



89TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Senator Carol Alvarado

Senate District 6

Greetings,

The Texas Legislature convenes for 140 days every other year to propose and consider legislation, shape the state budget for the next two years and contemplate our state's most pressing issues. Every session has its unique challenges, successes and hot spots - the 89th regular legislative session was no exception.

As you read through this wrap up, I hope you can take pride in the work of the Senate District 6 team. This session I tackled a wide range of issues critical to our community - grade separation, school safety, district workforce development, Medicaid benefits and protections for survivors of crimes, just to name a few. I know that myself and my team put our all into fighting for a better future for our neighbors.

It is my honor to serve as your state senator and a privilege to advocate for the needs of our community.

Yours in health,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Alvarado". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carol" and last name "Alvarado" clearly distinguishable.

Carol Alvarado
Texas State Senator, District 6

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Bill Statistics

89th Legislative Session

	Filed	Passed (Enrolled)	Vetoed
Senate Bills (SBs)	3,075	594	15*
House Bills (HBs)	5,644	619	13**
Total	8,719	1,213	28

*includes line-item veto of SB 1; ** includes line-item veto of HB 500

Senator Alvarado's Statistics

Senator Alvarado passed a total of 25 bills in the 89th Legislative Session, ranking 5th among 11 Democratic senators. In total, she passed 13 senate bills and 12 sponsored house bills. Unfortunately, four of Senator Alvarado's SBs that were passed out of the Senate were placed on the House General Calendar but time ran out for a vote by the full House.

Senator Alvarado's Senate Bills

Senator Alvarado filed a total of 69 senate bills (SBs) in the 89th legislative session, including one concurrent resolution and one joint resolution. This section concerns legislation that was finally signed into law.

SB 482 (Alvarado/Harless) - *Relating to the offenses of assault, harassment, and interference with public duties committed against certain employees or agents of a utility.*

- SB 482 enhances protections for utility workers by increasing criminal penalties for harassment or assault committed against a utility worker while performing their duties.
- Assault is enhanced from a Class A misdemeanor to a third-degree felony (two to 10 years in state prison and a fine of up to \$10,000) when committed against a utility worker while they are working.
- Harassment is enhanced from a Class B misdemeanor to a Class A misdemeanor (up to one year in jail and a fine of up to \$4,000) when committed against a utility worker while they are working.

SB 487 (Alvarado/Flores) - *Relating to the confidentiality of identifying information of victims of certain offenses.*

- SB 487 allows survivors of invasive visual recording and indecent assault to qualify for pseudonyms during legal proceedings. This means that the survivors of these crimes would be designated by their initials or a fictitious name rather than their full name in all public files and records concerning the offense, including police reports and judicial proceedings records.
- Invasive visual recording is committed when a perpetrator photographs, records or broadcasts a survivor's intimate areas in a space that has the reasonable expectation of privacy - such as a bathroom or a changing room - without the survivors consent.
- Indecent assault is committed when a perpetrator touches another person's intimate parts without consent, exposes or attempts to expose those parts or causes another person to come into contact with bodily fluids in a sexual manner.

SB 763 (Alvarado/Bell, K.) - *Relating to standard permits for certain concrete plants.*

- SB 763 requires the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to conduct a protectiveness review to evaluate air quality permits for concrete batch plants at least once every eight years. There is no current requirement for these reviews to occur regularly.
- Protectiveness reviews are used to evaluate the how well air quality standard permits ensure safe air quality. The protectiveness review considers concentrations of pollutants authorized by the standard permit throughout the state.

SB 790 (Alvarado/Guillen) - *Relating to the procedure for resolving certain customer complaints before the Public Utility Commission of Texas.*

- SB 790 allows the PUC to create a simplified complaint resolution process when a tenant and owner have a small claims discrepancy on a water or wastewater bill. This legislation reduces existing unnecessary, lengthy and expensive complaint processes.

SB 865 (Alvarado/Leach) - *Relating to instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of automated external defibrillators and to a cardiac emergency response plan for certain school employees and volunteers.*

- SB 865 requires CPR training and the maintenance of a CPR certification from a nationally recognized association for every school nurse, athletic or cheerleading coach, physical education instructor, marching band director and any other school employee specified by the Texas Education Commission.
- SB 865 also requires all private and public schools to establish Cardiac Emergency Response Plans, as recommended by the American Heart Association. These plans must be accompanied by annual practice drills and an identified cardiac emergency response team to ensure timely and effective responses to cardiac emergencies.
- This bill is named the Landon Payton Act in honor of a Senate District 6 student who tragically passed away during a medical emergency at school.

SB 1177 (Alvarado/Leach) - *Relating to fire safety inspections at public and private schools.*

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- SB 1177 requires that automated external defibrillators on school campuses be inspected during fire safety inspection to ensure their full functionality. The bill also requires that a written report of the inspection be provided to the school's principal or director.

SB 1265 (Alvarado/Harris Davila) - *Relating to certain duties of the Texas Workforce Commission with respect to child-care resources.*

- SB 1265 requires the Texas Workforce Commission to build out its online resources to better support employers in offering childcare benefits. It will provide businesses with access to key resources, best practices, templates and information on state and federal tax credits and dependent care savings accounts.
- Small employers face special challenges regarding employee child care - they may not have the resources to offer child care as a benefit and need a one-stop-shop to help employees understand the child care resources in their communities like child care scholarships and child care facility ratings.

SB 1266 (Alvarado/Hull) - *Relating to Medicaid provider enrollment and credentialing processes.*

- SB 1266 requires the provider support team shepherding Medicaid providers through enrollment and re-enrollment processes to be regularly-evaluated with clear objectives for provider support. This legislation also requires both written and electronic notification of provider disenrollment, no less than 30 days before disenrollment. Currently, providers only receive electronic notification.
- Medicaid providers across the state expressed support for this legislation. During the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), all existing Medicaid providers' re-enrollment was paused. Once the PHE ended and providers began re-enrolling, Texas' brand new Medicaid provider enrollment system was overwhelmed and ill-equipped to support the volume of Medicaid providers re-enrolling. Thousands of hospitals and clinics across the state were unable to re-enroll or unaware the re-enrollment was required. The problem was exacerbated by under-trained provider support teams, leading to delayed reimbursement for medical services.
- SB 1266 ensures that Medicaid providers receive clarity and support throughout the re-enrollment process so that they can focus on serving patients.

SB 1267 (Alvarado/Vasut) - *Relating to certificates of number and certificates of title issued by and records kept by the Parks and Wildlife Department; creating a criminal offense.*

- SB 1267 updates Texas's boat titling and registration system by allowing the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife to move vessel titles online. This will shorten the ownership transfer window from 45 to 20 days and require disclosure of major hull damage at the time of sale.
- SB 1267 also creates a criminal offense for knowingly concealing damage to a used boat during its sale. The bill incorporates language from the Uniform Certificate of Title for Vessels Act to help prevent fraud and increase consumer protections.

SB 1804 (Alvarado/Thompson, S.) - *Relating to restitution and compensation paid to victims of certain offenses for tattoo removal related to the offense.*

- SB 1804 makes survivors of human trafficking and prostitution eligible for reimbursement for the cost of removing forced tattoos. Traffickers use forced tattooing to brand victims, leaving an often-permanent reminder for survivors who cannot afford tattoo removal.

SB 2349 (Alvarado/Walle) - *Relating to notice requirements for a leased dwelling located in a floodplain.*

- SB 2349 exempts landlords from providing floodplain notices for certain short-term leases that last less than 30 days. Additionally, SB 2349 clarifies that when flood notices are required, they must be signed separately by both the landlord and the tenant to make sure the disclosure is seen and acknowledged.
- Current law requires tenants to be notified of floodplains even when a property is for a short time, creating unnecessary burden for both renters and landlords.

SB 2351 (Alvarado/Walle) - *Relating to the construction of certain concrete plants under a standard permit.*

- SB 2351 allows the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to require a concrete batch plant that requests a construction delay to comply with the most recent version of the air quality permit. Currently, concrete batch plants may delay

construction for years. During those delays, air quality permit requirements may be updated. SB 2351 ensures that TCEQ can require plants with construction delays to comply with the most current - and rigorous - air quality standards.

- In District 6, a controversial concrete batch plant was granted a construction extension in late 2023 but TCEQ could not require the plant to revise their air permit to meet new requirements. This plant is adjacent to the James Driver Park in Aldine, where children and families should be able to expect clean, breathable air.

SCR 25 (Alvarado/Perez) - *Urging the Houston City Council to construct a memorial pedestrian bridge in honor of Sergio Ivan Rodriguez.*

- SCR 25 urges the Houston City Council to construct a memorial pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks near Milby High School named and in honor of Sergio Ivan Rodriguez, a Milby high school student who lost his life in December 2024 while crossing those railroad tracks on his way to school.
- SCR 25 is accompanied by \$10 million in general revenue funding to design and construct the memorial bridge.

House Bills Sponsored by Senator Alvarado

HB 136 (Hull/Alvarado) - *Relating to Medicaid coverage and reimbursement for lactation consultation services.*

- HB 136 adds lactation consultation as a Medicaid benefit for pregnant and postpartum Medicaid recipients. At least 15 states already offer this Medicaid benefit.
- A lactation consultant is a certified healthcare professional who specializes in providing support and education to mothers related to breastfeeding. These professionals support mothers who choose to breastfeed by addressing issues like difficulty latching, challenges efficiently pumping breastmilk, milk supply issues and by providing education about safely weaning a child from breastmilk.
- In Texas, 89 percent of mother start breastfeeding immediately postpartum, but at six months the exclusive breastfeeding rate drops to only 24 percent of babies.

Sixty percent of mothers who stop breastfeeding indicate that they did so earlier than desired.

- There are various health and developmental benefits of breastfeeding for both a mother and child, including improvements in an infant's immune responses and brain development. Additionally, breastfeeding is linked to a decreased risk for allergies, celiac disease and obesity in children. Mothers who breastfeed often experience improved postpartum recovery and a decreased risk for both breast and ovarian cancer.

HB 1089 (Paul/Alvarado) - *Relating to creation of the gulf coast protection account to be administered by the General Land Office.*

- HB 1089 creates the Gulf Coast Protection Account, managed by the General Land Office. The account is funded through gifts, grants, donations or appropriations for the development of infrastructure necessary or useful for protecting the gulf coast.
- One project HB 1089 will support is the Ike Dike, a coastal barrier that will prevent dangerous storm surges from wiping out homes, businesses and infrastructure if and when a hurricane hits Houston directly. As a community, we have been fortunate that this worst-case scenario has not yet occurred but we must prioritize infrastructure that secures the safety of our community moving forward.
- The creation of this account allows the legislature to make appropriations to the GCPD directly, allows funds to carry over across bienniums and allows funds to accrue interest through investment. Ultimately, this account will save tax payer dollars and streamline the funding of essential gulf coast infrastructure projects.

HB 1639 (Patterson/Alvarado) - *Relating to a study on the increased incidence of cancer in female firefighters in this state.*

- HB 1639 initiates a study on female-specific cancers amongst female firefighters by requiring the Department of State Health Services and the Texas Commission on Fire Protection to evaluate the incidence of cancer in female firefighters, focusing on cancers specific to women, including ovarian and breast cancer.

HB 2488 (Bell, K./Alvarado) - *Relating to conducting certain contested case hearings under the Texas workers' compensation system by remote communication.*

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- HB 2488 authorizes the Division of Worker's Compensation to hold formal contested case hearings by videoconference when agreed to by both the agency and individual seeking the hearing. This legislation will result in faster resolutions for both parties while saving valuable taxpayer resources.

HB 2760 (Villalobos/Alvarado) - *Relating to judicial review of a Texas Workforce Commission decision in an unemployment compensation proceeding.*

- HB 2760 clarifies which courts may conduct a judicial review of a final decision by the Texas Workforce Commission. Previous statute indicated "court of competent jurisdiction," and this legislation clarifies that the court must be a county court at law or district court.

