STATEWIDE:

There are two weeks left in the legislative session, which ends on June 1, 2015. Here are the major issues and their status:

2015 Major Issues:

Budget – HB 1, the general appropriations bill, is in conference committee; HB 2, the supplemental appropriations bill, has passed the House and been referred to the Senate Finance Committee; HB 8/HJR 8 directing budget surplus to retiring state debt, have passed the House and been referred to the Senate Finance Committee; and HB 5 requiring strategic fiscal reviews of state agencies has passed the House, been reported favorably from the Senate Finance Committee and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar.

Border Security – HB 11 has passed the House and is scheduled for a public hearing in the Senate Subcommittee on Border Security on May 18, 2015; SB 3 has passed the Senate and been referred to the House Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee.

Economic Development – HB 26, the House’s omnibus economic development incentive reform bill, has passed the House and been referred to the Senate Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee where it is scheduled for a public hearing this week.

Energy – SB 931, terminating the state’s goals for renewable energy, has passed the Senate and been referred to the House State Affairs Committee; HB 40, state preemption on regulation of oil and gas operations, has passed the House and Senate and been sent to the governor.

Environment – Texas Emissions Reduction Plan – SB 603 has passed the Senate and been referred to the House Environmental Regulation Committee, and HB 14 has passed the House and is set for a hearing in the Senate Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee on May 19, 2015; HB 1865, contested case hearing reform, has passed the House and Senate and been sent to the governor; and sunset review of river authorities – SB 523 has passed the Senate and been voted favorably from the House Natural Resources Committee and HB 1290 has passed the House but has not been referred to committee in the Senate.

Handguns – Open carry - SB 17 has passed the Senate and been referred to the House Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee and HB 910 has passed the House and is set for a hearing in the Senate State Affairs Committee for May 18, 2015; Campus carry - SB 11 has passed the Senate and been reported favorably from the
House Homeland Security and Public Safety and **HB 937** was reported from the House Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee but not set on the House calendar and is therefore DEAD.

**Health** – **HB 2813**, requiring insurance coverage for ovarian cancer screening, has passed the House and Senate; “Right to Try” drugs in clinical trials for terminally ill patients - **HB 21** has passed the House and is set for a hearing in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee on May 18, 2015 and **SB 694** has passed the Senate and been voted favorably from the House Public Health Committee; **SB 97** regulating the sale, use and advertising of vapor products, has passed the Senate and House.

**Higher Education** – **HB 100**, tuition revenue bonds, has passed the House, been reported out of the Senate Higher Education Committee, and is on the Senate Intent calendar for May 18, 2015; **SB 1191**, the Constitutional appropriation for non-PUF universities, has passed the Senate and House.

**Public Education** – **SB 14**, “parent trigger” authorizing parents of students at a campus with an unacceptable performance rating to request repurposing or closure, has passed the Senate and is set for a hearing in the House Public Education Committee on May 19, 2015; **SB 149**, requiring individual graduation committees for students that fail end-of-course assessments, has passed the Senate and House and been signed by the governor; **SB 6**, A-F campus performance ratings, has passed the Senate, been heard in the House Public Education Committee and left pending; **HB 2804**, would redesign the accountability system for evaluating school districts and campuses and includes an A-F campus rating provision, has passed the House; and **HB 1759**, public school finance reform, was on the House calendar on May 14, 2015, but was withdrawn by the author and is DEAD. **Governor’s Early Childhood Education Package**: **HB 4**, high quality Pre-Kindergarten, has passed the House and Senate; **SB 925**, literacy achievement academies, has passed the Senate and House and been sent to the governor; **SB 934**, math achievement academies, has passed the Senate, passed the House on Second Reading and will be on the House calendar for final passage on May 18, 2015; **SB 935**, reading excellence teams, has passed the Senate and been reported favorably from the Senate Public Education Committee; and **SB 972**, Reading-to-Learn academies, has passed the Senate and been reported favorably from the House Public Education Committee.

**Tax Relief** – The Senate-passed tax reform package includes: **SB 1/SJR 1**, increasing the homestead exemption; **SB 7**, decreasing the franchise tax rate by 15 percent; and **SB 8**, increasing the small business franchise tax deduction from $1 million to $4 million. **SB 1, SJR 1, and SB 7** were heard in the House Ways and Means Committee on May 12, 2015 and left pending. **SB 8** has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee but has not had a hearing. The House-passed tax reform package includes: **HB 31**, decreasing the state sales tax rate from 6.25 percent to 5.95 percent;
and HB 32, decreasing the franchise tax rate by 25 percent. Both bills have been referred to the Senate Finance Committee but have not been scheduled for a hearing.

Telecommunications – HB 80, prohibiting texting while driving, has passed the House, been reported out of the Senate State Affairs Committee, and is on the Senate Intent calendar for May 18, 2015.

Transportation – SJR 5, dedicating a portion of sales tax revenue to the State Highway Fund, has passed the Senate and House and is in a conference committee.

Sunset Bills:

State Office of Administrative Hearings – HB 2154 has passed the House and Senate and is on the House Items Eligible list to concur in Senate amendments or request a conference committee.

Department of Aging and Disability Services – SB 204 has passed the Senate and been voted favorably from the House Human Services Committee.

Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services – HB 2463 has passed the House and been voted favorably from the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities – HB 1679 has passed the House and Senate and been sent to the governor.

Texas Education Agency – SB 214 has been referred to the Senate Education Committee; and HB 1763 has been referred to the House Public Education Committee. No action has been taken on either bill. HB 3123 sets the sunset review date for Texas Education Agency for 2025.

Department of Family and Protective Services – SB 206 has passed the Senate, passed to Third Reading in the House and is on the House calendar for May 18, 2015 for final passage.

Health and Human Services Commission – SB 200 has passed the Senate and been voted favorably from the House Human Services Committee.

Texas Health Services Authority – SB 203 has passed the Senate and House and been sent to the governor.

Texas Department of State Health Services – SB 202 has passed the Senate and been voted favorably from the House Human Services Committee.
Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities – HB 1678 has passed the House and Senate and been sent to the governor.

Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities – SB 212 has passed the Senate and is on the House calendar for May 19, 2015.

Self-Directed Semi-Independent Status of State Agencies – SB 217 has passed the Senate and been referred to the House State Affairs Committee.

University Interscholastic League – SB 213 has passed the Senate and is set for a hearing in the House Public Education Committee on May 19, 2015.

Texas Workforce Commission – SB 208 has passed the Senate and been referred to the House Economic and Small Business Development Committee.

Texas Workforce Investment Council – HB1606 has passed the House and Senate and been sent to the governor.

Sunset Schedule (Safety Net) – HB 3123 has passed the House and Senate. There was a Senate committee substitute so it will have to go back to the House to concur in Senate amendments or request a conference committee. It sets the sunset date for Texas Education Agency at 2025.

