



CITY OF HOUSTON

Office of the Mayor

Interoffice

Correspondence

To: Houston City Council

From: Mayor's Office of Government Relations

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Subject: Update to Council

Legislative Update

Last Friday was the filing deadline for all non-local bills. There are 80 days remaining in the 86th Legislative Session and as of mid-afternoon Friday, March 8, 2019 the Legislature is on track to author over 7,200 bills by close of business.

The past week saw committee hearings and movement on the following measures:

SB10 by Nelson, creating the Texas Mental Health Consortium, passed the Senate and is now in the House and is the first bill designated by Governor Abbott as an Emergency Item to pass one Chamber.

With Texas facing a severe shortage of mental health professionals, SB 10 would help address gaps in our system by tapping the expertise of our academic health-related institutions. It would establish a mental health consortium to foster collaboration between publicly-funded higher educational institutions. This consortium would have the goal of improving early identification and intervention, addressing the shortage of mental health professionals, promoting and coordinating mental health research, and bolstering judicial training on juvenile behavioral health. SB 10 would also incentivize the use of telemedicine and other cost-effective approaches to mental health care delivery.

Further, SB 10 would create the Child Psychiatry Access Program (CPAP), a statewide system of regional hubs designed to leverage the primary care system for consultation and referral. These hubs would be located at academic medical centers. Nearly 30 states have already successfully implemented CPAP programs. In a few years, each hub should be able to address the primary care needs of half a million children and youth at a cost of just \$2 per child.

SB2 by Paul Bettencourt, relating to the 2.5% Rollback Tax Rate, still does not have the votes for Senate passage due to significant opposition from local elected officials. The GR staff has submitted written testimony opposing the bill, with the assistance of the CoH Finance staff.

SB15 by Brandon Creighton, relating to a prohibition against local regulation of private employers, passed the Senate State Affairs Committee and is set for a full vote next week. This

bill was introduced in response to San Antonio and Austin passing local ordinances mandating Paid Sick Leave.

State of the Secretary of State Appointment

Embattled **Texas Secretary of State David Whitley** has cleared the Senate Committee on Nominations via a 4-3 party-line vote on Feb. 28. Amid his "voter fraud" controversy, Whitley has drawn intense scrutiny and three lawsuits from civil rights groups. It's now possible that his confirmation by the full Senate, and his brief tenure as Secretary of State, is coming to an end. All 12 Senate Democrats have vowed to block Whitley's nomination, and he would need two of those votes to meet the two-thirds threshold for confirmation. Gov. Greg Abbott has pointed the finger at Texas Department of Public Safety Director Steve McCraw, saying Whitley was just relying on data that DPS knew was flawed. "DPS did not adequately communicate that to the secretary of state," said Abbott on a recent radio interview, "so part of the fault goes to [McCraw] for causing the error in the first place."

The Week Ahead

Harvey Bills in Senate on the horizon next week and set for hearings on March 11, 2019, are three major bills with \$1.8 billion dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

SB6 by **Lois Kolkorst**, **SB7** by **Brandon Creighton**, and **SB8** by **Charles Perry** relating to: 1) emergency and disaster management, response and recovery, 2) flood control planning, mitigation and infrastructure projects, and 3) a state and regional flood planning respectively. The total cost for these three measures is \$1.8 billion. The GR Team was able to help craft language to SB7 which includes the "local match", however, Steve Costello still would like to see further changes in the bill. The GR team will continue to work with Senator Creighton to incorporate suggested changes. SB 7 hearings will take place Monday, March 11, at 3PM.

Senate Committee Appointment Updates

Lt Governor Dan Patrick formally reestablished the **Select Committee on Texas Ports** chaired by **Senator Creighton**, from Conroe. Also serving on the committee is Senator Alvarado from Houston. Lt. Governor Patrick also added **Senators Jose Menendez** and **Pete Flores** to the **Higher Education Committee**,

The biggest news of the week was the announcement of **HB3** by **Dan Huberty**, with the majority of the House as co-sponsors, this major school finance plan spends \$9 billion over current law requirements increasing the basic allotment (BA) to \$6,030 from the current \$5,140. The highlights: funds full-day PreK, updates transportation funding to \$1.00/mile, increases compensatory education and facilities allotments, creates a tutoring grant program, a dyslexia allotment, a teacher quality allotment, a dual language allotment, a blended learning teacher training program, a rural and remote allotment for districts with less than 450 students, an extended year program, and allows the career and technology allotment down to the 6th grade.

HB3 is a full school finance plan that phases out inefficient adjustments and corrects outdated methodology established in 1993. HB3 is a stark contrast to the Senate's proposal of a \$5,000 pay increase for teachers but so far leaves everything else in place.

City of Houston Priorities

The table below reflects priority legislation for the City that has been filed to date.