HB 3463 (Walle/Alvarado) - *Relating to the prosecution of the offense of theft of service.*

- HB 3463 updates the Penal Code to allow written notice in theft of service cases to be sent by email, text message or commercial delivery service in addition to certified or registered mail. This legislation streamlines theft of service cases so that these cases may proceed more efficiently, benefiting business of all sizes.

HB 3698 (Vo/Alvarado) - *Relating to participation in reemployment services as a condition of eligibility for unemployment benefits.*

- HB 3698 allows the Texas Workforce Commission to enroll claimants in the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program if the commission has determined that the individual's participation will reduce the duration of unemployment.
- The RESEA program helps customers receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits prepare for their next job while ensuring UI payment are not made to ineligible individuals. RESEA connects individuals with reemployment services like childcare, transportation and vocational training.
- Currently, this program is only available to individuals who are *already* likely to exhaust their employment benefits. Under HB 3698, the Workforce Commission can enroll more unemployment benefit recipients in RESEA before benefits are likely to run out. For busy parents seeking employment, this will result in additional child care, training and long-term financial security.

HB 3699 (Vo/Alvarado) - *Relating to initial claims under the unemployment compensation system.*

- HB 3699 prevents unemployment benefit fraud by ensuring that the Texas Workforce Commission can verify an applicant's last employer. This legislation closes a loophole in current law that enables bad actors to improperly qualify for unemployment benefits by listing fictitious or unverifiable previous employment.

HB 3732 (Martinez/Alvarado) - *Relating to compliance by a fire department with certain minimum standards adopted by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection.*

- HB 3732 extends certain National Fire Protection Association personal protective equipment compliance standard deadlines. The bill gives flexibility to local fire departments attempting to meet those standards that face supply chain challenges but have made a good faith effort to obtain updated personal protective equipment.

HB 3966 (Morales, C./Alvarado) - *Relating to requiring owners or operators of commercial passenger bus services to provide certain notifications to residents concerning operations.*

- HB 3966 requires commercial passenger bus companies to notify nearby residents via newspaper posting at least 90 days before opening a new terminal.
- This legislation follows the 2023 move of Houston's Greyhound terminal from downtown Houston to the East End without prior notice to East End residents. HB 3966 will give communities time to plan and work with local law enforcement in situations like these, so that community and lawmaker engagement can be proactive rather than reactive.

HB 5129 (Noble/Alvarado) - *Relating to the security of certain personal identifying information submitted to or retained by a state agency.*

- HB 5129 ensures that personal information of occupational license holders retained by state agencies is confidential, preventing sensitive information from being publicly disclosed without the licensee's written consent. Personal information includes a license holder's home address, home telephone number,

personal cell phone number, personal e-mail address, driver's license number, emergency contact information and information that reveals whether a person has family members.

HB 5195 (Capriglione/Alvarado) - *Relating to modernization of state agency Internet websites and digital services.*

- HB 5195 directs state agencies to evaluate their online systems and requires the Texas Department of Information Resources to coordinate an agency website modernization effort. This bill also reduces digital exclusion by requiring agencies to assess their websites for accessibility so that individuals with disabilities can use screen readers, keyboard navigation and other assistive technologies.
- In December 2024, Governor Abbott launched the Small Business Freedom Council to review government efficiency for Texas businesses. The council produced a report in March 2025 identifying ways to cut unnecessary government regulations that impede small business formation and growth. This legislation was a result of the Governor's report.
- Many state agency websites are outdated, difficult to navigate, and not optimized for mobile devices. HB 5195 ensures citizens can access government services quickly and efficiently, which is especially critical for business owners, elderly users, people with disabilities and those in rural areas with limited broadband access.

The State Budget – Overview

The 89th legislative session was Senator Alvarado's first session serving on the Senate Finance Committee. Senator Alvarado also served on the Article II workgroup, which directly oversees funding decisions related to programs administered by the Health and Human Services Commission, the Department of State Health Services and the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Through her work on the Finance committee, **Senator Alvarado secured \$35.56 million in All Funds for impactful projects and programs.**

SB 1 (Huffman/Bonnen) – the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Funding amounts throughout this document are rounded totals for the 2026-2027 biennium, unless otherwise noted. Funding amounts may be in "All Funds" (federal and state funds, combined) or "General Revenue" (state funds only).

SB 1, the General Appropriations Act, appropriates a total of:

- \$338.02 billion in All Funds;
- \$149.17 billion in General Revenue Funds; and
- \$100.93 billion in Federal Funds

This is a(n):

- increase of \$4.02 billion, or 1.2 percent, in All Funds;
- decrease of \$1.75 billion, or 5.1 percent in General Revenue; and
- decrease of \$6.92 billion, or 6.4 percent compared to last biennium's budget.

HB 500 (Bonnen/Huffman) - Supplemental Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2025

HB 500 serves as the state's "supplemental" budget, funding existing contracts and programs through fiscal year 2025 and funding certain pieces of legislation from the 89th legislative session. HB 500 appropriates a total of \$13.33 billion in General Revenue Funds for these purposes.

HB 500 Highlights:

- \$250 million for the Texas Moving Image Incentive Program.
- **\$250 million for railroad grade separation projects, which create raised or lowered separations between public roads and railways to reduce congestion and public safety hazards associated with rail crossings.**
- \$177.2 million to address the federal victims of crime funding shortfall.
- \$5.94 million to implement the Jobs, Energy, Technology and Innovation (JETI) Act. JETI was created with the passage of HB 5 (88th Legislature, Regular Session) and aims to help Texas stay competitive by attracting new jobs and investment to the state.
- \$20 million for the Thriving Texas Families program, in addition to the \$90 million appropriated in SB 1. The Thriving Texas Families program is a statewide support network that provides an array of resources, including parenting classes on life skills, personal finance, parenthood and stress management. The program also provides supplies for infant care and pregnancy, including car seats, cribs, maternity clothes, infant diapers and formula.
- \$1.62 billion for the Water Development Board to use for water infrastructure and supply projects.
- \$60 million for local parks grants, to be administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Riders Authored by Senator Alvarado

Rider	Article	Amount (All Funds)	Purpose
Rider 28: Provider Enrollment Management System	II	\$23.06 million	This rider will improve the efficiency of Medicaid provider enrollment and revalidation. Timely provider enrollment is critical to maintaining the Medicaid provider network and ensuring access to care for Texans enrolled in Medicaid.
<i>Rider 48: Sergio Ivan Rodriguez Memorial Pedestrian Bridge</i>	VII	\$10 million	These funds will be used for the design and construction of the Sergio Ivan Rodriguez Memorial Pedestrian Bridge at the Union Pacific rail line near Milby High School to provide a safe crossing for students and other pedestrians.
Rider 96: Long-Term Care Ombudsman	II	\$1.5 million	The office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman is critical to ensure the wellbeing of Texans in long term care settings across our state. This team visit facilities proactively and in response to complaints. They are the eyes and ears that protect vulnerable residents, serving over 200,000 Texans who live in long-term care facilities. In 2024, the office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman made 3,306 facility visits and investigated 594 resident complaints in Harris County. These additional funds will expand the reach and bandwidth of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's team, ensuring that Texans in long term care facilities have the support they need.
Rider 36: Future Healthcare	II	\$1. million	These funds will be used for grants to hospitals to develop and implement on-site healthcare workforce

Workforce Apprenticeship Support			apprenticeship programs. These programs allow individuals to pursue healthcare training while in school or employed full-time in a medical setting.
Rider 76: Healthy Texas Women Short Form Application	II	No Cost	Healthy Texas Women is an essential program for the health of hundreds of thousands of women across our state. The current application is overly burdensome, limiting access and artificially increasing denials. This rider will direct HHSC to seek a shortened application through its next waiver renewal.
Rider 161: Clear Process for Including Prescription Drugs on the Texas Drug Code Index	II	No Cost	These funds ensure the timely review and inclusion of prescription drugs in the Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs.

The State Budget – Article by Article

The state budget (SB 1) is organized by “articles,” which cluster related topics and agencies.

Article I - General Government

Article I is funded at \$11.91 billion in All Funds for the 2026-2027 biennium, a decrease of \$9.73 billion - or 45 percent - from the 2024-2025 biennium.

Article I Highlights:

- \$20.2 million for the Texas Music Incubator Program, administered by the Trusteed Programs in the Office of the Governor.
- \$98 million for victims assistance grants administered by the Office of the Attorney General.

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- \$600.1 million for the Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas.

Article II - Health and Human Services

Article II is funded at \$105.73 billion in All Funds for the 2026-2027 biennium, an increase of \$4.88 billion - or 4.8 percent - from the 2024-2025 biennium.

Article II Highlights:

- \$2.44 billion appropriated for a base wage increase for personal attendant services, so that the base wage is no less than \$13.00 an hour. These providers serve Texans with disabilities who need support with daily tasks.
- \$533.92 million appropriated for rate (reimbursement) increases for nursing facilities to increase available funds for residents' dietary needs and facilities' administrative needs.
- \$5 million specifically set aside for a new Maternal Health Outcome Program that will fund maternal mortality and morbidity reduction initiatives, including statewide healthcare professional training, increased postpartum depression screening and the implementation of risk assessment tools. This funding compliments the Alliance on Maternal Health safety bundles rolled out by the Department of State Health Services across Texas hospitals, which have been extremely successful at reducing common obstetric and postpartum complications like hemorrhage, sepsis, high blood pressure and substance use disorders.
- Women's health programs are fully funded at \$445.60 million. An additional \$10 million is appropriated to be used for caseload growth across women's health programs.
- \$31.11 million appropriated for rate (reimbursement) increases for services to diagnose and support children with autism.
- \$27 million for youth mobile crisis outreach teams (YCOTs), including funding to establish at least eight new YCOTs. These teams provide face-to-face counseling to youths who are at risk of harm to themselves or others. The services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Article III - Education

Article III is funded at \$134.66 billion in All Funds for the 2026-2027 biennium, an increase of \$11.19 billion - or 9.1 percent - from the 2024-2025 biennium.

District 6 Spotlight

San Jacinto College – Center for Biotechnology

\$10 million in All Funds

These funds will support San Jacinto College's strategic investment in the future of biotechnology education and the biotechnology workforce. As the demand for skilled professionals in the biotechnology field continues to increase, Texas faces a critical need for workforce initiatives. San Jacinto College will dedicate these funds to addressing this need through Biotechnical workforce training opportunities and new industry partnerships.

Article III Highlights:

- The Foundation School Program funding is capped at \$66.87 billion, in addition to funds made available through local school district tax revenue.
- \$1 million appropriated for a Fatherhood and Parental Involvement in Literacy Campaign to help Texans understand the important role parents play in supporting and developing childhood literacy.
- \$2.61 million appropriated for a training developed by The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio to educate public school district employees across the state about the dangers of fentanyl contamination.
- \$2.6 million appropriated for the establishment of a dedicated Crime & Urban Issues Data Analysis Center at the University of Houston Downtown. Currently, county, city and school law enforcement departments maintain separate data about crime incidents that contain important information regarding the prevalence

of crime and how it is best-prevented in the Houston area. This Center will ensure that these different data sets are examined holistically for proactive and effective law enforcement efforts.

- \$30 million to support the ongoing work of the M.D. Anderson Institute for Cell Therapy Discovery and Innovation. This Institute will situate Houston as a world leader in the development and advancement of impactful cell therapies for cancer, autoimmune diseases and other medical conditions.

Article IV - Judiciary

Article IV is funded at \$1.23 billion in All Funds for the 2026-2027 biennium, a decrease of \$9.2 million - or 0.7 percent - from the 2024-2025 biennium.

Article I Highlights:

- \$10 million in fiscal year 2026 for basic civil legal services to victims of sexual assault.
- \$500,000 to train judges and their staff on mental health care resources available in Texas.

Article V - Public Safety and Criminal Justice

Article V is funded at \$19.77 billion in All Funds for the 2026-2027 biennium, an increase of \$286 million - or 1.5 percent - from the 2024-2025 biennium.