GOVERNOR:

Disaster Declaration – On Monday, as severe weather including tornadoes, heavy rainfall, thunderstorms and flooding continued across areas of Texas, Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of disaster in Bosque, Clay, Denton, Eastland, Gaines, Montague and Van Zandt counties, authorizing further mobilization of state resources to assist impacted communities. Governor Abbott said, “Severe storms continue to impact areas across the State of Texas and I strongly urge everyone to take all possible precautions to ensure their safety. Declaring a state of disaster in these counties will enable Texas to activate state resources to help affected communities as efficiently and effectively as possible. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have lost their lives, their families and all of our affected communities. I want to thank the first responders who are working tirelessly to provide shelter, care and resources to affected areas.”

Governor Signs SB 149 - On Monday, Governor Greg Abbott signed into law SB 149 by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) and Dan Huberty (R-Humble), which requires individual graduation committees for students that fail more than one end-of-course exam. Governor Abbott said, “The goal of the Texas public education system should be to ensure all students who graduate from high school are college or career-ready.
Ensuring that Texas students are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for future success is what students, parents and taxpayers deserve. That is exactly why I have pledged to elevate Texas’ public education system to be number one in the nation. The Class of 2015 is the first graduating class required to pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) end-of-course exams in order to graduate. While it is critical that the state appropriately holds public schools and districts accountable for delivering the best possible education, we must protect Texas students from being penalized as a result of evolving testing standards. SB 149 protects students from undue penalization, and guarantees that students who meet specified requirements are able to graduate. I will continue to work with the Legislature to create and maintain standards of excellence for our schools so that our shared goals for public education can be accomplished."

Governor Signs SB 835 – On Tuesday, Governor Greg Abbott today signed SB 835 by Van Taylor (R-Plano) and Kenneth Sheets (R-Dallas), which increases the penalty for the offense of presenting a fraudulent or fictitious military record. Governor Abbott said, “The United States Military is one of the most revered institutions in the history of the world. Anyone who would fraudulently claim to have served our nation honorably for their own personal gain should be held fully accountable for their actions, and increasing the penalty for this illegal act is the right thing to do. Too many brave American men and women have put their lives on the line for our country to have their records tarnished by someone making a false claim. I am proud to sign this bill into law and I look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to protect all of our soldiers and veterans.”

Texas Enterprise Fund – On Thursday, Governor Greg Abbott announced that Kubota Tractor and Credit Corporations will relocate their corporate headquarters from Torrance, California to Grapevine, Texas. Kubota’s headquarters relocation is projected to create at least 344 new jobs and $51 million in capital investment in the State of Texas. A Texas Enterprise Fund (TEF) grant offer of $3.8 million has been extended to Kubota Tractor Corporation. Governor Abbott said, “I’m proud to extend a warm Texas welcome to Kubota and I know their investment in Texas will allow their company to grow, prosper and create even more jobs in the coming years. Thanks to our low-tax, low-regulation environment that allows all businesses to thrive, we are able to bring job creators like Kubota to Texas. As the top state in the nation for agriculture, Kubota is sure to find fertile ground for its products and distribution network.”

Governor Signs SB 788 – On Friday, Governor Greg Abbott signed SB 788 by Kevin Eltife (R-Tyler) and Chris Paddie (R-Marshall), also known as "Kari's Law" to require direct dialing of 9-1-1 from multi-line telephone systems across the state. Governor Abbott, who was joined by members of Kari’s family at the signing ceremony, said, "There’s a lesson virtually every parent teaches their child - if you face an emergency, call 9-1-1. I am signing Kari’s Law to ensure that whenever there is an emergency, any
child and any adult who dials 9-1-1 is going to be able to connect with emergency personnel to ensure they come to the rescue of those who need help the most. Today cements in history the important role Kari Hunt has played and I'm thankful for her and her family in changing the course of the future of the State of Texas."

SENNATE:

The Senate was in session Monday through Friday this week, but on Friday, they met only for a Local and Uncontested calendar.

On Monday, the Senate passed 26 bills:

SB 161 by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) would increase the **bilingual education weight**. Senator Rodriguez said, "It is more important than ever that our education system be able to teach all students effectively. This is a clear opportunity for Texas to take a step in the right direction to meet its constitutional obligation to provide a quality education for all students and set itself apart as a state that is prepared to meet the global economy. School districts across the state are increasingly diverse and struggling to meet the needs of English Language Learners without adequate funding. In total, more than 120 languages are spoken in Texas public schools. SB 161 directs TEA to study the appropriate add-on, or weight, for ELL education in order to provide objective funding weight data." The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 26-5.

SB 208 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) is the sunset bill for the **Texas Workforce Commission**. The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 25-6.

SB 1178 by Don Huffines (R-Dallas) would establish the **Education Savings Account Program** to provide funding to pay approved education-related expenses of children attending a private school. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 21-10.

SB 1897 by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) would authorize the Commissioner of Education to grant more than one charter for an **open-enrollment charter school** to a charter. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 22-9.

SB 2046 by Van Taylor (R-Plano) would allow **home-schooled students** to participate in University Interscholastic League activities. It passed by a vote of 26-5. There were no amendments.
HB 1051 by John Wray (R-Waxahachie) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would establish a campus of the Texas State Technical College System in the City of Red Oak in Ellis County. It passed by a vote of 30-1. There were no amendments.

They also gave preliminary approval to:

SB 2065 by Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) would provide that clergy or ministers may not be required to participate in any part of a marriage ceremony or celebration if it would violate a sincerely held religious belief. Senator Estes said, "I appreciate Lt. Governor Patrick for making this issue a priority. It is my firm belief that this legislation is needed to protect religious freedom in this matter. I look forward to working throughout the remaining weeks of session to ensure that it is signed into law by Governor Abbott." The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 21-10.

Lt. Governor Dan Patrick said, "I am very proud that Senator Craig Estes and Senate members passed SB 2065. SB 2065 protects our churches and pastors from participating in any part of a marriage that is against their beliefs. Religious leaders should never be compelled to provide any kind of service that separates them from the fundamental principles of their faith. This bill is about protecting religious freedom across the state."

Senator Rodney Ellis (D-Houston), who voted against SB 2065 said, "This bill is a solution in search of a problem. In the more than 30 states where same-sex couples can legally marry, no clergy or house of worship has ever been compelled to perform a same-sex wedding. The fact is that there are many faith traditions that embrace gay and lesbian couples and joyfully celebrate these marriages. Nobody is reliant on forcing a reluctant pastor in order to get married."

On Tuesday, the Senate gave final approval to SB 2065 and passed 30 bills including SB 1058 by Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen), which would require schools to report alleged sexual misconduct of a teacher if the administrators have evidence of misconduct, even if no charge is filed. Senator Hinojosa said, "This would allow Texas Education Agency to take enforcement action against the teacher and provide safety and protection to our students in our public school system." One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 27-3. And they passed SB 1169 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels), which would require new teachers to receive training in suicide awareness and prevention. Senator Campbell said, "One in ten Texans under the age of 18 attempt suicide and one in six have considered it at some point. Educators are often in a position to notice warning signs in students before others." The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 29-1.

