

**GOVERNOR:**

**Medicaid Waiver Rescinded** – On April 16<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services rescinded approval of Texas’ 1115 Medicaid Waiver extension. The extension is now set to expire on Sept. 30, 2022. The extension was granted by the previous administration in January 2021, and was set to run through 2030. The initial waiver was approved by the Obama administration in 2011 and was renewed again in December 2017.

**Governor Greg Abbott** commented on the Medicaid announcement saying, “This extension, which was scheduled to run through 2030, would have provided critical healthcare funding, including funds for uncompensated care. By rescinding this waiver extension, the Biden administration is obstructing healthcare access for vulnerable Texans and taking away crucial resources for rural hospitals in Texas. The State of Texas spent months negotiating this agreement with the federal government to ensure vital funds for hospitals, nursing homes, and mental health resources for Texans who are uninsured. With this action, the Biden administration is deliberately betraying Texans who depend on the resources made possible through this waiver.”

**Comptroller Glenn Hegar** also commented saying, “The extension provided an important economic foundation and the fiscal certainty needed by Texas to properly plan for its post-pandemic recovery. The state of Texas negotiated in good faith to secure this waiver, believing that the federal government would honor its commitments to the people of Texas. At a time when the entire nation is trying to pull itself out of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, the Biden administration is recklessly working to undermine our fragile recovery by holding hostage the critical funding Texas needs to support its rural hospitals, nursing homes, mental health and other crucial care facilities. It is particularly irresponsible for President Biden to take this action while his administration continues to fail to meet its responsibilities along our southern border. Uncompensated care is a major contributor to the costs of Medicaid that this waiver helped to mitigate, and rescinding it now is particularly malicious given the costs rural hospitals face in providing that type of care.”

**SENATE** – The Senate was in session Monday through Friday of this week.

**Senate Committee on Constitutional Issues** – On Thursday, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick appointed a new committee – the Senate Committee on Constitutional Issues. The members are Senators:

- Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown), Chair
- Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury), Vice Chair
- Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway)
- Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe)

- Bob Hall (R-Edgewood)
- Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen)
- Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville)

**HB 1927** by Matt Schaefer (R-Tyler), which would allow anyone who is eligible to own a gun to carry it in Texas even without a permit (“Constitutional carry”) is the only bill that has been referred to the committee so far. HB 1927 passed the House last week.

**On Monday**, the Senate passed 101 bills on the Local & Uncontested calendar including the following resolutions.

- **SCR 7** (Springer) designating the Bowie knife as the official **state knife** of Texas.
- **SCR 9** (Zaffirini) designating San Marcos as the official **Mermaid Capital of Texas**.
- **SCR 11** (Blanco) designating Fort Davis as the official **Highest Town in Texas**.
- **SCR 20** (Schwertner) recognizing the 1847 Colt Walker pistol as the **official handgun** of the State of Texas.
- **SCR 21** (Schwertner) designating March 10 as **Histotechnology Professionals Day**.
- **SCR 23** (Schwertner) establishing an **America 250** state commission.
- **SCR 26** (Springer) designating the third Tuesday in February as **Texas Game Warden Day**.

From the Intent Calendar, the Senate passed 13 bills including:

- **HB 1195** by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would **exclude PPP revenue** from the franchise tax. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 442** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would require local **school health advisory councils** to adopt a policy for the district’s **human sexuality instruction**. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 24-7.*
- **SB 700** by Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) 2s the sunset bill for the **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 703** by Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) is the sunset bill for **Texas Department of Agriculture**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0. It is scheduled for a hearing in the House Agriculture & Livestock Committee on April 29, 2021.*
- **SB 808** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would allow recovery of **attorney’s fees** if the claimant or defendant prevails in a contract case. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*

- **SB 1055** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would provide penalties for a vehicle driver to inflict bodily injury to a **pedestrian lawfully utilizing a crosswalk**. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1126** by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) would establish the **Texas Woman's University System**. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1233** by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) would require the Texas Military Department to study each Texas military facility's **preparedness for natural disasters**. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 30-1. It is scheduled for a hearing in the House Defense and Veterans' Affairs Committee on Monday, April 26, 2021.*
- **SB 1282** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would require energy generators to pay for their own **generation interconnection costs** instead of socializing the costs. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 30-1.*
- **SB 1438** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would clarify the **voter-approval tax rate** in a disaster area. *Two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 21-10. It was reported favorably from the HOUSE Ways & Means Committee.*

Also on Monday, the Senate gave preliminary approval to:

- **SB 207** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would allow a **defendant in a personal injury case** to introduce evidence on the reasonableness of healthcare costs. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 19-12.*

**On Tuesday**, the Senate passed the Third Reading bill and passed 17 additional bills including:

- **SB 281** by Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen) would prohibit the use of **hypnosis-induced testimony** in a criminal trial. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 334** by Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) would allow a property owner to obtain **comparable sales data** from the chief appraiser. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 30-1.*
- **SB 721** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would require an **entity seeking to acquire property by eminent domain** to provide to the property owner with all existing appraisal reports. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 723** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would update the **landowner's bill of rights** related to **eminent domain** proceedings. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 29-2.*
- **SB 726** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would update the definition of **"actual progress"** in an **eminent domain proceeding**. *The*

*committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 27-3.*

- **SB 763** by Beverly Powell (D-Burleson) would require the Texas Transportation Commission to establish the **Urban Air Mobility Advisory Committee**. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 29-2.*
- **SB 766** by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would require sexually-oriented businesses to participate in the federal E-verify system. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1019** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to disaggregate **student loan data** in its annual report on financial aid. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1490** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would prohibit approval a **private postsecondary institution to grant a professional degree** if there are adequate similar degree programs sufficient to meet the current market needs. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1696** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would require the **sharing of information concerning cyberattacks** among school districts. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 28-3.*
- **SB 1809** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would clarify **Texas Department of Insurance's enforcement** authority. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*

The Senate also gave preliminary approval to:

- **SB 1261** by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would provide that the state has exclusive jurisdiction over the **regulation of greenhouse gas emissions**, unless preempted by federal law. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 20-11.*

**On Wednesday**, the Senate approved the Third Reading bill and passed 17 bills including:

- **SB 22** by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would create a presumption for **police officers and firefighters** that any disease contracted during a disaster was contracted in the course and scope of employment. *The committee substitute and two floor amendment were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 462** by Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) would authorize the **transportation allotment** to be used for transporting meals or instructional materials to a student's residence. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 739** by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would require the governor to designate a member of the **board of a river authority** as the presiding officer. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 28-3.*

- **SB 968** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Department of State Health Services and other state agencies during a **public health disaster** or emergency. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 969** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would require the Department of State Health Services to make available all de-identified **data related to a public health disaster** in a timely and easy to read format. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1267** by Royce West (D-Dallas) would make several changes regarding **continuing education** and training requirements for educators. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1295** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would establish **comprehensive regional universities** to serve at-risk students and help meet the state's workforce needs. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1524** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would establish a **sales tax refund** pilot program small businesses that **employ apprentices**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 28-3.*
- **SB 1677** by Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) would eliminate unnecessary **reports** by institutions of **higher education**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1780** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would establish the **Texas Epidemic Public Health Institute** at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 28-3.*
- **SB 1818** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would provide a liability defense to an imminent and substantial endangerment order regarding **scrap metal transactions**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*

**Lt. Governor Dan Patrick** commented on the passage of **SB 22**, the First Responders Pandemic Care Act, saying, "During the worst days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas first responders repeatedly went beyond the call of duty to assist their fellow Texans, often putting their own health at risk. Sadly, too many of our first responders subsequently contracted COVID-19 and suffered partial or total disability, or passed away from the disease. SB 22 will ensure that those first responders who were disabled or lost their lives to COVID-19 are treated as line-of-duty disabilities or deaths. I congratulate Senator Springer and the Texas Senate for unanimously passing SB 22 and standing up for our heroes, who risk their lives for our communities every day."

The Senate passed two bills on Second Reading including:



- **SB 1146** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would require a **physician that performs an abortion** to complete and submit a **monthly report** to the Health and Human Services Commission regardless of where the abortion is performed. *It passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19-12.*
- **SB 1158** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would require governmental entities sell, redeem, divest, or withdraw all publicly traded securities of company that owns a **social media website that censors political speech**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 17-14.*

**On Thursday**, the Senate gave final approval to SB 1158 and passed 6 bills including:

- **SB 68** by Borris Miles (D-Houston) would require a law enforcement officer to attempt to stop and to report another **officer using excessive force**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1102** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would establish the **Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE) Initiative** to award grants to public junior colleges for workforce training required for high-demand occupations. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1385** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would allow **student athletes** at Texas institutions of higher education to **earn compensation** for use of their name, image and likeness. *The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 28-2.*
- **SB 1449** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would exempt income-producing **tangible personal property** from ad valorem taxes if it has a taxable value of less than \$2,500 instead of \$500. *It passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*
- **SB 1615** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would make several changes regarding the **adult high school charter school program**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 28-3.*
- **SB 2212** by Royce West (D-Houston) would require a **peace officer** to immediately request emergency medical **assistance for injured persons** they encounter during the course of their official duties. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the Senate by a vote of 31-0.*

**Senator Borris Miles** commented on **SB 68** saying, "When you look at the film from George Floyd, there were numerous officers standing around, but not one of them thought to intervene with their fellow police officer. Officers sometimes do not intervene when they witness misconduct because they may be fearful of retaliation from their fellow officers, and we understand that, but that's not acceptable. We all know what happened, we all know what took place, but I can assure you, my brothers, the leadership in this state is not going to stand by."

**Senator Royce West** commented on the passage of **SB 2212** saying, “While issues surrounding police reform are controversial, they must be faced. Whether we sympathize, are angered by, or want them all to go away or ignore these topics of today related to criminal justice, police reform and social justice, we must acknowledge their presence and realize they're unlikely to move from public discourse any time soon. It takes our law enforcement and also members of the advocacy communities to work together and figure out exactly what can be agreed upon. SB 2212 would require a peace officer to request emergency aid when they come across an injured individual during the course of their official duties. Officers would also be required to render first aid, commensurate with their level of training, provided doing so would not place the officer or others in danger. Requiring such actions reaffirms the role of police officers as public servants and represents a consensus step forward in improving police accountability.”

**Senator Brandon Creighton** commented on the passage of **SB 1385** saying, “I was initially opposed to this legislation, but I recognize that compensation for college athletes has become inevitable. The question, members, is no longer if, but when student athletes will be allowed to earn compensation from their name, image and likeness. Eight states have already passed this legislation and 30 more are considering it. Laws in Alabama and Florida go into effect this summer. I don't want to see the cream of Texas high school athletics leave because other states offer the promise of remuneration. If Texas waits another two years to address the issue, we will see hundreds of Texas' best high school athletes potentially choose to take their talent to other states.”