SB 7 & HB 478	Sen. Creighton & Rep. Phelan	Local Match: Fund existing Disaster Contingency Fund (DCF) with \$1.5 billion appropriation to alleviate recent underfunding and be available to the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to perform its existing function of providing local matching funds required by FEMA-qualified projects related to disaster recovery.	Filed 1-29-19
HB 303	Rep. Dennis Paul	Houston Space Port Development Corp: Relating to the creation of the Houston Space Port Development Corporation to apply for state grant funding for spaceport development.	Filed 3-4-19
HB 1113	Rep. Davis, Sarah	Human Trafficking Grants: relating to state contract limitations and programs for sex trafficking prevention and victim treatment	Filed 1-28-19
HB 1168	Rep. Anchia, Rafael	Firearms in Airports: Relating to the offense of possessing a weapon in a secured area of an airport.	Filed 2-26-19
HB 1363	Rep. Wu, Gene	Yard Parking: Relating to the authority of certain municipalities to create a presumption in a prosecution for certain offenses involving the parking of a motor vehicle.	Filed 2-4-19
HB 1568	Rep. Hernandez, Ana	Towing Designate: authorize municipalities to designate employees such as Parking Enforcement Officers to tow or impound illegally parked cars or illegally operate vehicles-for-hire.	Filed 2-11-19
HB 1841 & SB 839	Rep. Thompson & Sen. Miles	Community Land Trust: relating to the appraisal value of property in a community land trust agreement.	Filed 2-11-19
HB 1842 & SB 492	Rep. Thompson & Sen. Alvarado	Reduced Valuation Program: Relating to the application of the limit of the limit on appraised value of a residence homestead for ad valorem tax purposes to an improvement that is a replacement structure.	Filed 1-28-19
HB 1881 & SB 1829	Rep. Calanni & Sen. Alvarado	City Housing Resolution: Removing the requirement for the municipality to issue any resolution for the applications for tax credit properties for which the City does not have jurisdiction, tax support, mayor or city council, or voter representation	Filed 2-15-19
HB 1958	Rep. Dutton, Harold	TDCJ Notification: Relating to requiring TDCJ to provide monthly information to municipalities & counties regarding parolee placement and facility approval for all types of parolee housing within those municipalities & counties	Filed 2-14-19
HB 2018	Rep. Thierry, Shawn	MMD: Require management districts to provide notice to jurisdictions where management district territory is located of changes made by the district to its boundaries on its own motion. This notice is not currently required, and it is difficult for the COH to keep up with changes to the boundaries without notice	Filed 2-17-19
HB 2512	Rep. Miller, Rick	Drone Legislation: The proposed change would allow the use of unmanned aircraft for the purposes of investigating fire safety public health or sanitation or dumping of refuse.	Filed 2-26-19
HB 3685 & SB 2021	Rep. Miller and Sen. Miles	1115 Waiver: Add health departments acting in the capacity of a local health department in the region as a managed care organization that contracts with the commission to provide healthcare services in the region	Filed 2-28-19
HB 435 & SB 1774	Rep. Shaheen & Sen. Bettencourt	Uncollectable Fees: Provide, under the Collection Improvement Act, any authorized officer the ability to request, from the trial court that heard a criminal case and assessed a fee, that the fee be deemed uncollectible.	Filed 1-28-19
HB 86	Rep. Martinez, Armando	Celebratory Gunfire: creating a new state statute regarding use of a firearm	Filed 11-12-18
SB 417	Sen. Miles, Borris	Concrete Batch Plants: relating to concrete batching and concrete crushing facilities.	Filed 1-23-19
SB 493 & HB 1839	Sen. Alvarado & Rep. Thompson	Two Mile Rule: Relating to the allocation of housing tax credits to developments within proximate geographical areas.	Filed 1-28-19
HB 1091, HB 3416 & SB 1218	Rep. King, Phil, Rep. Geren, Charlie & Sen. Alvarado	Permanent Resident Eligibility: Increase the recruiting pool for police applicants by allowing lawful permanent residents to apply to be police officers.	Filed 1-25-19
SB 779	Sen Zaffirini, Judith	Speed Limit: Reduce prima facie speed limit to 25 mph.	Filed 2-1-19
SB 2249	Sen Miles, Borris	Cap Park: Relating to the authority of certain municipalities to create sports and community venue districts and to authorize and finance certain sports and community venue projects.	Filed 3-8-19
HB 2841	Rep. Vo, Hubert	Limit ETJ Changes: Relating to the authority of certain municipal utility districts to select the municipality that will have authority over the district.	Filed 3-1-19
SB 1918 & HB 3732	Sen. Alvarado & Rep. Thompson	Houston Land Bank: Relating to the creation of an urban land bank by certain municipalities.	Filed 3-7-19
HB 3278	Rep. Wu, Gene	Jugging: Relating to the creation of the criminal offense of predatory theft.	Filed 3-5-19