The Senate also passed:
SJR 8 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would propose a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to require a court to provide notice to the attorney general of a **challenge to the constitutionality of a state statute** and authorize the legislature to prescribe a waiting period before the court can enter a judgment holding the statute unconstitutional. *There were no amendments.*

HB 658 by John Zerwas (R-Fulshear) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would establish a campus of the Texas State Technical College System in the City of Richmond in Fort Bend County. *There were no amendments.*

HB 1606 by Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale) and Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) is the sunset bill for the Texas Workforce Investment Council and the Skill Standards Board. *There were no amendments.*

HB 1678 by Richard Raymond (D-Laredo) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) is the sunset bill for the Governor’s Committee on People With Disabilities. *It passed by a vote of 29-1. There were no amendments.*

HB 1679 by Richard Raymond (D-Laredo) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) is the sunset bill for the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities. *There were no amendments.*

And, they gave preliminary approval to:

SB 1624 by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) would add information on **mental health and suicide prevention services** to the required orientation for undergraduate students. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 21-10.*

On Wednesday, the Senate passed 20 bills including:

SB 674 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would require **teacher certification** programs to require instruction regarding **mental health**, substance abuse, and youth suicide. *The committee substitute was adopted.*

HB 440 by Larry Gonzalez (R-Round Rock) and Kirk Watson (D-Austin) would add **students with a mental disability** to the type of students for whom the physical education curriculum must be developmentally appropriate. *It passed by a vote of 30-1. There were no amendments.*

HB 2154 by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) is the sunset bill for the State Office of Administrative Hearings. It continues the office until 2027. *The committee substitute was adopted.*
HB 2813 by Ken King (R-Canadian) and Kevin Eltife (R-Tyler) would require health benefit plans that provide coverage for diagnostic medical procedures to provide to each woman 18 years of age or older coverage for expenses for an annual medically recognized diagnostic examination for the early detection of ovarian cancer including at a minimum a CA 125 blood test. One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 22-9.

On Thursday, the Senate passed 12 bills including:

SB 202 by Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) is the sunset bill for Texas Department of State Health Services. The committee substitute was adopted.

SB 1041 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would require a ballot proposition for the issuance of bonds or the imposition, increase, or reduction of a tax by political subdivisions to disclose the total amount of the political subdivision’s current outstanding debt and current debt payments, the amount of taxes required to be imposed on a homestead with a medial homestead value and the estimated tax burden that would be imposed on a homestead with a value equal to the median homestead value. Senator Bettencourt said, "For the first time, taxpayers will get to directly see how much they should expect to pay when they vote for bonds- right on the ballot itself. Local governments must explain why they want property tax supported bonds, and taxpayers will finally see how much it really costs. The bill will require government entities to show how much debt they have secured by property taxes, what the current payments are on that debt, and how much the median home has to pay in taxes to repay the current debt obligations." One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 26-5.

SB 1060 by Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen) would prohibit public adjusters from soliciting contracts or soliciting employment for an attorney. Senator Hinojosa said, "I am pleased with the strong unanimous support for this legislation as we recognize that industry practices by public insurance adjusters need reform to protect our Texas homeowners. It is all too common that following a natural disaster such as a hail storm, hurricane, or tornado, public adjusters come knocking on doors to sign up homeowners with promises of free estimates and monetary gain. These adjusters then have property owners sign contracts that they in turn sell to attorneys for a fee to file lawsuits. They often solicit and sell hundreds of contracts in bulk. This solicitation of contracts affects homeowners' insurance premiums and coverage, and causes insurance costs to significantly soar for all our Texas taxpayers. SB 1060 regulates public insurance adjusters and prohibits them from soliciting contracts and selling to attorneys, and ensures that a public adjuster may not accept any form of payment or compensation, other than the amount owed under a contract with the insured, for a claim for loss or damage that the license holder negotiates, investigates or adjusts on behalf of an insured." The committee substitute was adopted.
SB 1584 by Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) would establish that it is the policy of the state for school districts to provide functional behavioral assessments to a student whose behavior interferes with the ability of that student or of another student to learn. The committee substitute was adopted.

HB 1584 by Joe Farias (D-San Antonio) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would authorize voluntary contributions to the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance when purchasing a fishing and hunting license. There were no amendments.

The Senate also gave preliminary approval to three bills including:

SB 1639 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) would prohibit a municipality, from annexing an area for the limited purposes of applying its planning, zoning, health, and safety ordinances in the area. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 19-12.

SB 1813 by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would provide physicians with a right to a copy of any complaint against the physician and copies of all medical reports. Four floor amendments were adopted and it passed to Third Reading by a vote of 16-14.

On Friday, the Senate passed 63 bills on the Local and Uncontested calendar including:

HB 3628 by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would require the Director of the Department of Public Safety to adopt rules governing the use of unmanned aircraft in the capitol complex and would make it a Class B misdemeanor if a person violates the adopted rules. The committee substitute was adopted.

Total number of bills reported out of Senate Committees this week: 228
Total number of bills passed by the Senate this week: 151
Total passed on the Local and Uncontested calendar: 63

Next Week: The Senate adjourned until Monday, May 18, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. Monday’s Senate Intent Calendar has 70 bills. Key Senate Intent calendar bills for Monday are included in the issue categories below.

HOUSE:

This week, the House was in session Monday through Friday. They met in marathon sessions with End-of-Session slow-down rules starting to kick in – Monday was the deadline for House committees to report House bills; Tuesday at 10:00 p.m. was the last calendars with House bills were printed and distributed; Thursday midnight was the
deadline for the House to debate House bills and House Joint Resolutions on Second Reading; and Friday was the deadline for the House to pass HB’s and HJR’s (except local bills). The House started out the week with 40 Third Reading bills; 20 items of postponed business, and 169 Second Reading bills on Monday’s calendar.

