



CITY OF HOUSTON

Office of the Mayor

Interoffice

Correspondence

To: Houston City Council

From: Mayor's Office of Govt. Relations

Date: March 25th, 2019

Subject: Update to Council

There are 63 days left in the 86th Legislative Session. We are more than half way through the session. As of midday Friday, there were 2455 bills filed in the Senate and 4663 bills authored in the House. Even though the bill filing deadline passed on March 8, 2019, local bills may be introduced that do not have statewide impact or jurisdiction.

Senate Bill 1152 and the \$27 million price tag for Houston

On Tuesday, Council Member David Robinson testified before the Senate Committee on Business & Commerce against Senate Bill 1152. The bill involves the elimination of cable franchise fees, costing the City of Houston anywhere between **\$17 million and \$27 million in the General Fund.**

From his testimony:

City Council and the Mayor work together every year to close that budget gap, often by making difficult decisions and cuts. This proposed bill would make our budgeting process even more challenging by adding a cut between \$17 and \$27 million annually, adding uncertainty to our revenue projections.

Legal's YuShan Chang testified on the measure as well, noting that \$27 million is equal to 707 police cadets, 225 full time classified employees, or 337 full time civilian employees.

- For reference, please see the Mayor's letter against Senate Bill 1152 here: <https://www.houstontx.gov/govtrelations/86lege/against-sb1152.pdf>

The GR Team invites Council Members to contact Senators and House Members, and can provide support materials on cable franchise fees.

Currently, the bill is in the Senate Business & Commerce Committee. The companion piece of legislation is House Bill 3535 by Rep. Dade Phelan, who is Chair of the House State Affairs Committee (where the bill was referred).

House Budget Floor Debate Wednesday, March 27

The House will debate both the budget for the upcoming biennium, CSHB 1, and the supplemental budget bill, CSSB 500, on [Wednesday, March 27](#). All amendments that will be offered will need to be filed by 10 am on Sunday, March 24.

307 amendments to the House Budget have been filed. Not every amendment filed will be brought up on the floor for debate, but it is expected the debate will go late into the evening and possibly into early hours the following day. During the 84th Session, the budget bill was voted out of the House after 17 hours of discussion and in the 85th it was voted out after 15 hours of discussion.

The House has adopted a calendar rule for both bills that states any amendments offered that increase funds must have an offsetting reduction.

Harvey Related Legislation

The Senate passed the Harvey related infrastructure bills, SB 6, 7, and 8, that fortify efforts to rebuild after this recent storm and mitigate future flood disasters across the state.

- The legislation would require the Texas Department of Emergency Management to create a disaster response plan for local officials, direct the state's water planning agency to devise a statewide flood plan and create a "resiliency fund" to support flood projects.

Committee Substitute to Senate Bill (CSSB) 500, the supplemental appropriations bill, has already passed the Senate and was moved forward by the House Appropriations Committee.

- The Senate passed version contains \$335 million for non-federal match for PA projects, while the House Appropriations version increases that to \$400 million

Keep in mind the City of Houston estimate is \$228 million needed for the 436 PA projects

Both versions contain \$273 billion for non-federal match for HMGP

School Finance Update

HB 3, the school finance bill and top priority for Speaker Dennis Bonnen passed out of the House Education Committee unanimously and is expected to hit the House floor around April 3, 2019. The bill commits \$9 billion in funding for our public schools and is the first major school finance overhaul in more than 20 years. It substantially increases the basic allotment, Pre-K, and gives more discretion to local independent school district trustees.