Also on Thursday, the Senate passed one bill to Third Reading:

**SB 1675** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would limit the governor's executive power to suspend **vote by mail** statutes; and prohibit political subdivisions from suspending or amending vote by mail statutes. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19-12.*

**On Friday**, the Senate convened for the passage of 42 bills on the Local & Uncontested Calendar.

*Note: many of the bills that passed the Senate on Monday and Friday on the Local & Uncontested calendar are in the issue categories below.*

<b>Total number of bills reported out of Senate Committees this week:</b>	<b>271</b>
<b>Total number of bills passed on the Local &amp; Uncontested Calendar:</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>Total number of bills passed by the Senate this week:</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Total number of bills passed by the Senate this session:</b>	<b>393</b>

**Next Week:** The Senate will reconvene on Monday, April 26, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

**HOUSE:** The House was in session Monday through Friday this week.

**On Monday**, the House gave preliminary approval to 27 bills including:

- **HB 14** by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) would establish the **Texas Electricity Supply Chain Mapping Committee** to map the state's electricity supply chain. *It passed the House by a vote of 142-3.*
- **HB 129** by Mary Gonzalez (D-El Paso) would require **digital citizenship** and media literacy education for K-12 students. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 105-40.*
- **HB 530** by Jared Patterson (R-Frisco) would allow **election judges** to carry **handguns** at polling sites. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 94-51.*
- **HB 619** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) would require the Texas Workforce Commission to develop a strategic plan for expanding the **child care workforce**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 91-54.*
- **HB 907** by Julie Johnson (D-Carrollton) would prohibit a health benefit plan from requiring prior authorization for a **prescription drug** prescribed to treat a **chronic or autoimmune disease** more often than once a year. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 115-31.*
- **HB 1284** by Chris Paddie (R-Marshall) would give the Railroad Commission regulatory authority over the **geologic storage of carbon dioxide**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 142-2.*
- **HB 1490** by Jay Dean (R-Longview) would require hospitals to disclose the **hospital's cash price** for each **health care service**. *Two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 146-0.*
- **HB 1510** by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) would establish the **Texas Electric Utility System Restoration Corporation** to provide lower cost financing of electric utility system restoration costs. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 145-0.*
- **HB 1520** by Chris Paddie (R-Marshall) would authorize the Public Finance Authority to issue **customer rate relief bonds**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 139-5.*
- **HB 1572** by Tom Craddick (R-Midland) would clarify that an **entity that rents or owns electric service equipment** is not a retail electric provider. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 145-0.*
- **HB 1578** by Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa) would allow **attorney's fees** to be recoverable from a **limited liability company**. *The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 143-0.*
- **HB 1788** by Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would grant **immunity** to school districts for **damages** resulting from any reasonable action taken by **security personnel**. *It passed the House by a vote of 90-54.*



- **HB 2053** by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) would institute licensing requirements for **genetic counselors**. *It passed the House by a vote of 112-30.*
- **HB 2490** by Donna Howard (D-Austin) would allow a minor who is eligible for a **home visiting program** to consent to receive services from a home visiting program. *One floor amendment was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 115-30.*
- **HB 2530** by Trent Ashby (R-Lufkin) would change the **basis month** for calculating interest to be paid on **tax refunds** from December to November. *It passed the House by a vote of 146-0.*
- **HB 2670** by Ryan Guillen (D-Rio Grande City) would make social workers eligible for the **Homes for Texas Heroes home loan program**. *It passed the House by a vote of 95-49.*
- **HB 2896** by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) would dedicate and rededicate revenue for use in **certifying the budget**. *It passed the House by a vote of 146-0.*
- **HB 3348** by Leo Pacheco (D-San Antonio) would increase the number of **baccalaureate degree** programs a public **junior college** can offer from three to five. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 122-24.*
- **HB 3619** by Rhetta Andrews Bowers (D-Rowlett) would require **groundwater conservation districts** to consider whether a proposed use of water unreasonably affects wells that are exempt from permitting requirements. *It passed the House by a vote of 107-38.*
- **HB 3648** by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) would require the Public Utility Commission to designate **gas facilities as critical** during an energy emergency. *Three floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 144-0.*
- **HB 3788** by Justin Holland (R-Rockwall) would allow distance learning for **appraisal review board** member training. *It passed the House by a vote of 140-4.*
- **HB 3801** by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) would clarify that the most recently adopted desired future condition is the one to be included in the **groundwater management plan**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 144-0.*
- **SB 270** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Jeff Leach (R-Allen) would prevent **financial abuse of nursing home residents** by allowing facilities to pursue debts against responsible payors who have improperly diverted a resident's funds. *It passed the House by a vote of 136-8.*

**Representative Mary Gonzalez** commented on the passage of **HB 129** saying, "Today marks a step toward healing the terrible wounds El Paso suffered from the August 3, 2019 Cielo Vista Walmart massacre. I filed HB 129 in remembrance of the lives lost and the damage to our community as a result of that horrible act. This bill addresses a catalyst for that tragedy - misinformation, hatemongering, and conspiracy theories, much of it online - by giving young Texans the tools to think critically about what they see on the internet. It will help

students responsibly engage in online environments, increase awareness about the real-life consequences of their actions online, and help prevent the toxic behavior that can lead to tragedies like teen suicide and mass shootings. I'm grateful for the support of the overwhelming majority of my colleagues in the Texas House in moving HB 129 forward."