Article V Highlights:

- \$5.93 million for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to continue the Battering Intervention and Prevention Program. The mission of battering intervention and prevention program is to eliminate intimate partner violence by providing services to batterers, promoting safety for victims and bringing about social change necessary to end battering and all other forms of abuse.

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- \$37.75 million appropriated for ongoing human trafficking and anti-gang activities conducted by DPS.
 - \$1.5 million for the continuation and promotion of the statewide safe gun storage campaign overseen by DPS.

Article VI - Natural Resources

Article VI is funded at \$8.06 billion in All Funds for the 2026-2027 biennium, a decrease of \$2.99 billion - or 27 percent - from the 2024-2025 biennium.

Houston Parks Spotlight

Article VI includes \$20.8 million in funding for local parks across the state. This includes \$2 million for Doss Park in northwest Houston and \$2 million for Melrose Park in north Houston.

Article VI Highlights:

- \$20.2 million for the Texans Feeding Texans program, which offsets the costs of harvesting and transporting agricultural products to Texas food banks.
- \$13.2 million to provide free lunch in lieu of reduced price lunch to qualified students.
- \$9 million for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for air quality planning activities to reduce ozone in certain counties. Activities will include inventorying emissions, monitoring of pollution levels, air pollution data analysis, modeling pollution levels and regional air quality planning.
- \$500,000 to operate TCEQ's mobile air monitoring units in coastal regions.
- \$112.01 million for coastal erosion control projects.
- \$4.3 million for the ongoing operation of the Gulf Coast Protection District.

Article VII - Business and Economic Development

Article VII is funded at \$48.48 billion in All Funds for the 2026-2027 biennium, a decrease of \$1.35 billion - or 2.7 percent - from the 2024-2025 biennium.

Article VII Highlights:

- No less than \$30 million available for low-income housing assistance.
- \$3 million for the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to provide housing services to unaccompanied homeless youth and homeless young adults 24 years of age and younger.
- The Texas Workforce Commission will dedicate \$1.5 million to programs that encourage increased participation in continuing professional development for early childhood professionals.

Article VIII - Regulatory

Article VIII is funded at \$6.70 billion in All Funds for the 2026-2027 biennium, an increase of \$803.7 million - or 13.6 percent - from the 2024-2025 biennium.

Article VIII Highlights:

- \$200,000 for the purpose of developing a Spanish language social work licensing exam for the Licensed Master's level Social Workers, opening licensure to more Spanish-speaking mental health professionals.
- \$5.3 million for inspections and enforcement actions by the Department of Licensing and Regulation to combat human trafficking in the department's regulated programs.
- Article VIII includes enacting provisions from SB 3070, which moves the Texas Lottery Commission under the purview of the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

Notable Bills by Policy Area

Criminal Justice & Public Safety

Senator Alvarado's Criminal Justice Achievements

SB 482 (Alvarado/Harless) provides enhanced protections for utility workers on the job by increasing penalties for the assault or harassment of a utility worker. In the wake of Hurricane Beryl, many of these workers were met with harassment, verbal threats and, in some cases, physical assaults. They persisted in their essential work despite these dangers, highlighting the need for stronger legal protections for utility workers.

SB 487 (Alvarado/Flores) expands who qualifies for the voluntary use of a pseudonym during a court proceeding, so that survivors of invasive visual recording and indecent assault can protect their privacy while pursuing justice.

SB 1804 (Alvarado/S. Thompson) expands reimbursable services for survivors of human trafficking and prostitution. Current state law allows survivors to receive funds for medical and mental health costs but does not contemplate tattoo removal. This legislation will play a key role for survivors who would otherwise live with a physical, permanent reminder of their abusers.

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

SB 9 (Huffman/Smithee)– *Relating to the confinement or release of defendants before trial or sentencing, including regulating charitable bail organizations, and the conditions of and procedures for setting bail and reviewing bail decisions.*

- SB 9 enhances the regulation of bail processes and magistrates in Texas by revising conditions and procedures for setting bail, expanding access and use of the public safety report system and providing for certain crime victims' rights.
- This legislation will make it easier to hold those accused of serious crimes - including murder, kidnapping and sexual assault - without bond pending trial. Rare but horrible instances of violent crimes convicted by such individuals while out on bail prompted this public safety legislation.

SB 20 (Flores/Capriglione) – *Relating to the creation of the criminal offense of possession, promotion, or production of certain obscene visual material appearing to depict a child.*

- SB 20 criminalizes the possession, distribution or promotion of obscene materials that appear to depict a child, regardless of whether the image is real, animated or AI-generated. These crimes will be state jail felonies , punishable by a sentence of up to two years in a state jail facility and a fine of up to \$10,000.
- The penalty would be increased to a third degree felony in the case of a previous conviction and be increased to a second degree felony in the case of two or more certain previous convictions. A third degree felony is punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a second degree felony is punishable by up to 20 years in prison.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 20.

SB 40 (Huffman/Smithee) – *Relating to the use by a political subdivision of public funds to pay bail bonds; authorizing injunctive relief.*

- SB 40 prohibits the use of public funds of a political subdivision (cities and counties) to pay a nonprofit organization for defendants' bail bonds. The legislation allows residents or taxpayers of a political subdivision to seek injunctive relief (action by the courts) if the political subdivision violates this law and uses funds for the purposes of bail.

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- Bail funds like those banned under SB 40 aim to provide access to bail for low-income Texans, but state lawmakers contend that this is not an appropriate use of taxpayer funds.

HB 33 (McLaughlin/Bettencourt)– *Relating to active shooter incidents at primary and secondary school facilities and other emergencies.*

- HB 33 requires all public-school districts and junior colleges to adopt Mult hazard emergency operations plans that include regular safety drills, improved communication infrastructure, and standardized response protocols.
- This bill mandates that each school campus maintain at least one breaching tool and one ballistic shield to support law enforcement response during active shooter events.
- The bill also requires security reviews of new or renovated school facilities to assess vulnerabilities and identify mitigation strategies.

HB 75 (Smithee/Huffman) – *Relating to the duty of a magistrate to make written findings in certain criminal proceedings.*

- HB 75 requires a magistrate to make written findings within 24 hours if they determine there is no probable cause for a person’s arrest. This legislation requires written findings when a magistrate determines there is no probable cause to support an arrest.

HB 449 (González, Mary/Blanco) VETOED BY THE GOVERNOR - *Relating to the unlawful production or distribution of sexually explicit media using deep fake technology.*

- HB 449 makes it a criminal offense to knowingly produce or share sexually explicit deep fake images or videos without the depicted person’s consent. It expands the definition of deep fake media and removes the requirement to prove intent to deceive, addressing evolving AI-based abuse.

HB 3073 (Howard/Paxton)– *Relating to the prosecution of the offense of sexual assault.*

- HB 3073, known as the Summer Willis Act, updates the definition of “without consent” in the sexual assault statute. It states that sexual assault is without consent if the offender knows the victim is intoxicated or impaired by any

substance to the extent that they are incapable of consenting regardless of whether the substance was administered by the offender.

- Senator Alvarado is a proud cosponsor of HB 3073.

HB 1443 (Schatzline/King) - *Relating to creating the criminal offense of promotion or possession of a child-like sex doll.*

- HB 1443 criminalizes the promotion or possession of child-like sex dolls, making promotion a second-degree felony, intent to promote a third-degree felony and possession a state jail felony.
- This bill allows courts to presume a person's intent to promote the dolls when two or more child-like sex dolls are in a person's possession.
- In Texas Penal Code, "intent to promote" refers to a person's objective to further certain criminal activities.

Economic Development

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

SB 14 (King/Capriglione) – *Relating to reforming the procedure by which state agencies adopt rules and impose regulatory requirements and the deference given to the interpretation of laws and rules by state agencies in certain judicial proceedings.*

- SB 14, also known as the Regulatory Reform and Efficiency Act, establishes the Texas Regulatory Efficiency Office. This office aims to identify opportunities for implementing efficiencies, strengthen the regulatory review processes and reduce unnecessary or inefficient rules within state agencies. The office will work with state agencies in evaluating the costs and impacts of regulations to the state and find ways to adopt rules that benefit the public with the least cost and inconvenience to both the state and regulated persons.

HB 20 (Gates/Schwertner) - *Relating to establishing the Applied Sciences Pathway program.*

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- HB 20 requires the Texas Education Agency commissioner to create and oversee the Applied Sciences Pathway program, which allows high school students to simultaneously earn their diplomas and workforce certificates from colleges or other higher education institutions. The program would involve partnerships between school districts or charter schools and colleges, offering students in grades 11 and 12 a structured sequence of courses that lead to both graduation and certification in high-demand, high-wage technical fields.

HB 2768 (Capriglione/Hinajosa, A.) – *Relating to the development of a state information technology apprenticeship credential offered by public junior colleges or public technical institutes to address shortages in the state information resources workforce.*

- HB 2768 allows state agencies to enter into contracts with public junior colleges or technical institutes to offer a program leading to a state information and technology (IT) apprenticeship to address the IT workforce shortage. The bill also allows this credential, when combined with an associate degree, to substitute for a four-year degree in state hiring and promotion decisions.

HB 3260 (Hancock/Bell, K.) – *Relating to the Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs Grant Program.*

- HB 3260 makes clarifying changes to the Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs Grant Program. It defines a qualifying training program as one recognized or certified by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) according to rules adopted by the TWC, or as certified by the commission as an industry-recognized apprenticeship program rather than by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- This bill allows TWC to distribute grant payments constituting a partial reimbursement for on-the-job training or employment milestones achieved by program participants.

SB 1728 (Perry/Lalani) – *Relating to the participation of certain juvenile justice entities in the Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program.*

- SB 1728 allows the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, juvenile boards and juvenile probation departments to receive grants for the development of new career and

technical education courses from the Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program.

- The JET program provides grants to buy and install equipment for career and technical education (CTE) courses. These courses must lead to a license, certificate or post-secondary degree in a high-demand occupation.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 1728.

HB 346 (Harris-Davila/Miles) – *Relating to the fee amounts prescribed by the secretary of state for expedited commercial and business record searches or filings and the exemption from the franchise tax and certain filing fees for veteran-owned businesses.*

- HB 346 requires the Secretary of State to work with the appropriate state and local government entities to eliminate all required licensing and registration fees during a business's first year of operation. The bill requires the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office to encourage state entities to allocate at least 5 percent of funding budgeted for economic development to support businesses established within the previous five years and have a principal place of business in Texas.
- HB 346 codifies incentives for new veteran-owned businesses, which were set to expire on January 1, 2026. These include fee waivers and franchise tax exemptions for new veteran-owned businesses.
- This legislation is critical to support the development and longevity of businesses, as half of all new businesses fail within their first five years. Reducing bureaucratic hurdles, taxes and fees goes a long way to support Texas' economic growth and small business owners.

SB 1535 (Zaffirini/Button) – *Relating to the establishment by the Texas Workforce Commission of an advanced nuclear energy workforce development program.*

- SB 1535 establishes the Advanced Nuclear Energy Workforce Development Program under the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to address skilled labor shortages in the state's nuclear energy sector. TWC will develop a plan to close labor gaps, retain talent and foster public-private partnerships to enhance workforce development and job placement efforts while promoting nuclear energy education and workforce training.

HB 117 (Schoolcraft/Campbell) – *Relating to the establishment of the governor's task force on the governance of early childhood education and care.*

- HB 117 establishes the Governor's Task Force on Governance of Early Childhood Education and Care. The task force is charged with examining the current governance structure and operational challenges across the early childhood system, including local, state and federal child-care programs. The steering committee will work to align statewide goals, metrics and data systems across the three agencies and assess their plans to meet early childhood education needs.
- Currently, state agencies with child care functions often operate separately despite serving the same populations of caregivers and child care providers. This task force aims to streamline access to programs and regulation for these groups in order to promote access to high-quality child care.

Transportation

District 6 Spotlight

SB 1555 (Nichols & Alvarado/Patterson) – *Relating to a grant program to fund certain railroad grade separation projects.*

- SB 1555 establishes a grant program to help local governments fund railroad-grade separation projects at intersections where roads or pedestrian pathways cross railroad tracks and are not a part of the state highway system. It requires that all grants be approved by the Texas Transportation Commission and only if at least 10 percent of the project's total cost comes from non-state sources.
- This legislation is accompanied by \$250 million in funding.