**On Monday**, the House passed 39 Third Reading bills, and gave preliminary approval to 51 additional bills including:

**HB 18** by Jimmie Don Aycock (R-Killeen) would require the Commissioner of Education to develop **postsecondary education and career counseling academies** for middle school counselors. *Three floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 136-9.*

**HB 207** by Jeff Leach (R-Plano) would increase the penalties for the **offense of voyeurism** for repeat offenders. Representative Leach said, "HB 207 is a substantive step forward aimed at addressing a crime that is so often overlooked, yet so detrimental to the safety of our neighborhoods. Voyeurism is widely considered by law enforcement to be one of the most common gateway offenses to other sexual crimes, including violent sex crimes, and reports have shown that most voyeurism offenses are committed by repeat offenders. Under current law, the offense is treated as a form of ‘Disorderly Conduct’ and is classified as a Class C Misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not to exceed $500. As the law reads now, there is little incentive for voyeur offenders to end this type of behavior because it is not clearly identified on the offender’s record and the penalty is the lowest form of misdemeanor offenses.” *The committee substitute was adopted.*

**HB 849** by Chris Paddie (R-Marshall) would institute a sales tax holiday for **firearms and hunting supplies** the last weekend in August. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 110-36.*

**HB 1492** by Doug Miller (R-New Braunfels) would require plaintiff lawyers for claimants for **asbestos-related diseases** to file claims with bankruptcy trusts in advance of trial against defendants in litigation. Texans for Lawsuit Reform President Richard J. Trabulsi, Jr., commented, “We congratulate Chairman Doug Miller on the passage of HB 1492. Texas has been a leader in fighting asbestos lawsuit abuse since 2005 when the Legislature reined in outrageous asbestos lawsuit scams that were ravaging the state. Chairman Miller’s bill will eliminate the latest asbestos lawsuit abuse while assuring that people suffering from asbestos diseases have speedy access to Texas’ courts. HB 1492 encourages honesty, transparency and fairness in asbestos litigation.” *Three floor amendments were adopted in lieu of the committee substitute and it passed by a vote of 126-11.*
HB 2712 by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) would exempt tangible personal property that is necessary and essential to the operation of a qualified large data center project (if the capital investment is at least $500 million) from sales taxes for the first 20 years of operation. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 114-26.

Failed to Pass:

HB 282 by Harold Dutton (D-Houston) would change the process for selecting grand jurors. Representative Dutton postponed it to January 1, 2016 killing it by procedural action.

HB 1059 by Chris Turner (D-Arlington) would add additional reporting requirements for personal financial statements required to be filed with the Texas Ethics Commission. It failed to pass by a vote of 53-87.

HB 2473 by Yvonne Davis (D-Dallas) would provide grants for mortgage lenders in low-income neighborhoods. On Monday, it failed by a vote of 54-81. It was reconsidered on Tuesday and passed to Third Reading by a vote of 98-45. On Wednesday, one floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 81-51.

HB 2785 by Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) would require fire departments to give notice of hearings to firefighters. Representative Alvarado postponed it to June 17, 2016 killing it by procedural action.

HB 2982 by Celia Israel (D-Austin) would facilitate renewals for volunteer deputy voter registrars. It failed by a vote of 58-77.

HB 3032 by Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) would establish a procedure for filling vacancies created by promotions in fire departments. Representative Alvarado postponed it to June 1, 2016 killing it by procedural action.

On Tuesday, the House started out with 51 Third Reading bills; 16 items of postponed business, 57 Second Reading bills left from Monday’s calendar, an 82 additional Second Reading bills on Tuesday’s calendar. The House passed 69 bills on the Local and Consent calendar. With House deadlines taking effect, the two bills that were knocked off of the Local and Consent calendar – HB 3866 by Jason Isaac, which would prohibit municipalities that lease public facilities from refusing to lease or charging a higher fee for gun shows; and HB 3929 by Allen Fletcher (R-Tomball), which would limit the use of data collected from automatic license plate readers - stood no chance of passing the House before Thursday’s deadline.
The House passed 50 Third Reading bills and gave preliminary approval to 57 additional bills including:

HB 867 by Ana Hernandez (D-Houston) would establish the Texas Women Veterans Program. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 122-24.

HB 2919 by John Raney (R-Bryan) would require the Texas A&M Energy Systems Laboratory, in consultation with the Texas Facilities Commission and the State Energy Conservation Office, to create a pilot program in which the State Energy Conservation Office makes or guarantees loans to governmental entities to finance energy efficiency improvements in state-owned buildings. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 63-69 on May 8, 2015. It was brought back before the House for reconsideration on May 12, 2015 and passed to Third Reading by a vote of 97-48. It received final passage on May 13th by a of of 93-48.

SB 66 by Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) and Myra Crownover (R-Denton) would allow the use of epinephrine auto-injectors on school campuses. One floor amendment was adopted.

Failed to Pass:

HB 1668 by Paul Workman (R-Austin) would clarify that unless a general contractor and subcontractor enter into an agreement for the general contractor provides workers’ compensation insurance coverage to the subcontractor and its employees then the general contractor is not considered the employer of the subcontractor and its employees. It was killed on a point-of-order.

On Wednesday, the House started with 56 Third Reading bills, 20 items of postponed business, 62 Second Reading bills from Monday’s calendar, 81 from Tuesday’s calendar and 86 new bills on Wednesday’s calendar. They passed 56 Third Reading bills. But, they only gave preliminary approval to 7 additional bills including:

SB 1280 by Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and John Otto (R-Dayton) would direct payment for miscellaneous claims and judgments against the state. SB 1280 was substituted for HB 3330 and it passed without amendment or opposition.

Failed to Pass:

HB 506 by Eddie Rodriguez (D-Austin) would create a new 60 cent/$100 permissible debt tax rate for fast-growth school districts that have adopted a capital improvement plan (instead of the current 50 cent limit); and would require school districts with a debt tax rate of 45 cents or greater to adopt a capital improvement plan.
The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted, but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 49-92.

HB 1798 by Joe Deshotel (D-Beaumont) would rename “home-rule” school districts “local control” school districts; and would exempt local control school districts from the student teacher ratio requirement of 22 to 1 in grades K-4 and other exemptions currently afforded to home-rule districts. The committee substitute and eight floor amendments were adopted but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 59-76.

HB 2769 by Eddie Rodriguez (D-Austin) would change from December 31, 2015 to December 31, 2017 the date of expiration the pilot revolving loan program established under the loanstar revolving loan program to provide for energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technology for community-based organizations. One floor amendment was adopted but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 50-91.

HB 3113 by Larry Gonzales (R-Round Rock) would authorize municipalities to pledge revenue from the municipal hotel occupancy tax for the payment of obligations related to hotel projects. 18 floor amendments were adopted as several House members loaded the bill up with their municipality, but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 54-88.

On Thursday, the House passed 7 Third Reading bills and passed another 47 bills on Second Reading including:

HJR 77 by Rick Miller (R-Sugar Land) would ask Congress to call a convention to propose one or more amendments to the U.S. Constitution to impose restraints on the federal government. It passed by a vote of 80-62.

Failed to Pass:

HB 71 by Mary Gonzalez (D-El Paso) would remove the requirement from the affirmative defense to prosecution for indecency with a child that a person accused and the victim be of the opposite sex. One floor amendment was adopted but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 51-79.

HB 215 by Patricia Harless (R-Spring) would waive the fee for a fishing license for Texas residents who are 65 years of age or older. Representative Harless postponed it to September 26, 2015, killing it by procedural action.