**On Tuesday**, the House passed the Third Reading bills and gave preliminary approval to 29 bills:

- **HB 113** by Tom Oliverson (R-Cypress) would institute requirements for **peer-to-peer car sharing programs**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 148-0.*
- **HB 270** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) would increase the **personal needs allowance** for residents of long-term care facilities. *It passed the House by a vote of 103-43.*
- **HB 872** by Diego Bernal (D-San Antonio) would **exempt from public information statutes** information maintained by a government-operated utility as part of an **advanced metering system**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 149-0.*
- **HB 999** by Diego Bernal (R-San Antonio) would extend **individual graduation committees**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 145-1.*
- **HB 1371** by Bobby Guerra (D-McAllen) would change the sunset date on the **Trade Agricultural Inspection Grant Program** to 2025. *It passed the House by a vote of 135-14.*
- **HB 1565** by Chris Paddie (R-Marshall) is the sunset bill for the **Texas Funeral Service Commission**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 144-0.*
- **HB 1570** by Chris Paddie (R-Marshall) is the sunset bill for the **Brazos River Authority**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 146-0.*
- **HB 1694** by John Raney (R-Bryan) would protect from prosecution any person who calls 911 to **aid an individual** who appears to have **overdosed** as well as the person for whom aid is sought. *Two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 145-2.*
- **HB 1993** by Justin Holland (R-Rockwall) would prescribe the **disclosure form** for sellers to use regarding **fuel gas piping** in residential real property. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 142-6.*
- **HB 2116** by Matt Krause (R-Fort Worth) would prohibit design contracts for **engineering or architectural services** from including duty to defend

provisions. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 126-21.*

- **HB 2350** by Erin Zwiener (D-Driftwood) would require the Texas Water Development Board to adopt rules on use of **revolving funds** for **nature-based water quality enhancement projects**. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 92-50.*
- **HB 2483** by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would authorize a **transmission and distribution utility** to lease or own and operate facilities that provide **temporary, emergency electric energy**. *The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 145-1.*
- **HB 2519** by Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) would make several changes regarding the authority of **State Board of Educator Certification**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 143-5.*
- **HB 2683** by Terry Canales (D-Edinburg) would require **governing bodies meeting** by **telephone** or **videoconference** to ensure that members of the public are able to participate. *The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 145-0.*
- **HB 2957** by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) would authorize the Railroad Commission to use **unmanned aircraft** to **examine an oil or gas site**. *It passed the House by a vote of 149-0.*
- **HB 3257** by Phil King (R-Weatherford) would establish the **Texas Commission on Antisemitism**. *Two floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 147-0.*
- **HB 3786** by Justin Holland (R-Rockwall) would allow **electronic submission** to and from the **comptroller's office**. *It passed the House by a vote of 143-5.*
- **HB 3799** by Will Metcalf (R-Conroe) would provide a sales tax exemption for **items sold at a county fair**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 149-0.*

**On Wednesday**, the House passed the Third Reading bills and passed 12 bills on Second Reading including:

- **HB 8** by Leo Pacheco (D-San Antonio) would allow **law enforcement agencies** access to an applicant's employment records. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 142-2.*
- **HB 1276** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would allow **food service establishments to sell directly to individual consumers** food that is in its original condition or original packaging. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 145-2.*
- **HB 1525** by Dan Huberty (R-Humble) is the **HB 3 (public education reform from 2019) clean-up** bill. *The committee substitute and 17*

*floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 142-4.*

- **HB 1635** by Jared Patterson (R-Frisco) would require the workers' compensation research and evaluation group to **review first responder claims** and report on the costs and outcomes. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 139-8.*

**Representative Chris Turner** (D-Grand Prairie) commented on his amendment to **HB 1525** to protect teacher payraises granted under HB 3 from 2019, saying "Over the past year, we have asked more from our educators than ever before. When the pandemic hit, classrooms became Zooms, desks became couches and the school halls became the walls of our living rooms. But our teachers, as always, were our children's caretakers. The teachers and staff of our public schools were a rock for our families and our communities, and we owe them our most sincere thanks. I can think of no better way to honor our teachers and staff than to ensure the pay raises the Texas House approved in 2019 stay in place for years to come."

**On Thursday**, the House passed the Third Reading bills and then spent eleven hours debating **SB 1** by Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) and Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood), which is the **general appropriations bill**. *It passed the House by a vote of 149-0. The committee substitute and 146 floor amendments were adopted.* The House also passed **HB 2** by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood), which is the **supplemental appropriations bill**. *The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed the House by a vote of 140-0.*

**House Speaker Dade Phelan** commented on the passage of **SB 1** saying, "I appreciate the exceptional work of the Appropriations Committee, Chair Greg Bonnen, and all members of the Texas House to pass a balanced budget that keeps spending in check while addressing the multitude of challenges that our state experiences, especially those experienced over the past year. This budget provides a sound framework to address Texas' growing needs while also maintaining the legislature's commitment to public education, border security, mental health and other priorities, and I am proud of the House's efforts to adopt a budget that invests in these critical areas." The speaker gave the following summary of SB 1 as passed by the House:

- Grows less than the growth in population plus inflation. After adjusting for population and inflation, GR spending decreases by 4.5 percent.
- Fits within the Comptroller's January revenue estimate and is more than \$4 billion below the constitutional spending limit.
- Fully funds House Bill 3, last session's historic school finance reform legislation.
- Fully funds the increased state contribution to the Teacher Retirement System passed last session.
- Dedicates \$800 million to border security efforts.
- Provides over \$1 billion to community mental health programs for adults, children, and crisis services.