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

HB 3611 (Curry/Miles) – *Relating to civil penalty for certain signs placed on the right-of-way of a public road.*

- HB 3611 imposes civil penalties on a person whose commercial advertisement appears on an unauthorized sign located in the right-of-way of a public road, making them subject to the same penalties as the individual who placed the sign.
- The bill revises the civil penalty structure from a range of \$500 to \$1,000 per violation to a tiered system: \$1,000 for the first violation, \$2,500 for the second and \$5,000 for each following violation.

SB 1366 (Nichols/King) – *Relating to the inclusion of information about construction or maintenance work zones in the curriculum of driver education and driving safety courses.*

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- SB 1366 requires that driver education and driving safety courses include information about driving in construction or maintenance work zones. The curriculum must cover the dangers of violating traffic laws in these zones and the penalties for specific violations in work zones.

Public Education

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

SB 2 (Creighton/Buckley) – *Relating to the establishment of an education savings account program.*

- SB 2 establishes the Education Savings Account program (ESA, "Voucher Program") in Texas, administered by the state Comptroller. The program is funded through general revenue, appropriations, donations and other lawful sources.
- Students accepted into the program receive annual ESA deposits of: \$2,000 for students who are homeschooled, \$10,000 for private school students or up to \$30,000 for private school students with disabilities, depending on their needs. Funds roll over year to year and are not taxable income. Eligibility includes any Texas student eligible to attend public school who is not currently enrolled in a public school, not graduated and not a child of a sitting state official. If the number of applicants exceeds available funding, 80 percent of spots are prioritized for former public school students who are low-income or have disabilities and the remaining 20 percent are awarded by lottery.
- ESA funds must be used on approved educational expenses such as tuition, textbooks, assessments, tutoring and therapies from pre-approved providers.
- Public schools are required to share relevant student records for ESA use and the Comptroller may access criminal background data, the Texas Education Agency's Do Not Hire Registry and the Health and Human Services Commission misconduct reports to ensure program integrity. Participants and providers are allowed to intervene in legal challenges to the program's constitutionality.

HB 2 (Buckley/Creighton) – *Relating to public education and public school finance.*

- HB 2 enacts sweeping reforms to Texas public school finance and teacher workforce policy. The bill overhauls teacher compensation by establishing a structured retention allotment, expands the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) with new designations and provides additional pay for non-administrative staff. It phases out uncertified teaching, introduces new certification pathways, funds teacher residency and partnership programs, and enhances teacher rights and support systems. The bill also aligns educator preparation programs with rigorous state-defined standards and makes adjustments to school finance formulas, including hold harmless provisions and Teacher Retirement System definitions.
- Article 1: Teacher Compensation – Establishes a tiered Teacher Retention Allotment. In school districts with 5,000 students or less, teachers with three to five years of experience receive \$4,000 and teachers with five or more years of experience receive \$8,000. In school districts with more than 5,000 students, teachers with three to five years of experience receive \$2,500 and teachers with five or more years of experience receive \$5,000. This legislation also creates a Support Staff Retention Allotment and offers state-funded liability insurance to teachers.
- Article 2: Educator Preparation, Certification and Teacher Rights – Phases out the use of uncertified teachers by the 2029/2030 school year, except under limited conditions. Creates new certification pathways including “enhanced standard” and “enhanced intern” certificates. Mandates parent notification when students are taught by uncertified teachers and improves grievance protections and administrative transparency for teachers. Certification is incentivized through teacher pay increases, which correspond certification levels.
- Article 3: Special Education Funding and Reforms – Replaces the current special education funding model with a new “intensity of services” formula, allocating funding based on the level of services special education and special needs students require. This model ties funding more closely to actual student needs and service levels. Includes a \$1,000 per-evaluation reimbursement for initial special education evaluations.

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- Article 4: Early Learning Initiatives – Invests in universal literacy screeners for Kindergarten through grade two students and mandates targeted intervention for students who fail two consecutive screens.
 - Article 5: Career and Technical Education (CTE) – Expands funding for new instructional facilities and enhances support for CTE pathways including Rural Pathway Excellence Partnership and Pathways in Technology Early College High School. Supports career-readiness alignment and rural workforce access.
 - Article 6: School Finance and Structural Reforms – Implements major structural adjustments, including: a \$55 increase in the basic allotment; \$500 million added to the school safety allotment; \$255 million for charter school facilities; \$300 million in increased funding for small and mid-size districts; \$42 million to address regional health insurance cost variations; and additional Tier II and miscellaneous formula adjustments.
 - Senator Alvarado is a proud cosponsor of HB 2.

HB 6 (Leach/Bettencourt) – *Relating to discipline management and access to telehealth mental health services in public schools.*

- HB 6 makes significant changes to student discipline policies in Texas public schools and open-enrollment charter schools. It allows principals or administrators to suspend students for conduct listed in their district's student code of conduct, capping out-of-school suspensions at three school days. In-school suspensions have no fixed limit but must be reviewed at least every 10 school days.
- Students in grades below third may only be suspended out of school for serious incidents, such as threats to safety, repeated disruption or drug or alcohol-related conduct. Violent offenses like assault are no longer listed as grounds for such suspensions in younger grades.
- Teachers are not be required to accept a student back without either written consent or a formal return-to-class plan. The bill allows school districts to assign expelled students to virtual or in-person disciplinary alternative education programs or, in some cases, to juvenile justice alternative education programs. The bill also removes the requirement to expel students for e-cigarette possession and expands the list of off-campus offenses that can trigger disciplinary action.

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- For students receiving special education services, threat assessments must include professionals familiar with the student's disability, and school districts may seek court approval to move a student to an alternative setting if they pose a physical threat. The bill ensures these students continue receiving required educational services. Charter schools may not exclude students based solely on discipline history but may do so based on current placement in disciplinary programs or expulsion.

SB 10 (King/Noble) – *Relating to the display of the Ten Commandments in public school classrooms.*

- SB 10 requires all public elementary and secondary schools in Texas to display a poster or framed copy of the Ten Commandments in a visible area of every classroom. The display must be at least 16 inches wide and 20 inches tall, with text that can be easily read from anywhere in the room. If a school does not already have a display, it must accept one if it is privately donated and meets the required specifications but schools are not required to use their own funds to buy them. All public schools must comply with the requirements in this legislation.

SB 11 (Middleton/Spiller) – *Relating to a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools.*

- SB 11 allows Texas public schools and charter schools to set aside time each day for voluntary student and employee prayer or reading of religious texts, with written consent required for participation. Prayer sessions cannot take the place of instructional time or be broadcast over loudspeakers. Parents, guardians or employees can revoke consent, but the original legal waiver remains in effect, and the Attorney General will support schools that adopt the policy.

SB 12 (Creighton/Leach) – *Relating to parental rights in public education, to certain public school requirements and prohibitions regarding instruction, diversity, equity, and inclusion duties, and social transitioning, and to student clubs at public schools.*

- SB 12 outlines several new requirements for Texas public and charter schools which emphasize parental rights and limit diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts. This legislation specifies the criteria schools must use for student transfers.

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- The bill affirms that parents have authority over their child’s education and medical or mental health decisions, except in emergencies requiring life-saving care. It prohibits school districts from assigning DEI-related duties unless required by law and requires employee discipline policies for violations.
 - The bill also mandates that schools report detailed facility and enrollment data to the Texas Education Agency, which must publish the reports online unless security risks are identified.
 - Additional provisions address parental access to instructional materials, student transfer policies, grievance procedures and restrictions on certain classroom instruction topics, including requiring parental consent for human sexuality education.

SB 13 (Paxton/Buckley) – *Relating to a school district's library materials and catalog, the establishment of local school library advisory councils, and parental rights regarding public school library catalogs and access by the parent's child to library materials.*

- SB 13 allows parents to access records of library materials their child checks out and to submit a list of materials they do not want their child to access. The bill defines terms like “harmful,” “indecent” and “profane” content for use in regulating school libraries and online databases.
- School libraries must track and maintain records of student checkouts and provide access to their catalogs. The bill also requires each school board to create a local school library advisory council made up mostly of parents to help ensure library content aligns with community values. The council can recommend changes to library materials and policies and parents may challenge specific books, which must be temporarily removed while under review.

HB 20 (Gates/Schwertner) – *Relating to establishing the Applied Sciences Pathway program.*

- HB 20 requires the Texas Education Agency to create the Applied Sciences Pathway program, allowing high school students to simultaneously earn a diploma and a workforce certificate through a partnership with a higher education institution.
- These courses must lead to high-wage, high-growth technical jobs and be available to all juniors and seniors in participating public school districts. The program will

count toward students' instructional hours and allow limited substitution of graduation credits with career and technical education coursework.

HB 27 (King/Flores) – *Relating to courses in personal financial literacy for high school students in public schools.*

- HB 27 changes high school graduation requirements by requiring students to earn at least one-half credit in personal financial literacy and one credit in either economics, world geography or world history. This legislation removes the option to choose between economics and financial literacy, making both subjects part of the required curriculum.
- Students can fulfill the financial literacy requirement by taking an approved Advanced Placement course.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud cosponsor of HB 27.

SB 57 (Zaffirini/ González, Mary) – *Relating to provisions and plans by public schools to ensure the safety of individuals with disabilities or impairments during a mandatory school drill or a disaster or emergency situation.*

- SB 57 requires public schools to consider and document specific accommodations for students with disabilities during emergency drills in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan. This information must be shared with school and district emergency planners, who may also help determine appropriate accommodations.
- This bill also updates district emergency plans to ensure students and staff with disabilities have equal access to safety, with oversight and guidance provided by the TEA Commissioner in consultation with relevant experts and advocacy groups.

HB 121 (King/Nichols) – *Relating to measures for ensuring public school safety, including the commissioning of peace officers by the Texas Education Agency, the composition of the board of directors of the Texas School Safety Center, and public school safety and security requirements and resources.*

- HB 121 expands school safety laws by granting the Texas Education Agency authority to commission peace officers and revising requirements for armed security and emergency planning in schools and junior colleges. It requires detailed

multihazard emergency plans, strengthens protections for students with disabilities and mandates regular reporting on safety audits and threat assessments.

- This bill also allows broader use of school safety funds for mental health and prevention services, promotes safe firearm storage education and updates mandatory abuse reporting laws and definitions for peace officers.

SB 207 (Paxton/Leo Wilson) – *Relating to excused absences from public school for certain students to attend mental health care appointments.*

- SB 207 amends current law relating to excused absences from public school so that students' mental health care appointments constitute excused absences.

SB 260 (Huffman/Bonnen) – *Relating to the school safety allotment under the Foundation School Program.*

- SB 260 increases the amount of school safety funding provided to public school districts. It raises the per-student allotment from \$10 to \$20 and increases the per-campus allotment from \$15,000 to \$33,540 under the Foundation School Program. The bill also adjusts the funding formula to provide additional money based on a district's basic allotment.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 260.

HB 367 (Rosenthal/ Menéndez) – *Relating to verification of excused absences from public school for students with severe or life-threatening illnesses.*

- HB 367 updates the rules for excused absences due to serious or life-threatening illnesses by requiring a form certified by a Texas-licensed physician. The form must include details about the illness, its severity, the expected length of absence and confirmation that attending school is not feasible during that time. School districts must adopt the form and cannot ask for additional documentation beyond what the form requires.

SB 568 (Bettencourt/Buckley) – *Relating to special education in public schools, including funding for special education under the Foundation School Program.*

- SB 568 makes wide-ranging changes to improve special education in Texas by expanding services, updating funding structures and increasing oversight. It

broadens a state plan for students with visual impairments to also include those who are deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind. The bill allows students in special education to earn advanced graduation distinctions with appropriate Individualized Education Program (IEP) plans and requires translated IEPs, digital forms and better public reporting.