HB 1759 by Jimmie Don Aycock (R-Killeen) would require the Commissioner of Education to adopt rules for the distribution of state revenue to public schools. Representative Aycock postponed it to July 4, 2015, killing it by procedural action. Representative Aycock told House members that he did not want to take up time
debating it on the final day for the House to discuss House bills because the Senate was not going to pass it anyway. Speaker Joe Straus (R-San Antonio) said, "I want to thank Chairman Aycock for his extensive efforts to improve our system of paying for public education. The challenges in our school finance system are not going away. Solving these challenges will require a sustained and serious commitment by not only the House, but also the Senate, in the months and years ahead. The House will keep working to address school finance and build on the outstanding work that Chairman Aycock and many of his colleagues have already done."

HB 1777 by Helen Giddings (D-Dallas) would prohibit an employer from accessing the personal online accounts of employees and job applicants through electronic communication devices. The committee substitute was adopted but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 51-89.

HB 1892 by Eddie Rodriguez (D-Austin) would establish a community school grant program to assist public schools in developing community school plans and transitioning into community schools. The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 82-60.

HB 2088 by Justin Rodriguez (D-San Antonio) would establish the joint interim committee on judicial selection to study and review the method by which district judges and appellate justices and judges are selected for office. The committee substitute was adopted but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 51-90.

HB 2114 by Jim Murphy (R-Houston) would repeal the inheritance tax and the 3 percent gross receipts tax on admission to a combative sporting event. Representative Murphy postponed it to March 2, 2016 killing it by procedural action.

HB 2221 by Dan Huberty (R-Humble) would prohibit a strategic partnership agreement from providing for limited purpose annexation. It was killed on a point-of-order. Note: the companion, SB 1639, has passed to Third Reading in the Senate.

HB 3396 by Larry Phillips (R-Sherman) would require individuals who make one or more direct campaign expenditures of more than $1,000 to comply with campaign reporting requirements. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted but it failed to pass to Third Reading by a vote of 54-77.

HB 3692 by Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa) would allow refunding of hotel occupancy tax revenue for hotel projects in the Midland/Odessa area. Representative Landgraf postponed it to June 4, 2015, killing it by procedural action.

HB 3835 by Jason Isaac (R-Dripping Springs) would change provisions for alternative fuel vehicles used by state agencies. It was killed on a point-of-order.
HJR 26 by Trey Martinez Fischer (D-San Antonio) would propose a constitutional amendment requiring Texas employers to pay at least the greater of $10.10 an hour or the federal minimum wage. It failed by a vote of 50-92.

At the stroke of midnight, there were still 222 bills left on the House calendar to die. The dead bills included four bills from Monday’s calendar and all the new Second Reading bills on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday’s calendars. In addition, 248 House bills and 13 House Joint Resolutions died in the House Calendars Committee for a total of 483 bills reported out of House committees did not make it to the House floor.

On Friday, the House passed 106 bills on the Local and Uncontested calendar – not a single bill was knocked off the calendar. The House passed 40 Third Reading House bills, but adjourned for the weekend carrying the Third Reading Senate bills over to Monday.

Two bills that had passed on Second Reading on Thursday failed on Third Reading on Friday:

HB 2571 by Eric Johnson (D-Dallas) would require the Texas state climatologist to provide a report on projected changes in weather, water availability, and climate variability across the state. It passed to Third Reading on Thursday on a voice vote, but it failed final passage on Friday by a vote of 47-84.

Total number of bills reported out of House Committees this week: 259
Total number of bills passed by the House this week: 357
Total passed on the Local and Consent calendar: 165

Next Week: The House adjourned until 1:00 p.m. on Monday, May 18, 2015. Monday’s House calendar has 11 Third Reading SB’s and 13 Second Reading SB’s. Tuesday’s House calendar has 7 new SB’s. The House has a Local and Consent calendar set for Tuesday, May 19, 2015 with 54 bills.

BUDGET:

Passed the House:

HB 799 by Giovanni Capriglione (R-Southlake) would require the comptroller to conduct a study relating to the effects federal regulations and mandates enacted by federal law have on the state including a cost-benefit analysis on the impact of state compliance with federal regulations. Three floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 111-3.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

On Thursday, the House Economic and Small Business Development Committee took up:

SB 100 by Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) would make several changes to the Texas Enterprise Zone Program. It was left pending.

Passed the House:

HB 1318 by Angie Chen Button (R-Garland) would add presidential general election debates to the list of events that qualify for the Major Events Trust Fund. One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 90-54.

Passed the Senate:

HB 903 by Giovanni Capriglione (R-Southlake) and Van Taylor (R-Plano) would require any amount in the Rainy Day Fund that exceeds 30% of the cap be invested in accordance with the prudent person standard. It passed by a vote of 29-1. There were no amendments.

Next Week:

The Senate Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee will meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in E1.012 to take up:

HB 26 by Angie Chen Button (R-Garland) and Troy Fraser (R-Marble Falls) would make several changes to economic development programs in the governor’s office.

ENERGY:

Passed the House:

HB 2392 by Rafael Anchia (D-Dallas) would require the comptroller and the State Energy Conservation Office by rule to establish and administer a program that issues or guarantees loans to be used for improvements that increase the energy efficiency of residences that are not newly constructed. The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 81-59.

Next Week:

House Calendar:
HCR 57 Rafael Anchia (D-Dallas) would urge the United States Congress and the president of the United States to eliminate the current ban on crude oil exports. It is on the House calendar for Monday, May 18, 2015.

HCR 63 by Gene Wu (D-Houston) would urge the U.S. Congress to expedite natural gas imports. It is on the House calendar for Monday, May 18, 2015.

ENVIRONMENT:

On Monday, the House Energy Resources Committee took up:

SB 991 by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) would require the General Land Office and the Texas Water Development Board to conduct a study regarding the use of wind and solar power to develop and desalinate brackish groundwater. It was left pending.

Also on Monday, the Senate Agriculture, Water and Rural Affairs Committee took up:

HB 163 by Lyle Larson (R-San Antonio) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would change the name of the Multi-State Water Resources Planning Commission to Southwestern States Water Commission and make several other changes to its composition and duties. It was reported favorably as substituted and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar.

HB 655 by Lyle Larson (R-San Antonio) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would grant the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality jurisdiction over the regulation and permitting of Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project injection wells. It was reported favorably. It is on the Senate Intent calendar for May 18, 2015.

HB 1146 by Kyle Kacal (R-College Station) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) would allow a volunteer to be the licensed operator of a water supply system and require the owner or manager of such a water system to maintain records related to each volunteer operator. It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar.

HB 1902 by Donna Howard (D-Austin) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would authorize the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to adopt and implement minimum standards for additional domestic uses and reuses of graywater, and would require rules to prevent contamination of the potable water supply and protect human health. It was reported favorably as substitute and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar.