<b>Total number of bills reported out of House Committees this week:</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>Total number of bills passed on the Local &amp; Consent Calendar:</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Total number of bills passed by the House this week:</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Total number of bills passed by the House this session:</b>	<b>394</b>

**Next Week:** The House will reconvene on Monday, April 26, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION:**

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

**HB 278** by Terry Canales (D-Edinburg) would require a criminal history background check on prospective managers before the Commissioner of Education appoints a **board of managers** for a school district. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 424** by Ken King (R-Canadian) would require the State Board of Education to conduct a **review of the essential knowledge and skills** for the foundation curriculum and as necessary, revise the essential knowledge and skills to narrow the number and scope of student expectations for each subject and grade level. It would limit the State Board of Education ‘s biennial proclamation for instructional materials to 75 percent of the total amount used to fund the **Instructional Materials and Technology Allotment** for the biennium. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 517** by Michelle Beckley (D-Carrollton) would require school districts to adopt a policy regarding **custodian workload** for district facilities. *It was left pending.*

**HB 586** by Sheryl Cole (D-Austin) would establish the **school district equipment and improvement fund**. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 605** by Barbara Gervin-Hawkins (D-San Antonio) would require school districts to adopt a **healthy and safe school water plan** that provides for periodic testing for lead in school water sources and reduces exposure to elevated levels of lead in school water sources. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 1206** by Ryan Guillen (D-Rio Grande City) would allow the **instructional materials and technology allotment** to be used for **costs associated with distance learning**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 1302** by Ryan Guillen (D-Rio Grande City) would add to **indicators of achievement** students who have earned a diploma after not more than three and one-half years of high school attendance. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 1613** by Ray Lopez (D-El Paso) would extend the deadline for teachers and principals to attend a **teacher literacy achievement academy** from the 2021-2022 school year to the 2023-2024 school year. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 1726** by Steve Allison (R-San Antonio) would ensure schools and school districts **track bullying and cyberbullying incidents** and use this information to adopt preventative measures to help students. *It was voted out favorably.*



**HB 1744** by Bobby Guerra (D-McAllen) would require Texas Education Agency to develop a program of study for use in **career and technology education programs** that prepares and assists students in pursuing a **career teaching bilingual education**, English as a second language, or Spanish. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 1754** by Ana Hernandez (D-Houston) would require **student identification cards** for students in grade six and higher to contain the contact information for the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 2258** by Bobby Guerra (D-McAllen) would require the Texas Education Agency to develop a strategic plan that sets tangible **goals** and establishes timelines to **increase the number of educators certified in bilingual education**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 2688** by Gary VanDeaver (R-New Boston) would require a school district **trustee that votes** in favor of making a **severance payment to a superintendent** of the school district less than one year after the trustee voted in favor of accepting or extending the superintendent's contract or increasing the superintendent's salary, to seek re-election at the next regularly scheduled trustee election to maintain a position on the board regardless of the time remaining on the trustee's term. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 2721** by Eddie Lucio, III (D-Brownsville) would prohibit a **student who assaults a referee**, judge or other official from participating in an extracurricular activity. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 2769** by Liz Campos (D-San Antonio) would require the State Board Education to adopt essential knowledge and skills that include **coding for video games** in the technology applications curriculum. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 2846** by Garnet Coleman (D-Houston) would require school districts and charters to provide notice to parents if there is not a **full-time nurse** assigned to be present at the school for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 3033** by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) would require school districts to **report** through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) the total number of students, including the students' age, race, and gender, transported from the school district or charter for an **emergency mental health detention**. *It was voted out favorably.*

**HB 3456** by James White (R-Hillister) would provide that money received by **schools** under the purview of the **Texas Department of Criminal Justice**, the Texas **School for the Blind** and Visually Impaired, and the Texas **School for the Deaf** would be considered part of the foundation school program and not subject to any budget reductions requested by the Legislative Budget Board. *It was voted favorably as substituted.*

**HB 3489** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would require Texas Education Agency to develop and distribute for use by school districts and charters health and safety guidelines for best practices for the **effective integration of digital devices in public schools**. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 3862** by Gary VanDeaver (R-New Boston) would allow a **member of the board of trustees** of an independent school district to be **removed from office** by a three-fourths majority vote. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 3888** by Penny Morales Shaw (D-Houston) would allow a **teacher employed under a term contract** to resign any time during which a state of emergency or declared disaster. *It was left pending.*

**HB 4042** by Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) would require students participating in interscholastic **athletic activities** to participate based on the **student's biological sex**. *It was left pending.*

**HB 4124** by Gina Hinojosa (D-Austin) would allow **special-purpose school districts** to prioritize military-connected students when enrolling students or creating a waitlist. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 4198** by Bryan Slaton (R-Royce City) would authorize the board of trustees of a school district to **exempt** students from the administration of any **assessments not required by federal law**. *It was left pending.*