- This bill shifts special education funding to a service intensity-based model, increases support for evaluations and transportation, restores grant programs and creates new pathways to strengthen the special education workforce and services statewide.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 568.

HB 1188 (Manuel/Zaffirini) – *Relating to the provision of information regarding a local intellectual and developmental disability authority to the parents or guardians of certain special education students.*

- HB 1188 requires school districts to provide parents or guardians of students with intellectual or developmental disabilities information about local services and public benefits. This must be done at the first meeting where the student's Individualized Education Program is developed. The materials, created by the Texas Education Agency and Health and Human Services Commission, will include details on available services and federal waiver programs.

HB 2243 (Oliverson/Creighton) VETOED BY THE GOVERNOR – *Relating to the creation of the Texas Commission on Teacher Job Satisfaction and Retention.*

HB 2243 would create the Texas Commission on Teacher Job Satisfaction and Retention to study and recommend ways to improve teacher morale and reduce turnover. The 13-member commission, composed of appointees from state leadership including experienced teachers and school administrators, would be supported by the Texas Education Agency and could hold meetings, hire staff and procure services as needed. The commission must submit a report with recommendations by December 31, 2026, addressing issues such as administrative burdens, discipline policies and the impact of federal education requirements on teachers.

Higher Education

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

SB 37 (Creighton/Shaheen) – *Relating to the governance of public institutions of higher education, including review of curriculum and certain degree and certificate programs, a faculty council or senate, training for members of the governing board, and the establishment, powers, and duties of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Office of the Ombudsman.*

- SB 37 enacts a sweeping restructuring of public higher education governance in Texas, effectively consolidating state control over community colleges, universities and professional schools. It creates a new “Curriculum Review Committee,” composed solely of political appointees from the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House, which will control foundational course content and prohibit the teaching of concepts like systemic racism, identity politics or institutional privilege. The bill also gives the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board authority to evaluate and potentially eliminate degree programs based on performance metrics it sets.
- Faculty senates will be partially appointed and partially elected, with limited terms and their decisions will be strictly advisory. Members can be dismissed for undefined misconduct or political advocacy and institutional presidents, rather than faculty, will appoint senate officers and hold sole hiring authority over key academic positions. The bill removes faculty of peer grievance review processes and eliminates their role in final hiring decisions, even for academic roles.
- Additionally, SB 37 establishes an “Office of the Ombudsman” under the Coordinating Board, which is tasked with investigating and reporting institutional compliance with the bill. This office can trigger legal action or funding penalties for noncompliance and publicize violations, despite conflicting with standard principles of neutrality and confidentiality expected of ombuds institutions.

SB 2972 (Creighton/Leach) – *Relating to expressive activities at public institutions of higher education.*

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- SB 2972 updates state law to clarify and restrict how students, employees and others can engage in expressive activities like protests, speeches or handing out flyers on public college campuses. It affirms that outdoor areas of campus are public forums for speech but allows institutions to enforce reasonable, content-neutral rules on when, where and how those activities happen.
 - This bill prohibits disruptive activities like loud protests during finals, camping out in tents and using megaphones during class hours or covering one's face to avoid identification. Schools must create clear written policies outlining these rights and restrictions, including rules for guest speakers, identity checks and grievance procedures.

HB 2081 (Bucy/Menendez) – *Relating to the establishment of the Building Better Futures Program to support educational and occupational skills training opportunities and support services for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at public and private institutions of higher education.*

- HB 2081 establishes the Building Better Futures Program to expand inclusive education and job training opportunities for Texas students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at public and private colleges. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will administer the program, set rules and distribute funding to eligible institutions. Colleges must be approved or seeking approval by the U.S. Department of Education to offer a comprehensive transition program and must award a certificate upon completion. Students must meet certain eligibility requirements, including Texas residency, though nonresidents may be accepted if space allows. While program credits do not count toward degrees, colleges can receive state funds and pursue other financial support to operate the program.

SB 365 (Eckhardt/Howard) – *Relating to the period for which an applicant for admission as an undergraduate student to a public institution of higher education is entitled to an academic fresh start.*

- SB 365 allows public colleges and universities to choose not to count a student's grades or course credits that are more than 10 years old. However, they must consider any credits earned within the past 5 years. If a school decides to disregard older coursework, it must ignore all grades and credits from that time. Schools

must also post their policy about this on their website and share it with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

SB 769 (Menendez/Mary Gonzalez) – *Relating to a report by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board regarding enrollment and success in higher education for students with disabilities.*

- SB 769 introduces a new requirement for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to produce a report on college students with disabilities. The report must include how many students with disabilities enroll in both public and private colleges in Texas and the percentage they represent. The report must examine the challenges these students face when trying to enroll, as well as highlight the policies that different colleges have in place to support their enrollment and academic success. Additionally, the report must describe the services and accommodations that are offered to ensure accessibility. The report also assess how well institutions inform students with disabilities about their educational rights and legal protections under state and federal law. Finally, the report must include any recommendations for legislative or policy changes that could improve the higher education experience for students with disabilities.

SB 1273 (Hughes/Wilson) – *Relating to establishing the Higher Education Research Security Council.*

- SB 1273 establishes the Higher Education Research Security Council to support secure academic research practices at tier one research institutions in Texas. The council will include designated research security officers from public universities, as well as from private institutions that choose to participate. It is tasked with identifying best practices, developing a research security policy, creating an accreditation process, promoting relevant training programs and meeting at least quarterly. The council must submit an annual report on the status of research security to the governor and legislative leaders. It may accept gifts or donations to support its work, except from entities prohibited from federal contracts or identified as foreign adversaries.

SB 1786 (Creighton/VanDeaver) – *Relating to public higher education.*

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- SB 1786 expands access to dual credit courses by allowing students in grades 9–12 who were educationally disadvantaged in the current or previous four school years to enroll at no cost, with school districts responsible for determining eligibility and notifying colleges. The bill updates performance-based funding metrics to include students who transfer from junior colleges to private institutions and directs the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to designate "credentials of value" based on graduates' earnings and return on investment. It also allows certain education and healthcare credentials to qualify even if they don't fully meet the criteria, to address workforce needs. SB 1786 requires the TEA, THECB, and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to coordinate grant programs that support career and technical education aligned with state workforce goals, and mandates full support for related programs, including staffing and infrastructure. Additionally, it directs the TWC to work with employers to improve wage reporting data used for workforce planning.

SB 2231 (Adam Hinojosa/Wilson) – *Relating to requiring the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to waive fees for admission applications submitted to public institutions of higher education during certain periods.*

- SB 2231 requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to establish “Free College Application Week” during the second full week of October each year. During this week, individuals in Texas can apply to public colleges and universities for undergraduate admission without paying application fees.

SB 2314 (Creighton/Wilson) – *Relating to the creation of an electronic platform and submission portal, known as My Texas Future, to facilitate public high school students' awareness of and application to institutions of higher education using the electronic common admission application form.*

- SB 2314 creates a new online platform called My Texas Future, where public high school students can explore colleges, apply to schools using a common application and see potential financial aid offers. Before graduating, SB 2314 requires students decide whether they want to opt in and allow the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to share their academic data with colleges, which would let colleges directly offer them admission. Schools must notify students and parents

about the platform and their options. The bill ensures that student information shared through My Texas Future is kept confidential under federal privacy laws.

SB 2361 (Kolkhorst/Louderback) – *Relating to the transfer of the University of Houston--Victoria to The Texas A&M University System.*

- SB 2361 transfers the University of Houston–Victoria (UHV) to the Texas A&M University System, where it will become Texas A&M University–Victoria (TAMU–V), offering both undergraduate and graduate degrees. The Texas A&M Board of Regents will oversee the institution, with continued oversight from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. All property, assets, and funding associated with UHV will transfer to the A&M System, and students and employees will retain their current status and benefits. Existing policies, tuition, and fees will remain in place until modified by the A&M System. The bill also updates funding and bonding authority to reflect the transfer.

Natural Resources and Environment

Senator Alvarado's Environmental Achievements

SB 2351 (Alvarado/Walle) - Currently, a concrete batch plant operator that receives a standard permit through the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has 18 months to begin construction. If the concrete batch plant cannot meet the construction deadline, they may request up to two more 18-month extension periods from TCEQ. This has directly impacted District 6, where a controversial concrete batch plant that requested a construction extension in late 2023 was not required by TCEQ to revise their air permit to meet the new requirements. Now TCEQ can require plants with construction delays to meet the most up-to-date air quality requirements.

SB 763 (Alvarado/Bell, K.) - Ensures that the protectiveness reviews that are used to evaluate the how well air quality standard permits ensure safe, breathable air occur at least every 8 years.

Notable Legislation & Leadership Priorities

SB 7 (Perry/Harris) – *Relating to the oversight and financing of certain water infrastructure matters under the jurisdiction of the Texas Water Development Board.*

- SB 7 aims to strengthen Texas's water infrastructure by improving coordination, funding and oversight of water supply and transportation projects. It authorizes the Texas Water Development Board to coordinate joint planning efforts, develop technical standards and support infrastructure projects that help transport and integrate water from various sources. The bill expands eligible uses of the state's water funds to include desalination, water reuse, out-of-state water acquisition and infrastructure upgrades. It also establishes a new administrative fund for staffing and oversight expenses and directs the creation of a public dashboard tracking statewide water infrastructure progress. Lastly, it reforms the Texas Water

Fund Advisory Committee to enhance legislative oversight of water funding programs.

- Senator Alvarado is a proud joint author of SB 7.

SB 34 (Sparks/King) – *Relating to funding for certain volunteer fire departments, to the preparation for and the prevention, management, and potential effects of wildfires, and to emergency communications in this state.*

- SB 34 aims to improve wildfire prevention and emergency response in Texas. It directs the Texas A&M Forest Service and West Texas A&M University to study how much flammable material exists in wildfire-prone areas and evaluate the risks, economic impacts and effectiveness of prevention efforts. The bill also requires the creation of a real-time, statewide database of firefighting equipment that all fire departments can update and access. It sets aside at least 10 percent of volunteer fire department assistance funds for departments in areas at high risk of wildfires and increases the insurance assessment cap from \$30 million to \$40 million. Additionally, it establishes safety standards for power lines at oil and gas sites and outlines how to address fire hazards during inspections.

HB 49 (Darby/Perry) – *Relating to the treatment and beneficial use of fluid oil and gas waste and related material, including a limitation on liability for that treatment or use.*

- HB 49 updates rules for handling fluid oil and gas waste by requiring that treated waste be used for beneficial purposes, not just in oil and gas drilling. It provides liability protections for those who produce, transport or treat the waste, as long as they follow state environmental regulations and are not grossly negligent. The bill also clarifies that damages awarded for negligence and regulatory violations cannot include punitive damages.

SB 494 (Sparks/Landgraf) – *Relating to the establishment of a theft of petroleum products task force.*

- SB 494 establishes a statewide task force under the Railroad Commission of Texas to study and address the theft of petroleum products. The task force, composed of industry representatives and law enforcement officials, will analyze theft trends, review laws from other jurisdictions and recommend strategies for prevention,

security, and economic impact mitigation. It will meet quarterly and submit a report with findings and recommendations.

SB 1150 (Middleton/Geren) – *Relating to the plugging of and reporting on inactive wells subject to the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission of Texas; authorizing an administrative penalty.*

- SB 1150 strengthens oversight of inactive oil and gas wells regulated by the Texas Railroad Commission by requiring wells to be plugged if they have been inactive for over 15 years and 25 years have passed since completion, unless they're part of an approved compliance plan or granted a non-transferable exception.
- Texas has an estimated 150,000 of these "orphaned" wells, which are expensive to plug and pose significant environmental risks if left unplugged. Despite the fact that wells are opened by private companies, most of the cost associated with plugging wells has been paid by Texas taxpayers. SB 1150 reflects an important step forward by requiring industry to pay for timely oil plugging.
- This legislation also outlines criteria for compliance plans and allows operators to appeal denied plans through a formal hearing process. The bill also requires annual reporting on inactive wells and grants the Commission rulemaking authority to consider environmental risks and well integrity, with a delayed implementation to give operators time to comply.