HB 2767 by Jim Keffer (R-Eastland) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) is a technical correction bill of statutes regulating groundwater conservation districts. It was
reported favorably and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar. It is on the Senate Intent calendar for May 18, 2015 (first placement).

Passed the House:

HB 2187 by Wayne Smith (R-Baytown) and Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) would add restrictions on persons who sell regulated material to a metal recycling entity. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 125-18. It is set for a hearing in the Senate Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee for May 19, 2015.

HB 2763 by Ed Thompson (R-Pearland) would require the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to convene an advisory committee to conduct a study quantifying the amount of materials currently being recycled. The committee substitute was adopted.

Passed the Senate:

HB 280 by Ron Simmons (R-Carrollton) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would require the Texas Water Development Board to post on its website information related to the state water implementation fund (SWIFT). It passed the Senate on the Local and Uncontested calendar. There were no amendments.

HB 1224 by Eddie Lucio, III (D-Brownsville) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would authorize the Texas Water Development Board to approve the use of assets of the revolving fund, the safe drinking water revolving fund, or an additional state revolving fund as a source of revenue or security, or both revenue and security, for the payment of the principal of and interest on state revolving fund bonds. It passed on the Local and Uncontested calendar. There were no amendments.

HB 1232 by Eddie Lucio, III (D-Brownsville) and Craig Estes (R-Sherman) would require the Texas Water Development Board to conduct a study to define the quantity and quality of groundwater in confined and unconfined aquifers. There were no amendments.

Next Week:

House Calendar:

SB 912 by Kevin Eltife (R-Tyler) and Myra Crownover (R-Denton) would establish that an individual responsible for a facility which may cause pollution is not required to notify the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, officials, or media whenever an accidental discharge or spill occurs if the single accidental discharge occurs at a
wastewater treatment or collection facility owned or operated by a local government; and is 1,000 gallons or less. *It is on the House calendar for Monday, May 18, 2015.*

**HCR 74** by Yvonne Davis (D-Dallas) would direct the Texas Water Development Board and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to support the creation of a **model water recycling project** in an appropriate location. *It is on the House calendar for Monday, May 18, 2015.*

**HCR 90** by Todd Hunter (R-Corpus Christi) would request the speaker and lieutenant governor to create a joint interim committee to study **seawater desalination** on the Texas coast. *It is on the House calendar for Monday, May 18, 2015.*

**Monday’s Senate Intent Calendar:**

**HB 200** by Jim Keffer (R-Eastland) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would set out provisions governing the petition to appeal the Texas Water Development Board's approval of a desired **future condition of groundwater resources.**

**HB 1331** by Phil King (R-Weatherford) and Troy Fraser (R-Marble Falls) would exempt a person who generates drill cuttings and transfers them to another person with the contractual understanding they will be used for a beneficial use from liability in **tort for a consequence of the subsequent use of the drill cuttings.**

**HB 2179** by Eddie Lucio, III (D-Brownsville) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would authorize the board of directors of a **groundwater conservation district** to take action on any uncontested permit application at a properly noticed public meeting held at any time after the public hearing at which the application is scheduled to be heard, and to issue a written order to grant the application; grant the application with special conditions; or deny the application.

The **House Natural Resources Committee** will meet on Monday, May 18, 2015 upon adjournment in E2.010 of the capitol extension to take up:

**SB 521** by Troy Fraser (R-Marble Falls) would extend the initial period for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to issue an **emergency authorization relating to the use of state water** from 120 days to two years, and would allow the commission to renew or automatically renew such an authorization for a period not to exceed one year for each renewal.

The **House Environmental Regulation Committee** will meet on Monday, May 18, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. in E1.026 of the capitol extension to take up:
SB 394 by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would require the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, for a respondent that is a local government and has not previously committed the same violation, to approve a supplemental environmental project that is necessary to bring the respondent into compliance with environmental laws or that is necessary to remediate environmental harm caused by the local government's alleged violation.

The Senate Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee will meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in E1.012 to take up:

HB 14 by Geanie Morrison (R-Victoria) and Kirk Watson (D-Austin) would make several changes to the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan including adding Bell, McLennan, and Webb Counties to the plan and continuing the plan to 2023 (instead of 2019).

GENERAL BUSINESS:

HEALTH:

Passed the House:

HB 2950 by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) would establish a task force on infectious disease preparedness and response. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 142-3.

HIGHER EDUCATION:

On Monday, the House Public Education Committee took up:

SB 453 by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) would increase the scaled score of 50 percent to 60 percent for the minimum score required for public school students to receive credit by examination administered through the College-Level Examination Program. It was left pending.

Also on Wednesday, the Senate Higher Education Committee took up:

HB 1992 by John Zerwas (R-Fulshear) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) would provide that an institution of higher education may not require a score of more than three as the minimum required score on an Advanced Placement examination for granting course credit. It was reported favorably as substituted and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar. It is on the Senate Intent calendar for May 18, 2015 (first placement).
HB 2628 by Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) and Sylvia Garcia (D-Houston) would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to establish alignment between the college and career readiness standards and the knowledge, skills, and abilities students are expected to demonstrate in career and technical education. It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar. It is on the Senate Intent calendar for May 18, 2015 (first placement).

HB 3062 by Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) and Royce West (D-Dallas) would allow the comptroller to award grants to independent school districts from the Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program for development of new career and technical education if the school district has entered into a partnership with a public junior college or technical institute. It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar. It is on the Senate Intent calendar for May 18, 2015 (first placement).

Passed the House:

HB 1000 by John Zerwas (R-Fulshear) would change the Texas Competitive Knowledge Fund to the Texas Research University Fund; change the Research Development Fund to the Texas Comprehensive Research Fund; and establish the Core Research Support Fund to promote increased research capacity at emerging research universities. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 125-15).

HB 1612 by Ryan Guillen (D-Rio Grande City) would require institutions of higher education that administer a Texas Success Initiative assessment instrument to provide a report to each school district from which assessed students graduated information on the district’s students performance. It passed on the Local and Consent calendar. There were no amendments.

HB 1807 by Elliott Naishtat (D-Austin) would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to maintain an inventory of postsecondary educational programs and services provided for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities by institutions of higher education. It passed on the House Local and Consent calendar. It is set for a hearing in the Senate Higher Education Committee on May 20, 2015.

HB 3577 by Donna Howard (D-Austin) would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to distribute 8 percent of the Texas Educational Opportunity Grant Program funding to public state colleges and public technical institutes. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed on the House Local and Consent calendar. It is set for a hearing in the Senate Higher Education Committee on May 20, 2015.
HB 3987 by Marsha Farney (R-Georgetown) would allow school districts and charter schools to establish a **school-based savings program** to facilitate increased awareness of the importance of saving for higher education and facilitate personal financial literacy instruction. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 129-13.*

SB 686 by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) and Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) would allow state appropriations to the **Math and Science Scholars Loan Repayment Program.** It passed to Third Reading without amendment or opposition.