**HB 4509** by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) would require educators to **cultivate in students an informed patriotism**, which consists primarily of leading students through close study of America's and Texas' founding documents. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**HB 4525** by Gary Gates (R-Richmond) would require the State Board of Education to approve **career and technology courses** that are offered online or through an internet portal maintained by the district or agency and update the list of approved courses at least annually. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**Senate Education Committee** – On Tuesday, the Senate Education Committee took up:

**SB 215** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would establish the **Office of Inspector General at the Texas Education Agency**. *It was reported out favorably.*

**SB 980** by Beverly Powell (D-Burleson) would require the Texas Education Agency to establish a **suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention program**. *It was left pending.*

**SB 1277** by Royce West (D-Dallas) would require an agreement between a school district and an institution of higher education to provide a dual credit program to designate at least one employee of the district or institution as responsible for providing **academic advising to a student who enrolls in a dual credit course**. *It was reported out favorably.*

**SB 1351** by Borris Miles (D-Houston) would prohibit a **school district** from **donating food** that must be maintained at a certain temperature for safety unless the food has been maintained at the required temperature. *It was reported out favorably.*

**SB 1716** by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) would require Texas Education Agency to establish and administer a **supplemental special education services and instructional materials program** for special education students. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**SB 1955** by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) would be the **Learning Pod Protection Act** to ensure that parents that choose to voluntarily associate to advance the primary or secondary education of their children would not be subject to local restriction or regulation. *It was voted out favorably as substituted.*

**SB 2044** by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would establish the **State Advisory Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children**. *It was reported favorably.*

**SB 2050** by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would require (instead of allow) a student to be removed from class and placed in a disciplinary alternative education program or expelled if the **student engages in bullying**. *It was reported out favorably as substituted.*

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

**SB 168** by Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) would require school districts and charters to adopt a policy on active shooter drills and provide notice to parents of an active shooter drill before the district can conduct an **active shooter drill**. *It was left pending.*

**SB 194** by Beverly Powell (D-Burleson) would to add "students who successfully completed a program of study in **career and technical education**" as a student **success indicator**. *It was left pending.*

**SB 348** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would entitle parents to observe any virtual instruction and review any teaching materials, instructional materials, or other teaching aids provided to the parent's child while the parent's child is participating in **virtual or remote learning**. *It was left pending.*

**SB 534** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would grant **immunity** to school districts, charters, and private schools from liability for **damages** resulting from any reasonable action taken by **security personnel**. *It was left pending.*

**SB 1082** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would entitle parents to review **curriculum** materials used in any **human sexuality instruction** provided to their child. *It was left pending.*

**SB 1526** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would require operators that possess any **private student data** to use the unique identifier established by the Texas Student Data System for any account creation, data upload, data transmission, analysis, or reporting to mask all personally identifiable student information; and would require operators to adhere to a state-required student data sharing agreement. *It was left pending.*

**SB 1527** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would establish the **Rural Schools and Communities Technical Assistance Center** to assist small and rural school districts with expansion of broadband development in rural communities and facilitate the tri-agency alignment for rural students and assist participating school districts in implementing the Collegiate Edu-Nation P-20 System Model for 21<sup>st</sup>-Century School Transformation. *It was reported out favorably.*

**Reported/Voted From Committee:**

**HB 41** by James Talarico (D-Round Rock) requires school districts to maintain (instead of attempt to maintain) an average ratio in **pre-kindergarten classes** of not less than one certified teacher or teacher's aide for each 11 students. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 97** by Gina Hinojosa (D-Austin) would prohibit **charters** from discrimination in **admission policy** on the basis of **discipline history**, but would allow the exclusion of a student who is currently placed in a disciplinary alternative education program or a juvenile justice alternative education program. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 144** by Mary Gonzalez (D-El Paso) would require school districts to prepare a supplement to the written statement of the **individualized education program** developed for **special education students** indicating whether the written report of the child's full individual and initial evaluation was completed by the date required. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 220** by Diego Bernal (D-San Antonio) would allow a campus to apply to the Commissioner of Education to be designated as a **resource campus** that provides quality education and enrichment for students at the campus. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 244** by Mary Gonzalez (D-El Paso) would establish the **Computer Science and Technology Applications Professional Development Grant Program** to encourage teachers to obtain computer science certification and continue professional development in coding, computational thinking and computer science education. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 1016** by Claudia Ordaz Perez (D-El Paso) would require school districts and charters to adopt a policy on active shooter drills and provide notice to parents of an active shooter drill before the district can conduct an **active shooter drill**. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 1252** by Joe Moody (D-El Paso) would prohibit the Commissioner of Education from establishing a shorter period for filing a due process complaint alleging a **violation of state or federal special education laws**. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 1568** by Mayes Middleton (R-Wallisville) would increase the acceptable deviation permitted in the comptroller's **school district value study** from five percent to ten percent. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 1585** by Stan Lambert (R-Abilene) and Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) is the sunset bill for the **Teacher Retirement System of Texas**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Administration Committee. It is on the Senate Intent Calendar on April 26, 2021 (first placement).*