SB 1759 (Birdwell/Dyson) – *Relating to the declaration of an oil or gas emergency by the Railroad Commission of Texas and the liability of a person for assistance, advice, or resources provided in relation to an oil or gas emergency.*

- SB 1759 allows the Railroad Commission to declare an "oil or gas emergency" in cases such as spills, blowouts or uncontrolled releases from wells. The emergency declaration, issued by the RRC executive director, can last up to 30 days and be renewed if needed. The bill also protects individuals or companies that assist in managing the emergency from civil liability, unless they act with gross negligence, recklessness or intentional harm.

Fiscal Policy

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

HB 9 (Meyer/Bettencourt) – *relating to an exemption from ad valorem taxation of a portion of the appraised value of tangible personal property that is held or used for the production of income.*

- HB 9 expands the business personal property tax exemption as outlined in the Texas Tax Code. The bill raises the exemption threshold for tangible personal property used to produce income from \$2,500 to \$125,000 per location within a taxing unit. It also extends this exemption to leased property, allowing a business to exempt up to \$125,000 of leased personal property within each taxing unit, regardless of location. This legislation includes a cost to the state of an estimated \$193.5 million over the upcoming biennium.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud cosponsor of HB 9.

SB 22 (Huffman/Hunter) - *Relating to the Texas moving image industry incentive program and the establishment and funding of the Texas moving image industry incentive fund.*

- SB 22 provides a deposit of \$250 million from sales tax revenue to a new fund outside the treasury on a biennial basis for the purpose of funding reimbursements for moving image projects filmed in Texas. This ensures that funding levels for the program will remain consistent for the next decade.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 22.

SB 23 (Bettencourt/Meyer) - *Relating to an increase in the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district of the appraised value of the residence homestead of a person who is elderly or disabled and the protection of school districts against certain losses in local revenue.*

- SB 23 increases the homestead exemption for senior homeowners and homeowners with disabilities from \$10,000 to \$60,000.

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- This legislation ensures that school districts receive additional state aid for the 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 school years if recent property tax relief measures reduce the local revenue available to pay eligible debt.
 - Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 23.

HB 4226 (Morales Shaw/Campbell) – *Relating to exemptions from the taxes imposed on the sale, use, or rental of a motor vehicle for a vehicle purchased, used, or rented by a nonprofit food bank or a provider of housing and related services.*

- HB 4226 exempts nonprofit food banks' vehicles from the state sales and use tax. This legislation allows food banks to save money and devote more resources to critical services.

HB 104 (Bonnen/Schwertner) – *Relating to the creation of the Texas future fund and the Texas future fund investment review board and to the permissible uses of money in the Texas future fund.*

- HB 104 establishes the Texas Future Fund as an account within the Economic Stabilization Fund (also known as the "rainy day fund"). The account will invest \$5 billion from the rainy day fund in frontier technology, industries critical to national defense and other innovative technologies.
- The account will be administered by the Comptroller and the bill will allow the Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company to contract third parties to manage the fund, including auditing and legal review functions.
- This legislation aims to maximize returns on a small portion of the state's rainy day fund.

SB 1415 (Hughes/Hull) – *Relating to the sales tax exemption period for clothing, footwear, and certain school-related items.*

- SB 1415 moves sales tax exemptions for clothing or footwear under \$100 from mid/late August to early August, so that the sales tax exemption period better coincides with the beginning of the school year.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud cosponsor of SB 1415.

Policy Highlight: Supporting Texas Firefighters

HB 1639 (Patterson/Alvarado) requires the a study of the incidence in cancer amongst female firefighters. This bill will produce invaluable data on the increased risk that female firefighters face in being diagnosed with occupational cancers, which can in turn be used to develop necessary programs and legislation.

HB 2688 (Harless/Huffman) – *Relating to the public retirement systems of certain municipalities.*

- HB 2688 restores benefits and component of the total compensation packages for Houston's first responders which will help the city recruit and retain experienced professional firefighters and police officers.
- Senator Alvarado was a proud cosponsor of HB 2688.

HB 4144 (Turner/Middleton) – *Relating to supplemental benefits for retired firefighters and peace officers diagnosed with certain diseases or illnesses.*

- HB 4144 provides supplemental benefits for retired firefighters and peace officers diagnosed with certain diseases or illnesses.

HB 198 (Bumgarner/Parker) – *Relating to periodic health screenings for firefighters.*

- HB 198 requires political subdivisions that employ firefighters to provide free annual occupational cancer screenings beginning in the fifth year of a firefighter's employment. The screenings must be confidential and include a range of tests, such as urine and blood tests, pulmonary function tests, electrocardiograms, infectious disease screenings, chest x-rays and breast cancer screenings.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud cosponsor of HB 198.

Health Care & Public Health

Senator Alvarado's Health Care Policy & Funding Achievements

SB 1266 (Alvarado/Hull) - This bill ensures enhanced customer service for Medicaid providers enrolling or re-enrolling in Medicaid, so that those providers face fewer bureaucratic hurdles and can focus on serving their patients. Existing issues with the Provider Enrollment and Management System (PEMS) have resulted in thousands of Texas Medicaid providers either delaying the delivery of care or providing care without Medicaid reimbursement.

HB 136 (Hull/Alvarado) - This legislation adds lactation consultation as a Medicaid benefit for pregnant and postpartum Medicaid recipients. For mothers who choose to breastfeed, delays in lactation support can result in a reduction of milk supply, newborn failure to thrive and ultimately end any attempt at breastfeeding. HB 136 aims to ensure that any mother in Texas who chooses to breastfeed has access to additional, needed support.

Rider 76 (SB 1) directs HHSC to implement a shortened, user-friendly application for the Health Texas Women Program once the agency receives approval from the federal government. This will increase access to the program, while provides essential preventative care to women across Texas.

Senator Alvarado secured:

- \$23.06 million to improve PEMS.
- \$1.5 million for the office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman at HHSC.
- \$1 million for a Future Healthcare Workforce Apprenticeship Program.

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

SB 5 (Huffman/Craddick) - *Relating to the creation of the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (DRPIT).*

- The DPRIT is designed to accelerate research relating to dementia and related disorders, improve the health of Texas residents and establish Texas as a leader in this field. It is contingent on the approval of a constitutional amendment by voters (CSSJR 3). If voters approve CSSJR 3, \$3 billion will be transferred to the Dementia Prevention & Research Fund from state General Revenue to provide funding over the next 10 years.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 5.

HB 18 (VanDeaver/Perry) – *Relating to the establishment and administration of certain programs and services providing health care services to rural counties.*

- HB 18 provides codifies the State Office of Rural Hospital Financing and existing grant programs for rural hospitals. The bill also creates an add-on payment for rural hospitals that have a department of obstetrics and gynecology.
- HB 18 codifies the Medicaid definition of a rural hospital, requires HHSC to regularly update certain reimbursement rates for rural hospitals participating in Medicaid based on the most recent cost information and expands the Pediatric Teleconnectivity Grant Program to rural hospitals

SB 25 (Kolkhost/Hull) – *Relating to health and nutrition standards to promote healthy living, including requirements for food labeling, primary and secondary education, higher education, and continuing education for certain health care professionals; authorizing a civil penalty.*

- Known as the "Make Texas Healthy Again" bill, SB 25 includes wide-ranging provisions concerning school physical education, required school nutrition curriculum and nutritional education continuing education for medical professionals.

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- School physical education (PE): This bill expands the requirement for 30 minutes of daily activity so that open-enrollment charter schools must meet the requirement, in addition to public schools. The bill prohibits schools from revoking access to PE as punishment for poor academic performance or behavior for grades kindergarten through eighth.
 - Nutrition elective: SB 25 requires public and open-enrollment high schools to offer an elective course in nutrition and wellness that is based on nutritional guidelines from the Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee. The bill also requires associates and baccalaureate degree programs to offer a course in nutrition education.
 - School nutrition curriculum: The bill specifies that health-related institutions of higher education are eligible for funds only if they require all medical student and students with health-related majors to complete a nutrition curriculum approved by the Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee.
 - The bill established the Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee, which is attached to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and composed of seven members appointed by the Governor. The advisory committee is responsible for independently examining the health impact of ultra-processed foods and establishing state dietary and nutritional guidelines through an annual report. DSHS must maintain a nutritional guideline webpage. No more than two members of the committee may be from health-related higher education institutions and no member may have more than a three percent ownership of a food, beverage or pharmaceutical company. Advisory committee members serve staggered two-year terms.
 - Truth in labeling: The bill requires food manufacturers to disclose certain additives, food colorings and chemical ingredients in products intended for human consumption. Manufacturers must include a warning label if any ingredients are not recommended for human consumption in Australia, Canada, the European Union or the United Kingdom. A violation of this section by a manufacturer is subject to enforcement by the Attorney General.
 - A continuing Nutritional Education requirement for medical professionals is established and the Texas Medical Board will establish the required hours and content using the Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee's guidelines.

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- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 25.

HB 26 (Hull/Kolkhorst) – Relating to requiring contracts with Medicaid managed care organizations to permit the organizations to offer nutrition counseling and instruction services in lieu of other state Medicaid plan services.

- HB 26 requires HHSC to permit Medicaid managed care organizations to offer nutrition counseling and instruction services in lieu of services specified in the state Medicaid plan.

SB 31 (Hughes/Geren) – Relating to exceptions to otherwise prohibited abortions based on a physician's reasonable medical judgment

- Known as the "Life of the Mother Act," SB 31 provides needed exceptions to Texas's abortion ban when the mother is at risk of death or serious impairment of a bodily function.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 31.

HB 3940 (Johnson/Paxton) – Relating to the provision of certain information about Medicaid benefits in relation to newborn children.

- HB 3940 will require the Health and Human Services Commission to provide an annual written notice to managed care organizations and health care providers reminding them that a parent's Medicaid identification number may be used to bill for a newborn's care until the newborn is assigned an identification number and encouraging these entities to educate enrollees about this fact.
- Senator Alvarado is a proud cosponsor on HB 3940.

Local Government

Notable Legislation

SB 2477 (Bettencourt/Hinajosa, Adam) – *Relating to certain municipal regulation of conversion of certain office buildings to mixed-use and multifamily residential occupancy.*

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- SB 2477 allows for the conversion of office buildings into mixed-use or multifamily residential developments in large Texas cities. This law allows property owners and developers to repurpose underutilized office space for residential use without applying the local regulations that typically apply to new development projects. The bill prohibits cities from requiring traffic studies, additional parking, zoning changes or design changes beyond international building code standard.

SB 434 (Miles/Jones, Jolanda) – *Relating to the authority of the Harris County Hospital District to employ and commission peace officers.*

- SB 434 grants the Harris County Hospital District the authority to employ and commission peace officers as other hospital districts can to enhance its safety and security measures.

SB 2173 (Parker/Darby) – *Relating to the effect of a tax certificate accompanying a transfer of certain property.*

- SB 2173 clarifies that when property is transferred with a tax certificate incorrectly stating that no delinquent taxes are owed, the purchaser is protected from liability for those taxes.

HB 331 (Patterson/Hinajosa," Chuy") – *Relating to certain presumptions applicable to claims for benefits or compensation for certain medical conditions brought by certain first responders.*

- HB 331 ensures that firefighter, peace officer or emergency medical technicians who suffer a heart attack or stroke within 8 hours after the end of a strenuous shift are presumed to have been injured in the line of duty.

HB 2464 (Hefner/Middleton) – *Relating to the authority of a municipality to regulate a home-based business.*

- HB 2464 limits how cities can regulate small businesses operated from residential homes. The bill prohibits cities from banning no-impact home-based businesses, requiring permits or licenses for them, or forcing property owners to

rezone their homes or install fire sprinklers if the home is a single-family residence or a small duplex.

- Cities may still ban home-based businesses that involve selling alcohol or illegal drugs, operate as structured sober living homes or function as sexually-oriented businesses.