SB 1470 by Kirk Watson (D-Austin) and John Raney (R-Bryan) would authorize the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to enter into a **state authorization reciprocity agreement** regarding the delivery of **postsecondary distance education** that establishes comparable standards for the provision of distance education by degree-granting postsecondary educational institutions. *SB 1470 was substituted for HB 3367 and it passed on the House Local and Consent calendar without amendment.*

**Next Week:**

**Monday’s Senate Intent Calendar:**

**HB 100** by John Zerwas (R-Fulshear) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) would authorize the issuance of **Tuition Revenue Bonds** for capital construction projects at Texas colleges and universities. *(committee substitute)*

The **House Public Education Committee** will meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in E2.036 of the capitol extension to take up:

**SB 13** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Larry Gonzales (R-Round Rock) would prohibit a rule adopted by the Commissioner of Education from limiting the number of **dual credit hours** in which a student can enroll.

The **Senate Higher Education Committee** will meet on Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in E1.012 of the capitol extension to take up:

**HB 1054** by Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to prescribe a score below which a student is eligible for basic academic skills education for each assessment instrument designated by the board for use by institutions of higher education to determine the need for **developmental education.**

**HB 1287** by Ron Simmons (R-Carrollton) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require institutions of higher education to have a link on the institution’s Internet website to the
Texas Consumer Resource for Education and Workforce Statistics (“Texas CREWS”) report on gainful employment applicable to the institution for the most recent year for which the report is available.

HB 1613 by Ryan Guillen (D-Rio Grande City) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would exempt a student from taking the Algebra 1, English I and English II end-of-course tests if the student meets college readiness standards in a college preparatory mathematics or English language arts course.

HB 2472 by John Zerwas (R-Fulshear) and Kirk Watson (D-Austin) would repeal Section 51.803(a-3) of the Education Code which sunsets the University of Texas at Austin’s ability to fulfill 75 percent of their admissions under the top ten percent automatic admissions rule rather than 100 percent of admissions under the top ten percent rule after the 2017-2018 academic year.

HB 2812 by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) and Van Taylor (R-Plano) would repeal Section 130.008(f) of the Education code which limits junior college courses that a high school student may enroll in for dual credit to three if the student does not reside in the junior college territory.

HB 3027 by John Zerwas (R-Fulshear) and Kirk Watson (D-Austin) would establish the Texas Competency-Based Education Grant Program.

HUMAN RESOURCES/EMPLOYMENT:

Passed the House:

SB 805 by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) and John Raney (R-Bryan) would require each state agency to establish a goal of hiring, in full-time positions, a number of veterans equal to at least 15 percent of the total number of employees at the agency, and authorize each state agency to designate an open position as a veteran’s position and only accept applications from qualified veterans. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 134-11.

Next Week:

The House Defense and Veteran’s Affairs Committee will meet on Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. in E2.026 of the capitol extension to take up:

SB 1307 by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would clarify provisions related to occupational licenses for military service members, military veterans, and military spouses, authorizing a state agency waive any licensing prerequisites for a military applicant, upon reviewing the applicant's credentials.
INSURANCE:

Passed the House:

HB 1132 by Paul Workman (R-Austin) would raise the value of an insured risk necessary to be exempt from provisions related to the approval, disapproval, and adoption and use of insurance policy forms. It passed by a vote of 138-7. There were no amendments.

Next Week:

House Calendar:

SB 782 by Kevin Eltife (R-Tyler) and John Smithee (R-Amarillo) would clarify that the Texas Insurance Commissioner is authorized to investigate other offenses in addition to insurance fraud, including by providing technical or litigation assistance to other governmental agencies. It is on the House calendar for Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

SB 783 by Kevin Eltife (R-Tyler) and John Frullo (R-Lubbock) would prohibit the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) fraud unit from accepting gifts from a regulated entity, and would require the insurance fraud unit to develop fraud prevention educational programs and informational materials. It is on the House Local and Consent calendar for Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

SB 876 by Kevin Eltife (R-Tyler) and John Frullo (R-Lubbock) would prohibit the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) from renewing an insurance agent’s license without evidence that the license holder completed the required continuing education, and authorize a nonresident insurance agent to apply to TDI for a comparable insurance license in Texas. It is on the House calendar for Monday, May 18, 2015.

PRIVACY:

On Monday, the House Business and Industry Committee took up:

SB 1213 by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) would make it a Class A misdemeanor to reidentify or attempt to reidentify an individual who is the subject of deidentified information released by a state agency or institution of higher education. It was voted out favorably as substituted.

On Wednesday, the House Government Transparency and Operation Committee took up:
SB 34 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Larry Gonzales (R-Round Rock) would require the Department of Information Resources to submit a report prior to each legislative session evaluating the information security of the state's information resources. It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local and Consent calendar.

SB 1844 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Amando Walle (D-Houston) would establish the Interagency Data Coordination and Transparency Commission to study and review the current public data structure, classification, sharing and reporting protocols for state agencies and other data security issues. It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local and Consent calendar.

SB 1878 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Gary Elkins (R-Houston) would require the Department of Information Resources to conduct a feasibility study regarding the adoption of an additional layer of sensitive data control and security or a comprehensive Identity and Access management (IAM) program. It was reported favorably and recommended for the Local and Consent calendar.

Passed the House:

HB 603 by Sarah Davis (R-Houston) would make it an offense to intentionally display, distribute, publish, advertise, offer or otherwise disclose visual material depicting another person and knows or should have known that the depicted person has not consented to the disclosure. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 128-1.

HB 852 by Scott Sanford (R-McKinney) would require a joint House and Senate interim committee to study and review the methods by which state agencies store biometric identifiers. It passed by a vote of 142-4.

HB 3248 by Yvonne Davis (D-Dallas) would require each state agency to develop policies and procedures to properly secure all information, including electronic information, that alone or in conjunction with other information identifies an individual. It passed without amendment or opposition.

HB 4046 by Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) and Rodney Ellis (D-Houston) would clarify that a student’s education records as defined by the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 are confidential and exempt from public disclosure. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed on the House Local and Consent calendar. It is set for a hearing in the Senate Higher Education Committee for May 20, 2015.
Passed the Senate:

**HB 896** by Ana Hernandez (D-Houston) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would apply the offense of *breach of computer security* to a person who knowingly accesses a computer, computer network, or computer system with the intent to obtain a benefit in violation of a clear and conspicuous prohibition by the owner of the computer, computer network, or computer system or a contractual agreement to which the person has expressly agreed. *It passed on the Local and Uncontested calendar.*

Next Week:

Monday’s Senate Intent Calendar:

**HB 2179** by Eddie Lucio, III (D-Brownsville) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) would authorize the board of directors of a *groundwater conservation district* to take action on any uncontested permit application at a properly noticed public meeting held at any time after the public hearing at which the application is scheduled to be heard, and to issue a written order to grant the application; grant the application with special conditions; or deny the application.