**HB 2193** by Alex Dominguez (D-Brownsville) would require the University Interscholastic League to ensure **students with disabilities** have an opportunity to participate in team athletic activities by establishing an **adaptive sports program**. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 2230** by John Bucy (D-Austin) would require the Commissioner of Education to establish a task force to study the utility, efficacy and feasibility of **incorporating fine arts into the foundation curriculum**. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 2344** by Erin Zwiener (D-Driftwood) would require the **writing performance portion of an assessment instrument** to be scored by a classroom teacher assigned to the same campus as the student to whom the assessment instrument is administered. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 2465** by Barbara Gervin-Hawkins (D-San Antonio) would add cultural inclusion in the enrichment curriculum and would require the State Board of Education to develop curriculum on cultural inclusivity that a school district or charter must use in the district's or school's **cultural inclusivity courses**. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 2554** by Gary Gates (R-Rosenberg) would require the State Board of Education to, upon petition of the board of directors of two or more school districts, establish a **joint vocational school district** to provide vocational education and training to eligible high school students whose educational needs are better served by focused vocational education and training. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 2664** by Armando "Mando" Martinez (D-Weslaco) would allow **school districts** to hold **election for its officers** on the November uniform election date and to transition the terms of office to three- or four-year staggered terms. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 2681** by Terry Wilson (R-Granite Shoals) would require an elective course providing academic **study of the Bible** to students in grades six, seven, or eight to be considered as a social studies course for curriculum requirement purposes. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 2756** by Alma Allen (D-Houston) would prohibit a **school district** from **donating food** that must be maintained at a certain temperature for safety unless the food has been maintained at the required temperature. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 2800** by Jay Dean (R-Longview) would eliminate **state assessments** not required by federal law. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 3089** by Lacey Hull (R-Smithville) would require meetings of a school district's **local school health advisory council** to be open meetings. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 3204** by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) would define **career readiness** for purposes of the College, Career and Military Readiness bonus. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*



**HB 3430** by Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa) would require the Commissioner of Education to establish a program to provide grants to school districts and charters with campuses designated as **full-service community schools**. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 3932** by Diego Bernal (D-San Antonio) would establish the **State Advisory Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children**. *It was voted favorably from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 3979** by Steve Toth (R-The Woodlands) would require the State Board of Education to adopt Texas essential knowledge and skills that develop each student's **civic knowledge** for the social studies curriculum. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 4257** by Penny Morales Shaw (D-Houston) would require school district **trauma-informed care policies** to address the district's plan for providing support to students, teachers, and district staff in the event of a crisis, including methods such as mental health first aid and referrals to community providers for mental health services. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the House Public Education Committee.*

**SB 27** by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) would make several changes to the **Virtual School Network**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Education Committee.*

**SB 346** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would allow open-enrollment charter schools to participate in the **Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program**. *It was voted favorably from the HOUSE International Relation & Economic Development Committee.*

**SB 879** by Eddie Lucio Jr. (D-Brownsville) would reduce the eligible age for a **dropout recovery school** from 17 to 16 years of age. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 1365** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would make several changes to public **school organization and fiscal management**. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the Senate Education Committee.*

**SB 1590** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require the State Board for Educator Certification to propose **flexible options for field-based experience** or internships. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee.*

**SB 1776** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would require school districts and charters to offer a high school **elective course** for one-half credit on the **founding principles of the United States**. *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 1888** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would repeal the Early High School Graduation Scholarship Program and replace it with the **Texas First Early High School Completion Program**. *It was reported favorably as substituted from the Senate Higher Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 2026** by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) would require educators to **cultivate in students an informed patriotism**, which consists primarily of leading students through close study of America’s and Texas’ founding documents. *It was voted favorably as substituted from the Senate Education Committee.*  
**SB 2066** by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would change the statutory references from “students of limited English proficiency” to “**emergent bilingual students.**” *It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested.*

**Bills Passed:**

**HB 3457** by James White (R-Hillister) would clarify that provisions relating to teacher contracts and confidentiality of teacher evaluations apply to teachers in the **Windham School District.** *It passed on the House Local & Consent Calendar.*

**SB 226** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would add **virtual learning** and virtual instruction to the required minimum academic qualifications for **teacher certification.** *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 369** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would allow parents to opt their student out of the requirement to submit a **financial aid application** as a condition of high school graduation. *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 797** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would **require** public schools and institutions of higher education **display** in each building a copy of the United States national motto, “**In God We Trust**” on a poster with a representation of the United States and Texas flags. *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 801** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would require Texas Education Agency to develop an **agriculture education program** for elementary students to encourage appreciation and improve students’ understanding of agriculture. *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 1063** by Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) would allow the one-half credit in economics required in the high school curriculum to be on **personal financial literacy and economics.** *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 1095** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would require school districts to notify parents of students in ninth grade or above of the availability of **career and technology** education programs or other **work-based education programs.** *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 1356** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) would authorize non-profit teacher organizations to participate in a program that facilitates the **tutoring** of public school students in kindergarten through grade 12 **by active or retired certified teachers.** *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 1522** by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) would authorize the Commissioner of Education to adjust the **average daily attendance** of a school district for the amount of instructional days during the **semester in which a calamity first occurs.** *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**SB 1697** by Angela Paxton (R-McKinney) would authorize a **parent** or guardian to **elect for a student to repeat** or delay prekindergarten and kindergarten, to repeat grades one through eight, or to repeat a high school course. *It passed on the Senate Local & Uncontested Calendar.*

**Next Week:**

**Tuesday, April 27, 2021**

**8:00 a.m. House Public Education Committee** will meet in E1.004 of the capitol extension to take up:

**HB 1417** by Sam Harless (R-Spring) would require **campus improvement plans** to include goals and methods for bullying prevention and dropout deterrence, including providing a research-based teacher development program that provides teachers continuing education in **creating a nurturing classroom environment.**

**HB 3880** by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) would change statutory references to special education services to **specially designed instruction.**

**HB 4023** by Armando “Mando” Martinez (D-Weslaco) would establish the **Life Skills Counselor Pilot Program** with a campus in each high school in a selected border county to address emotional and mental health concerns of students.