Border Security

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

SB 8 (Schwertner/ Spiller) – *Requiring Local Law Enforcement to Assist the Federal Government’s Deportation Efforts*

- SB 8 requires sheriffs in Texas counties with a population of 100,000 or more to request and, if offered, enter into agreements with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to allow sheriff’s department personnel to assist in enforcing federal immigration law. Sheriffs in smaller counties may also request such agreements voluntarily.
- The bill establishes a state grant program to support sheriff departments in counties with populations under one million that enter into these agreements. It sets out application procedures, reporting requirements and limits on local budget reductions tied to receiving state grants.

SB 36 (Parker/ Hefner) – *Relating to the homeland security activities of certain entities, including the establishment and operations of the Homeland Security Division in the Department of Public Safety.*

- SB 36 establishes the Homeland Security Division in the Texas Department of Public Safety to lead efforts regarding law enforcement initiatives and operations that support homeland security goals in Texas. The new division outlined in SB 36 is tasked with overseeing activities related to securing Texas long the border that divides Texas and Mexico. A key feature of the new division is also taking control of Operation Drawbridge—a camera-based monitoring initiative along the Texas-Mexico border.

SB 2601 (Blanco/Guillen) – *Relating to a border crime property damage compensation program.*

- The Landowner's Compensation Program, established by the 88th Legislature, compensates agricultural landowners for property damage caused by certain border crimes. SB 2601 proposes key improvements to the program, including:
 - Adding the continuous smuggling of persons to the list of border crimes for which compensation can be awarded;
 - Allowing for compensation to be awarded for debris, pollutants and contaminants damaging land; and
 - Allowing land lessees to directly receive compensation with the landowner's consent.
- Additionally, the bill prohibits insurance companies from raising rates on landowners for claims filed.

HB 247 (Guillen/Middleton) – *Relating to an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the appraised value of real property located in certain counties that arises from the installation or construction on the property of border security infrastructure and related improvements and to the consideration of the price paid by certain governmental entities for a parcel of or easement in real property purchased for the purpose of installing or constructing such infrastructure when appraising other real property.*

- HB 247 provides a property tax exemption for the value added to property through qualified border security infrastructure such as a wall, barrier, fence, road or other additions designed to surveil or impede the movement of persons crossing the Texas-Mexico border. Property owners who allow border security infrastructure to be built on their property through for this effort will be eligible for such property tax exemptions.

Human Trafficking

Leadership Priorities & Notable Legislation

HB 5509 (Bumgarner/Paxton) – *Relating to the suspension or revocation of a hotel's certificate of occupancy by a municipality for suspected human trafficking.*

- HB 5509 authorizes a municipality to suspend or revoke a certificate of occupancy for a hotel if a law enforcement officer provides an affidavit of probable cause, swearing that criminal human trafficking activity is occurring in the hotel.

SB 1278 (Parker/Thompson) VETOED BY THE GOVERNOR – *Relating to an affirmative defense to prosecution for victims of trafficking of persons or compelling prostitution.*

- SB 1278 establishes an affirmative defense for individuals who are victims of human trafficking or prostitution and who commit criminal offenses as a direct result of coercion, duress or threats from their trafficker.
- An affirmative defense is a reason provided by the defendant that, if proven, can defeat the plaintiff's or prosecution's claim, even if the plaintiff's allegations are true.

HB 45 (Hull/Huffman) – *Relating to the duty of the attorney general to represent the state in the prosecution of the criminal offense of trafficking of persons.*

- HB 45 grants the Attorney General the authority to prosecute human trafficking offenses when local prosecutors fail to act. This legislation allows the Attorney General to take over a case if a law enforcement agency submits a probable cause report to both the local prosecutor and the Attorney General and if the local prosecutor has not initiated prosecution within six months.

HB 742 (Thompson/Parker) – *Relating to human trafficking prevention, including training for first responders, disclosure of human trafficking information by certain health care facilities, and protection for facility employees who report human trafficking.*

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- HB 742 would require first responders, including fire protection personnel and emergency medical services personnel, within the timeframe established by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) rule, to successfully complete a training course approved by the HHSC executive commissioner on identifying, assisting and reporting victims of human trafficking.

HB 2761 (Johnson/Parker) – *Relating to the prosecution of the offenses of trafficking of persons, continuous trafficking of persons, and compelling prostitution.*

- HB 2761 clarifies that traffickers cannot use a child's or disabled person's inability to consent to or complete an act of prostitution as a defense in legal prosecutions for the offense of trafficking or prostitution.

SB 610 (Paxton/Thompson, S.) – *Relating to combating human trafficking by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.*

- SB 610 authorizes the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) to combat human trafficking within industries it regulates by establishing an anti-trafficking unit within TDLR.
- The anti-trafficking unit within TDLR will work with the office of the Attorney General, law enforcement agencies and any nongovernmental entity who provides efforts to combating human trafficking or assists victims of human trafficking.

Housing

Notable Legislation & Leadership Priorities

SB 15 (Bettencourt/Gates) – *Relating to size and density requirements for residential lots in certain municipalities; authorizing a fee.*

- SB 15 removes restrictive lot size regulations in municipalities with populations over 150,000 located in counties with populations over 300,000. The bill prohibits municipalities from requiring residential lots to be larger than 3,000 square feet. Regarding small lots, the bill prohibits municipalities from enforcing

building regulations like setbacks over 15 feet, covered parking requirements or more than one parking space per unit.

- Senator Alvarado is a proud coauthor of SB 15.

SB 17 (Kolkhorst/Hefner) – *Relating to the purchase or acquisition of an interest in real property by certain aliens or foreign entities; creating a criminal offense; providing a civil penalty.*

- SB 17 restricts the purchase or acquisition of real estate property in Texas by foreign individuals, organizations and governments from certain "designated countries" identified as national security risks. The bill applies to agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and mining properties. The bill also applies to groundwater ownership and water rights.
- The Texas Attorney General is empowered to investigate violations and enforce the law through civil actions and courts may appoint a receiver to manage and sell property acquired in violation of this law.
- SB 17 includes exemptions exist for U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents and certain leaseholds under 100 years.

HB 21 (Gates/Bettencourt) – *Relating to housing finance corporations; authorizing a fee.*

- HB 21 revises the governance, transparency, and geographical limitations of housing finance corporations to ensure that tax exemptions for multifamily residential developments benefit low- to moderate-income residents.

SB 243 (Flores/Bernal) - *Relating to the regulation of migrant labor housing facilities; changing the amount of a civil penalty.*

- The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) oversees migrant labor housing facilities but lacks adequate accountability and enforcement mechanisms to address noncompliance with facility standards. Despite reports of noncompliance, TDHCA has not penalized a facility operator since 2005.
- SB 243 strengthens the TDHCA penalty structure from \$200 per violation per day to \$50 per person per day. Further, the bill requires TDHCA to establish a process for parties to submit complaints. TDHCA must notify a facility if they are the subject of a complaint within five days of receiving the complaint and must

detail the timeline for remedying a complaint. The bill ensures that the names of any migrant workers registering complaints are not required to be disclosed.

- SB 243 requires TDHCA to establish a procedure for the operator of a facility to submit proof that problems have been addressed and requires imminent hazards or threats to the health and safety of the occupants to be remedied within at least 30 days of notice.
- This bill also sets forth additional requirements for TDHCA outreach and education for migrant workers and operators about these processes and requirements, prohibits retaliation against employees and workers who file complaints and creates requirements for operators who must relocate migrant workers while remedies are implemented.

SB 617 (Schwertner/Harris Davila) - *Relating to hearing and public notice requirements regarding the conversion by a municipality of certain properties to house homeless individuals.*

- SB 617 prohibits a city from turning a property it owns into housing for homeless individuals without a public meeting. The meeting must take place at least 90 days before the conversion begins and be held within one mile of the property in question. The city must also provide notice of the hearing by mail to each residence and business located within a one-mile radius of the property at least 36 hours before the public hearing. If the city fails to notify the public about converting a property into housing for homeless individuals.

SB 1968 (Schwertner/Harless) - *Relating to the licensing and regulation of certain real estate professionals by the Texas Real Estate Commission.*

- SB 1968 sets forth wide-ranging updates to Texas's real estate licensing laws, administered by the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC). The bill simplifies the educational requirements for brokers and sales agents, allows the commission to modernize how it communicates investigation notices, clarifies when written agreements are required between license holders and buyers and expands TREC's authority to discipline license holders for misconduct. It also formally permits real estate brokers to show property without forming an agency relationship, so long as certain disclosures are made.

Elections

Notable Legislation & Leadership Priorities

SB 16 (Hughes/Isaac)– *Relating to requiring a person to submit proof of citizenship to register to vote, including the eligibility of certain voters to vote a limited federal ballot if the voter cannot supply the required proof and the procedures for the counting of those ballots; creating criminal offenses.*

- SB 16 require individuals registering to vote in Texas to provide documented proof of U.S. citizenship, such as a passport, birth certificate, or other official documentation, in addition to the current application requirements. If citizenship cannot be verified through submitted documents or external databases, the applicant will only be eligible to vote in federal elections. The Attorney General is given authority to enforce and prosecute offenses related to the provisions of this bill.

HB 1661 (Vasut/Bettencourt) - *Relating to election supplies and the conduct of elections; creating criminal offenses; increasing criminal penalties.*

- HB 1661 requires election officials to supply each precinct with ballots equal to prior turnout plus 25 percent and promptly resupply if needed. It increases penalties for ballot-related failures and other election violations, with some offenses upgraded to Class A misdemeanors or state jail felonies. A Class A misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of \$4,000 and/or jail time of up to one year. A state jail felony is punishable by up to two years in a state jail facility and a fine of up to \$10,000.

HB 2253 (Bhojani/Paxton) - *Relating to the authority to cancel certain elections on a measure to authorize the issuance of bonds.*

- HB 2253 addresses limited options for cancelling elections due to emergencies such as natural disasters, including situations when the governor issues a disaster declaration, that can affect a jurisdiction's ability to conduct an election.

HB 5115 (Shaheen/Hughes) - *Relating to the penalty for the crime of election fraud; increasing a criminal penalty.*

- HB 5115 makes it a second-degree felony if a person knowingly or intentionally attempts to count votes the person knows are invalid, alter a report to include votes the person knows are invalid, refuse to count votes the person knows are valid or change a report to exclude votes the person knows are valid. A second degree felony punishable by imprisonment for up to 20 years.
- If the crime was committed while acting as an elected official, it is a first-degree felony, punishable by five to 99 years in prison.
- For an attempt to commit an election fraud offense while the person was acting in the person's capacity as an elected official, the bill would increase the penalty from a class B misdemeanor to a third-degree felony, punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

HB 677 (DeAyala/Bettencourt) - *Relating to the restrictions on political activities of a county elections administrator.*

- HB 677 amends the Election Code to prohibit a county elections administrator from holding another office or position appointed by an elected official.

HB 640 (Bumgarner/Parker) - *Relating to the office hours of an election authority during an election period.*

- HB 640 standardizes the definition of "regular business day" for election authorities by specifying that it refers to any day when the main office of a county, city, or political subdivision is open for business. This clarification applies broadly, not just to school districts, and ensures consistency in office hour requirements during election periods.

Electrical Grid Reform

Notable Legislation & Leadership Priorities

SB 6 – *relating to the planning for, interconnection and operation of, and costs related to providing service for certain electrical loads and to the generation of electric power by a water supply or sewer service corporation.*

- SB 6 requires the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to establish procedures for connecting large electricity users to the electrical grid, speed up their approval processes and review how transmission costs are shared among consumers. The legislation also directs Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) to create a system for approving net metering and managing large power demands.
- SB 6 requires the PUC to implement minimum rates ensuring that all retail customers within ERCOT contribute to retail transmission charges. The PUC must begin planning to implement this act by December 2025 and must make changes to wholesale transmission charges before 2027.
- Entities with on site backup generating facilities are required to disclose information about these resources under this bill. Additionally, ERCOT may, after reasonable notice, deploy the customer's on site backup generating facility to support grid reliability.

SB 2148 (Hall/Slawson) – *Relating to the reliability of the electricity supply chain.*

- SB 2148 requires the PUC and ERCOT to run security exercises with electric companies every two years to prepare for any possible physical attacks on key parts of the power grid.

