employment in April 2023, with the state again eclipsing records for the largest civilian labor force and greatest number of people employed in state history. The seasonally adjusted civilian labor force increased by 62,184 to reach a series-high 14,960,308 people, while the unemployment rate held steady at 4.0 percent. Texas added 33,300 positions to reach another series-high job count at 13,871,100 total nonfarm jobs. Annually, the Texas job count increased more than any other state, with 534,600 positions added since April 2022. TWC Chairman Bryan Daniel said, "Texas continues its strong job creation trend with more than one million jobs added since April 2019. TWC continues to work to meet the growth across the state and support workforce needs with training solutions that start as early as high school." Every one of the 11 major industries had positive annual growth in Texas, with all but one industry – Construction - achieving positive over-the-month growth. In April, Professional and Business Services had the largest monthly gain with 8,700 jobs added, followed by Trade, Transportation and Utilities with 6,400 positions, and Leisure and Hospitality following closely with 6,200 positions. The Midland Metropolitan Statistical Area

(MSA) reached the lowest unemployment rate among Texas MSAs with a not seasonally adjusted rate of 2.3 percent in April, followed by Amarillo at 2.8 percent, then College Station-Bryan at 2.9 percent. Nationally, over the year, the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington MSA ranked second for number of jobs added, while the Midland MSA ranked first in America for percentage of jobs added.

Governor Greg Abbott said, “The strongest economy in the nation is built by Texans. Texas is again No. 1 for job creation, adding more jobs over the last 12 months than any other state. As a result, more Texans are working than ever before, and that means more paychecks and more possibilities for Texas families. With Texas employers growing jobs across every major industry over the year, and with our young and skilled workforce growing to nearly 15 million, we are building an even stronger Texas of tomorrow. April jobs data released by the Texas Workforce Commission and the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows Texas setting new employment highs:

- Texas reached a new high for total jobs at 13,871,100 as employers added 33,300 nonfarm jobs over the month.
- Texas reached a new high for Texans working, including employed and self-employed, at 14,354,600.
- Texas reached a new high with the largest labor force ever in the state’s history at 14,960,300.
- Texas again leads the nation for job creation over the last 12 months, adding 534,600 jobs and growing at an annual rate of 4.0 percent, faster than the 2.6 percent rate for the nation as a whole.”

SLOW-DOWN RULES:

House End-of-Session Slow-Down Rules - Rules that institute deadlines in the House prior to the end of the legislative session began to kick in Monday, May 8, 2023.

~~**May 8, 2023**— Last day for House committees to report House Bills and House Joint Resolutions (119th day).~~

~~**May 9, 2023**— Last House Daily Calendar with House Bills and House Joint Resolutions must be distributed by 10:00 p.m. due to the 36-hour layout rule for calendars (120th day).~~

~~**May 10, 2023**— Last House Local and Consent Calendar with Consent House Bills must be distributed by 9:00 a.m. due to the 48-hour layout rule for Local and Consent calendars (121st day).~~

~~**May 11, 2023**— Last day (midnight deadline) for the House to consider Second Reading House Bills and House Joint Resolutions on the regular calendar (122nd Day).~~

~~**May 12, 2023**— Last day (midnight deadline) for House to consider consent House Bills on Second and Third Reading and all Third reading House Bills and House Joint Resolutions on the regular calendar (123rd Day).~~

~~**May 17, 2023**— Last House Local and Consent Calendar with local House Bills must be distributed by 9:00 a.m. due to the 48-hour layout for Local and Consent calendars (128th day).~~

~~**May 19, 2023** – Last day for the House to consider local House Bills on Second and Third Reading (130th Day).~~

~~**May 20, 2023** – Last day for House Committees to report Senate Bills and Senate Joint Resolutions (131st Day).~~

May 21, 2023 – Last House Daily Calendar with Senate Bills and Senate Joint Resolutions must be printed and distributed (10:00 p.m. deadline) due to the 36-hour layout rule for regular calendars (132nd Day).

May 22, 2023 – Last House Local and Consent Calendar with Senate Bills must be distributed by 9:00 a.m. due to the 48-hour layout rule for Local and Consent calendars (133rd Day).

May 23, 2023 – Last day for the House to consider Second Reading Senate Bills and Senate Joint Resolutions on the regular calendar (134th Day).

May 24, 2023 – Last day for the House to consider local and consent Senate bills on Second and Third Reading and to consider all Third Reading Senate bills and Senate Joint Resolutions on the regular calendars (135th Day).

May 25, 2023 – All Senate amendments must be distributed in the House before midnight due to the 24-hour layout rule (136th Day).

May 26, 2023 – Last day for the House to act on Senate amendments. Senate copies of conference committee reports on tax, general appropriations and reapportionment bills must be printed and distributed before midnight due to the 48-hour lay-out rule (137th Day).

May 27, 2023 – In the House, all conference committee reports must be printed and distributed by midnight due to the 24-hour layout rule (138th Day).

May 28, 2023 – Last day for the House to adopt conference committee reports and to discharge conference committees and adopt Senate amendments (139th Day).

May 29, 2023 – Corrections only in the House. Last day of the session with midnight deadline to adjourn *Sine Die* (140th Day).

Senate End-Of Session Slow-Down Rules – Rules that institute deadlines in the Senate prior to the end of the legislative session began to kick in Friday, May 19, 2023:

~~**May 19, 2023** – First day the Senate can consider bills and resolutions the first day they are posted on the Intent Calendar (130th Day). **NOTE: This rule was changed this week to allow the Senate to consider bills the first day they are posted on the Intent Calendar to May 15, 2023.**~~

May 24, 2023 – Last day for the Senate to consider all bills and joint resolutions on Second or Third Reading (135th Day).

May 26, 2023 – Senate copies of CCRs on tax, general appropriations, and reapportionment bills must be printed and distributed – 48-hour layout (137th Day)

May 27, 2023 – In the Senate, all conference committee reports must be printed and distributed (other than those required to be printed the 137th day) before midnight due to the 24-hour lay-out rule (138th Day).

May 28, 2023 – Last day for the Senate to adopt conference committee reports or concur in House amendments (139th Day).

May 29, 2023 – Corrections only in the Senate. Last day of the session with midnight deadline to adjourn *Sine Die* (140th Day).

KEY DATES:

Key Dates – 88th Legislative Session:

~~88th Legislative Session Began: January 10, 2023~~

~~Inauguration of Governor and Lt. Governor – January 17, 2023~~

~~Bill Filing Deadline: March 10, 2023~~

88th Legislative Session Ends: May 29, 2023

Governor’s Veto Deadline: June 18, 2023

State Websites - Additional information can be obtained via the Senate, House, and capitol websites:

www.senate.state.tx.us

www.house.state.tx.us

www.capitol.state.tx.us