



**State Senator  
Kirk Watson  
District 14**

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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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## **Watson files ethics bills to improve transparency**

Senator Kirk Watson on Wednesday filed four ethics bills aimed at fostering greater trust in state government by ensuring more transparency around lobbying activity.

"It's not enough to say that ethics are important," Sen. Watson said. "Our laws have to ensure a transparent government that's accountable to the people. This should be the session that both parties and both chambers come together to pass these bills and deliver on the promise of meaningful ethics reform."

SB 366 improves transparency by requiring more detailed reporting when lobbyists spend money to influence the legislative or executive branch. For example, SB 366 closes a loophole that currently allows lobbyists to split a check to avoid detailed reporting.

SB 367 prohibits lobbyists from simultaneously holding most elected office positions, which can create at least the appearance of a conflict of interest.

SB 368 requires former legislators to wait one legislative cycle after leaving office before they may profit by lobbying their former colleagues — closing the "revolving door."

SB 369 requires the Texas Ethics Commission to continue to maintain lobby registrations and reports online so that the public can access them without driving to Austin.

As filed, SB 366, SB 367, and SB 368 are mirror three of the ethics bills that Sen. Van Taylor filed in the last regular session, all of which passed the Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support. SB 369 is a refile of a bill Sen. Watson previously filed.

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