SB 231 (King/Guillen) – *Relating to temporary emergency electric energy facilities.*

- Currently a transmission and distribution utility TDU may lease and operate facilities that provide temporary emergency electricity to aid in restoring power to its customers during certain significant power outages. SB 231 establishes that the type of facilities that are able to be leased must be mobile, can be transported within 12 hours and also capable of generating electricity within three hours after being connected.

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SB 1252 (Schwertner/King) – *Relating to the authority of a municipality to regulate the installation or inspection of a residential energy backup system.*

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- SB 1252 prohibits a municipality from adopting or enforcing an amendment or other measure to the National Electrical Code that would regulate the installation or inspection of a residential energy backup system. However, this would not limit a municipally owned utility's authority to regulate the installation or inspection of a residential energy backup system.

SB 1789 (Schwertner/McQueeney) – *Relating to electric service quality and reliability; providing an administrative penalty.*

- SB 1789 allows the Public Utility Commission to penalize electric utilities if their systems are damaged during a weather event and they failed to meet safety and maintenance standards. It also lowers the requirements for poor performance enforcement and requires all electric providers to inspect and keep their infrastructure on a set timeline.

SB 2321 (King/Bell, Keith) – *Relating to the regulation of emissions by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality during an event affecting electric demand or grid reliability.*

- SB 2321 authorizes the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to waive enforcement for emissions from electric generation and on-site backup generation facilities during a period requested by ERCOT if notified by ERCOT that additional electric generation was necessary during an emergency condition or a significant risk of an emergency condition.
- During the period that more electrical power is provided, the owner or operator of the facility would be required to take commercially reasonable steps to operate environmental controls and minimize excess emissions, maintain operational records, and submit proper documentation of those records to TCEQ.
- TCEQ will have the discretion to consider whether an exceedance of an emissions limit or standard during the period was appropriate based on available information.

LGBTQ+ Issues

Notable Legislation & Leadership Priorities

SB 18 – *Relating to prohibiting municipal libraries that host certain events from receiving state or other public funding.*

- SB 18 denies state or other public funding to municipal libraries that host drag story hours or host any other event where a person presents themselves as the opposite sex and reads books to children.

HB 229 (Troxclair/Middleton) – *Relating to general definitions for and collection of governmental information regarding biological sex.*

- HB 229 requires a governmental entity that collects information involving the sex of an individual for the purposes of complying with antidiscrimination laws or gathering other data to identify each individual as either male or female. Under this bill “boy” would mean a child of the male sex; “father” would mean a parent of the male sex; and “female” and “woman” would mean an individual whose biological reproductive system was developed to produce ova.

SB 965 (Parker/Leach) – *Relating to the right of a public school employee to engage in religious speech or prayer while on duty.*

- SB 965 protects the right of an employee of a school district or charter school to engage in religious speech or prayer while on duty.

SB 1257 (Hughes/Leach) – *Relating to required health benefit plan coverage for gender transition adverse effects and reversals.*

- SB 1257 establishes that if a health insurance plan provides coverage for an individual’s gender-affirming care, the insurance plan must also provide coverage for a person who later wants to undo or treat any problems from the original care or procedure provided.

SB 1188 (Kolkhorst/Bonnen) – *Relating to the definitions of child abuse and neglect.*

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- SB 1188 requires electronic health records (EHR) to be stored in the US, in a manner that is not accessible to other countries. This legislation also requires EHRs to be "automatically" accessible by a minor's guardian. EHRs must also have a space for medical providers to document an individual's biological sex and any sexual developmental disorders. Biological sex may only be changed in an EHR due to clerical errors or the diagnosis of a sexual development disorder. The Health and Human Services Commission may not provide Medicaid reimbursement to a provider or entity which violates these provisions.

Constitutional Amendments

There will be a total of 17 Constitutional Amendments in the November ballot.

1. HJR 1 is a constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation a portion of the market value of tangible personal property a person owns that is held or used for the production of income. Senator Alvarado voted yes on HJR 1.
 - a. A "yes" vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to raise the business personal property tax exemption from \$2,500 to \$125,000 and dedicate \$700 million in state funds to offset local revenue losses.
 - b. A "no" vote would keep the property tax exemption at \$2,500 and prevent the state from providing the offset funding.
2. HJR 2 is a constitutional amendment to prohibit the legislature from imposing death taxes applicable to a decedent's property or the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift. Senator Alvarado voted yes on HJR 2.
 - a. A "yes" vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to ban the Legislature from ever creating or expanding state estate or inheritance taxes, often called "death taxes".
 - b. A "no" vote would allow the Legislature to impose or modify such taxes in the future, although none currently exist.

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3. SJR 2 is a constitutional amendment to increase the amount of the exemption of residence homesteads from ad valorem taxation by a school district from \$100,000 to \$140,000. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 2.
 - a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to increase the homestead exemption for school district property taxes from \$100,000 to \$140,000. This would lower the taxable value of your primary residence, reducing your school district property taxes
 - b. A “no” vote would not support changing the current homestead exemption. The exemption would remain at \$100,000 and there would be no additional property tax reduction under this proposal.
 4. SJR 3 is a constitutional amendment providing for the establishment of the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, establishing the Dementia Prevention and Research Fund to provide money for research on and prevention and treatment of dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, and related disorders in this state, and transferring to that fund \$3 billion from state general revenue. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 3.
 - a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to create the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (DPRIT) and a dedicated \$3 billion state fund to support research, treatment and prevention of dementia, Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and related disorders. It would establish a new state agency to award grants and coordinate efforts in this area.
 - b. A “no” vote would not support creating DPRIT or the \$3 billion fund for research and prevention of dementia-related disorders. The state would not set up a new institute or dedicate these funds for this specific purpose.
 5. HJR 4 is a constitutional amendment prohibiting the legislature from enacting a law imposing an occupation tax on certain entities that enter into transactions conveying securities or imposing a tax on certain securities transactions. Senator Alvarado voted yes on HJR 4.
 - a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to ban the Legislature from imposing an occupation tax on registered securities market operators or taxing securities transactions they conduct. This would protect

certain financial firms and exchanges from being subject to future state-level transaction or occupation taxes.

- b. A “no” vote would not support adding this tax prohibition to the Constitution, leaving the door open for the Legislature to impose occupation or transaction taxes on securities market operators in the future.
6. SJR 5 is a constitutional amendment requiring the denial of bail under certain circumstances to persons accused of certain offenses punishable as a felony. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 5.
- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to allow judges to deny bail before trial to people accused of certain serious felony offenses such as murder, aggravated assault, trafficking or sexual offenses if the state proves either by a preponderance of the evidence that the person is likely to intentionally skip court or by clear and convincing evidence that releasing the person would not reasonably ensure public safety.
 - b. A “no” vote would not support this constitutional change and current rules would remain in place. This means judges would still generally be required to set bail for these offenses, though they could impose conditions to manage risk.
7. HJR 7 is a constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the revenue derived from state sales and use taxes to the Texas water fund and to provide for the allocation and use of that revenue. Senator Alvarado voted yes on HJR 7.
- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to dedicate part of state sales and use tax revenue specifically, the amount above \$46.5 billion per fiscal year, up to \$1 billion to the Texas Water Fund. This fund would support water infrastructure projects statewide.
 - b. A “no” vote not support this constitutional dedication of sales tax revenue to the Texas Water Fund. The state could still fund water projects, but it would not be required to set aside these specific tax revenues.
8. SJR 18 is a constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of a tax on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or

trust. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 18. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 18.

- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to prohibit the state from imposing a tax on the realized or unrealized capital gains of individuals, families, estates or trusts including taxes on the sale or transfer of capital assets.
- b. A “no” vote would not support adding this prohibition, leaving the door open for the Legislature to impose a state capital gains tax in the future if it chooses to do so.

9. SJR 27 is a constitutional amendment regarding the membership of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, the membership of the tribunal to review the commission’s recommendations, and the authority of the commission, the tribunal, and the Texas Supreme Court to more effectively sanction judges and justices for judicial misconduct. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 27.

- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to restructure the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, expand its disciplinary powers, revise how review tribunals handle judicial misconduct and replace current commission members starting in 2026.
- b. A “no” vote would not support these changes. The current structure, authority of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct and review tribunals would remain in place.

10. HJR 34 is a constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the market value of real property located in a county that borders the United Mexican States that arises from the installation or construction on the property of border security infrastructure and related improvements. Senator Alvarado voted no on HJR 34.

- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to allow the Legislature to exempt from property taxes any increase in market value of real property in counties along the Texas-Mexico border that results from the installation or construction of border security infrastructure and related improvements.

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- b. A “no” vote would not support adding this exemption, and any property value increases due to border security improvements would continue to be subject to local property taxes.
11. SJR 34 is a constitutional amendment affirming that parents are the primary decision makers for their children. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 34.
- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to affirm that parents have a fundamental right and responsibility to direct the care, custody, control and upbringing of their children, including making decisions about their lives.
 - b. A “no” vote would not support adding this language to the Texas Constitution and existing legal protections for parental rights would remain governed by current laws and court interpretations without this explicit constitutional language.
12. SJR 37 is a constitutional amendment clarifying that a voter must be a United States citizen. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 37.
- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to explicitly state that only U.S. citizens can vote in Texas elections. Current law already restricts voting to citizens. This amendment would add citizenship language to the state constitution.
 - b. A “no” vote would not support adding this citizenship requirement to the Constitution, though existing laws that limit voting to U.S. citizens would remain in place and there would be no change.
13. SJR 59 is a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the permanent technical institution infrastructure fund and the available workforce education fund to support the capital needs of educational programs offered by the Texas State Technical College System. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 59.
- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to create two new funds: the Permanent Technical Institution Infrastructure Fund and the Available Workforce Education Fund to provide stable, long-term funding for capital needs at the Texas State Technical College System. It also sets an

annual funding cap beginning at \$52 million adjusted for inflation and removes the existing 2.2 percent cap on the system's share of constitutionally dedicated funds.

- b. A "no" vote would not support creating these dedicated funds or removing the current funding cap, and the Texas State Technical College System would continue to receive capital funding under current law with no guaranteed permanent fund support.

14. SJR 84 is a constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 84.

- a. A "yes" vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to allow the Legislature to create a temporary property tax exemption for the value of a home improvement that is completely destroyed by a fire. The Legislature would decide how long the exemption lasts and who qualifies.
- b. A "no" vote would not support creating this temporary tax exemption and homeowners whose homestead improvements are destroyed by fire would continue to be taxed under current law without this specific exemption.

15. SJR 85 is a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district of the market value of the residence homestead of a person who is elderly or disabled. Senator Alvarado voted yes on SJR 85.

- a. A "yes" vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to increase the school district property tax exemption for people who are 65 or older or disabled from \$10,000 to \$60,000 of their residence homestead's market value starting with the 2025 tax year
- b. A "no" vote would not support increasing the exemption and the current \$10,000 school district tax break for elderly and disabled homeowners would remain unchanged.

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16. HJR 99 is a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation tangible personal property consisting of animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail. Senator Alvarado voted yes on HJR 99.
- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to allow the Legislature to exempt animal feed held for retail sale from property (ad valorem) taxes. This would reduce or eliminate property taxes on such inventory and lawmakers could set additional eligibility rules.
 - b. A “no” vote would not support creating this exemption and animal feed held for retail sale would continue to be subject to property taxes under current law.
17. HJR 133 is a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a veteran who died as a result of a condition or disease that is presumed under federal law to have been service-connected. Senator Alvarado voted yes on HJR 133.
- a. A “yes” vote would support amending the Texas Constitution to allow the Legislature to give property tax exemptions to the surviving spouses of U.S. military veterans who died from service-connected conditions or diseases as defined by federal law. It would also allow surviving spouses to transfer the exemption to a new homestead, in the same dollar amount, as long as they have not remarried.
 - b. A “no” vote would not support creating this new property tax exemption and surviving spouses in these situations would not be entitled to this specific exemption under the Constitution.