**SB 28** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would make several changes regarding **open-enrollment charter schools.**

**SB 179** by Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) would require **school counselors** to spend at least 80 percent of their total work time on direct counseling program services. Time spent in administering assessment instruments would not be considered a direct counseling service.

**203** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would require the **University Interscholastic League** to select **locations** for statewide competitions in extracurricular activities using a statewide request for proposals process.

**SB 229** by Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas) would require each school district and charter that offers a high school program to provide an **elective course in civics.**

**SB 338** by Beverly Powell (D-Burleson) would authorize school districts to adopt uniform general conditions adopted by the Texas Facilities Commission to be incorporated in all of the **school district building construction contracts.**

**SB 481** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would allow a **student** enrolled in a school district that offers only virtual instruction for any part of a school year to **transfer** for that school year to another **school district that offers in-person instruction.**

**STATEWIDE – COVID-19 RESPONSE:**

**DSHS Weekly Vaccine Distribution Update** – On April 16<sup>th</sup>, the Department of State Health Services issued its weekly update on Vaccine distribution in Texas for the week of April 19<sup>th</sup>. It said, “More than 1.9 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine will be shipped to providers across Texas next week. The Texas Department of State Health Services is allocating 733,090 first doses (*compared to 796,360 first doses the week of April 12<sup>th</sup>*) to 381 providers (*compared to 468*

*providers the week of April 12<sup>th</sup>) in 119 counties (compared to 116 counties the week of April 12<sup>th</sup>). Those numbers will increase as additional first doses are allocated over the next few days. DSHS is ordering 686,640 second doses (compared to 605,390 second doses the week of April 12<sup>th</sup>) for people vaccinated a few weeks ago. An estimated 500,000 additional first and second doses are expected to be available to pharmacy locations, federally-qualified health centers and dialysis centers as allocated directly by the federal government. Despite the pause in the use of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, nearly two million Texans got a shot in the last week. Additional information provided:*

- Texas has now administered more than 15.5 million doses of vaccine.
- Nearly 10 million people have received at least one dose, and 6.25 million are now fully vaccinated.
- About 44 percent of all eligible Texans have gotten a COVID-19 shot, and 28 percent are fully vaccinated.

Vaccine continues to be available across the state at large vaccine hubs, community vaccination providers, and special clinics operated by the DSHS public health regions, local health departments and Texas Military Forces.

**Vaccination Campaign** – On April 19<sup>th</sup>, the Texas Department of State Health Services announced the launch of the next phase of its campaign encouraging Texans to be vaccinated against COVID-19 with a \$1.5 million television and radio ad buy. The campaign combines general information on vaccine safety and effectiveness with messages geared toward specific groups that research shows tend to be less likely to get vaccinated. The first ad features Dr. Farris Blount talking to fellow Black Texans about the importance of getting vaccinated. Digital ads are also running in English and Spanish featuring Dr. Ross, a Houston physician, and Dr. Emilie Prot, the DSHS regional medical director in Harlingen. DSHS Commissioner Dr. John Hellerstedt said, “Our research shows that individual health care providers are the most trusted voices for people deciding whether to get vaccinated. Over the coming weeks we will continue to share messages encouraging various communities to get vaccinated. We are also relying on trusted voices within those communities to speak up and let their neighbors know that these COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and the best way to end the pandemic and restore normalcy.” DSHS will have 22 parking lot pop-up events around Texas. These 4-hour events, hosted in Walmart parking lots through mid-May, will feature a 16-foot video wall with facts about COVID-19 vaccines.

**Week Eight of Save Our Seniors** - April 20<sup>th</sup>, Governor Greg Abbott announced that the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and the Texas Military Department (TMD) have announced 24 counties participating in the eighth week of the Save Our Seniors COVID-19 vaccine initiative. To date, over 62,000 Texans have been vaccinated through this initiative. According to DSHS, 74 percent of seniors (65+) in Texas have been vaccinated with at least one dose of vaccine, and 59% of seniors are fully vaccinated. Governor Abbott said, "Since the launch of the

Save Our Seniors initiative, our partners at TDEM and TMD have worked diligently to vaccinate seniors across our state, and I thank them for their exceptional leadership and hard work on behalf of Texans. Vaccines are the most effective tool in our arsenal against COVID-19, and we will continue to invest in this program to ensure that every Texan who wants a vaccine receives one." As part of the Save Our Seniors program, TDEM and TMD work alongside local jurisdictions to set up a central drive-through vaccine clinics in each community or administer directly to homebound seniors. Counties participating in the eighth round of the program are Angelina, Atascosa, Caldwell, Cherokee, Culberson, Eastland, El Paso, Hale, Henderson, Hidalgo, Hopkins, Houston, Jim Hogg, Kimble, Leon, Llano, Maverick, Milam, Nueces, Rusk, Taylor, Tyler, Val Verde, and Webb.