

# The Austin Report

May 7, 2025

E-Newsletter

## Last Week in Austin: A Mixed Bag

*By Senator Royce West*

The topic of abortion has been a top issue at the Texas Capitol for many years and sessions. This session is no exception.

In 2022, Texas's ban on abortion was reinstated. There have been life-threatening circumstances as a consequence of the previous bills. Just last week, Senate Bill (SB) 31 passed that would clarify that pregnancies that threatened the life of the mother would not be covered by the state's abortion ban. Another anti-abortion measure, SB 2880, passed the Senate that allows any person who manufactures, mails, or delivers abortion pills to someone in Texas can be sued for \$10,000.

Also passing the Senate last week, was SB 33 which clamps down on organizations that provide transportation to women to receive abortion procedures out of state.

### **My Bills MOVING Down the Track:**

Last week was a busy week for me in your Texas capitol. Continuing on work I began in 2019 with Senate Bill (SB) 25, I passed Senate Bill 3039 out of the Education K-16

committee which addresses community college to four-year college transfers. Also in the education committee, my SB 2995 was heard relating to financial aid displacement. SB 2995 will require notices about financial aid displacement to be placed on the applications that students use when applying to Texas universities.

In the Local Government Committee, my bill to exempt rehab and remodel projects from the Two-Mile Rule, SB 2549, was heard. The two-mile rule is something I put in statute many years ago to prevent the overconcentration of tax credit affordable housing within the same geographic area.

On the Senate Floor, I passed Senate Bill 646 over to the House.





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This bill makes changes to the Mental Health Professional Loan Program. It is already set for a house hearing. Just more of my work to improve the number of mental health professionals in this state.

On May 7, 2025, all Texas driver licenses, and state-issued identification cards are required to be REAL ID compliant. This means that all applicants for a new driver license and those whose licenses will renew, must submit certain documents as proof of U.S. Citizenship or of lawful presence in this country. As a result, many Texans, despite having held a valid driver's license for decades, are now unable to renew their licenses due to their inability to provide a birth certificate.

SB 227 passed 31-0 from the Senate floor last week. The bill, renamed the Charles Edward Barton Act, provide greater guidance to DSHS and the state registrar in their review of delayed birth registration applications to assist our seniors who have been disenfranchised by changes in federal and state law.

## Other Issues MOVING this past week:

S.B. 1924 returns to the pre-2013 status quo when students could receive Class C misdemeanors for school offenses.

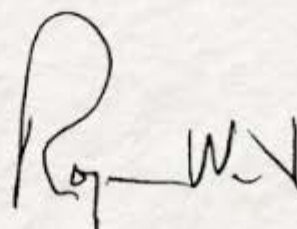
It requires criminal referral for harm or imminent harm to a teacher. I added an amendment ensuring that disciplinary actions are fair and respects due process. My thoughts, we've got to make certain that we've got zero tolerance for that kind of behavior, but we've got to us common sense."

A bill regarding road rage incidents passed last week. SB 3031 would enhance the penalties associated with assaults committed with firearms if assailant is moving away from or to, or inside a vehicle to a first-degree felony to a second-degree felony.

With the passage of SB 324, all public and private employers would be mandated to participate in E-Verify.

S.B. 324 would ensure all employees in Texas are legally authorized to work in the state by requiring all employers, public and private, to use the federal E-Verify system.

See you next week with more updates.



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