The **Senate Subcommittee on Border Security** will meet on Monday, May 18, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. in 2E.20 of the capitol building to take up:

**HB 1481** by Jim Murphy (R-Houston) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) would prohibit the *operation of an unmanned aircraft* less than 400 feet over a targeted facility unless the unmanned aircraft is operated by the federal government, the state, or a governmental entity; a law enforcement agency; an owner or operator of the targeted facility; or a person who has the prior written consent of the owner or operator of the targeted facility.

The **Senate Health and Human Services Committee** will meet on Monday, May 18, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. in E1.016 to take up:

PROCUREMENT:

On Wednesday, the **House Government Transparency and Operation Committee** took up:

**SB 1161** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Gary Elkins (R-Houston) would require state agencies to purchase *automated information systems*, including commodity items, using competitive bidding for purchases of more than $25,000. *It was reported favorably as substituted.*
Passed the House:

HB 1295 by Giovanni Capriglione (R-Southlake) would prohibit governmental entities and state agencies from contracting with a person unless the person submits a disclosure of interested parties to the governmental entity or state agency. Three floor amendments were adopted.

HB 3193 by Diego Bernal (D-San Antonio) and Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would allow municipalities to consider a vendor’s principal place of business in awarding municipal contracts if the contract is for services of less than $100,000 or for purchases less than $500,000. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 96-47.

Next Week:

House Calendar:

SB 20 by Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) and Four Price (R-Amarillo) would make several changes to procurement statutes. It is on the House calendar for Monday, May 18, 2015 (committee substitute).

SB 408 by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) and Cesar Blanco (D-El Paso) would allow counties to give preference to local bidders for purchase of real or personal property if the local bidder is within five percent of the lowest bid price received by the county. It is on the House Local and Consent calendar for Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

SB 1281 by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Garnet Coleman (D-Houston) would authorize local governmental entities to participate in a cooperative purchasing program with another local government of Texas or another state or with a local cooperative organization in Texas or another state. It is on the House Local and Consent calendar for Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

The Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee will meet on Monday, May 18, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in E1.028 of the capitol extension to take up:

HB 3193 by Diego Bernal (D-San Antonio) and Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) would allow municipalities to consider a vendor’s principal place of business in awarding municipal contracts if the contract is for services of less than $100,000 or for purchases less than $500,000.

PROPERTY:

Passed the House:
SB 498 by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) and Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton) would eliminate the December 31, 2015 sunset date on a Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA). It passed to Third Reading on a voice vote.

SB 695 by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) and Wayne Faircloth (R-Dickinson) would require the legislature to establish a joint interim committee to continue to study the feasibility and desirability of creating and maintaining a coastal barrier system. SB 695 was substituted for HB 1687 and it passed the House on the Local and Consent calendar.

SB 1626 by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) and Dawnna Dukes (D-Austin) would authorize a declarant to prohibit or restrict a property owner in a residential subdivision from installing a solar energy device in developments with 50 or fewer units/ lots. SB 1626 was substituted for HB 3639 on the House floor and it passed on the Local and Consent calendar.

Next Week:

The House Land and Resource Management Committee will meet on Monday, May 19, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in E2.016 to take up:

SB 474 by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) and Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale) would require a condemner to pay all costs as provided the special commissioners; and any reasonable attorney’s fees and other professional fees incurred by the property owner in connection with the eminent domain proceeding if the award is more than 10 percent of the settlement offer.

PUBLIC EDUCATION:

Passed the House:

HB 731 by Eddie Lucio, III (D-Brownsville) would add a school district in a county that borders the United Mexican States and the Gulf of Mexico to participation in the three-year high school diploma plan pilot program. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed on the Local and Consent calendar.

HB 1300 by Giovanni Capriglione (R-Southlake) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) would delete provisions allowing exceptions to the 2.75 grade point average minimum for persons admitted to educator preparation programs. The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 141-2. It is set for a hearing in the Senate Higher Education Committee on May 20, 2015.
HB 1842 by Jimmie Don Aycock (R-Killeen) would allow the Commissioner of Education to identify deficiencies and possible solutions as an optional action that can be taken if a school district does not satisfy accreditation criteria. The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 143-1.

HB 1891 by Eddie Rodriguez (D-Austin) would outline the community in schools model in statute and allow a school to transition into a community school rather than undergo reconstitution. The committee substitute and three floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 69-52.

HB 2205 by Myra Crownover (R-Denton) would require the State Board of Educator Certification to include one voting member with experience and knowledge regarding alternative educator preparation programs. The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 126-5.

HB 2251 by Rafael Anchia (D-Dallas) would prescribe the schedule of payments from the foundation school fund to open-enrollment charter schools. The committee substitute was adopted.

HB 2349 by Jimmie Don Aycock (R-Killeen) would allow a student to earn a performance acknowledgement on the student’s diploma and transcript by passing an established, valid, reliable, and nationally norm-referenced preliminary college preparation assessment. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted.

HB 2610 by Ken King (R-Canadian) would require school districts to provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses, for students in a school year (instead of 180 days of instruction). The committee substitute was adopted.

HB 2804 by Jimmie Don Aycock (R-Killeen) would require school districts to choose from an approved list of assessments to evaluate student achievement in science, social studies, and writing and would prescribe a testing schedule. It would specify indicators to be used to evaluate school districts and campuses. The committee substitute and eight floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 102-26.

HB 2811 by Ken King (R-Canadian) would provide that proclamations for instructional materials could be issued only during the second year of a biennium; and would only allow the State Board of Education to issue proclamations that do not exceed 75 percent of the total amount of the instructional materials allotment. The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed by a vote of 125-9.

SB 934 by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) and Marsha Farney (R-Georgetown) would require the Commissioner of Education to develop and make available mathematics
achievement academies for teachers who provide mathematics instruction to students at the kindergarten or first, second, or third grade level. **SB 934 was substituted for HB 2609 on the House floor, one floor amendment was adopted and it passed to Third Reading on a voice vote.**

**Passed the Senate:**

**SB 811** by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) would require school districts to provide the child’s **individualized education program** into a translated audiotape form if requested by the parent that is unable to speak English. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 26-5.*

**SB 1216** by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would abolish the **Harris County board of education**. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 29-2.*

**SB 1259** by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) would require the committee developing a **special education student’s individualized education plan** to include a regular education teacher who is responsible for implementing a portion of the student’s individualized education program. *The committee substitute was adopted.*

**HB 1430** by Susan King (R-Abilene) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would require information provided to students relating to **health science career pathways** include mental health careers as a possible pathway. *There were no amendments.*

**HB 1993** by J.D. Sheffield (R-Gatesville) and Van Taylor (R-Plano) would require school districts that use an **electronic platform for communicating** student grade and performance **information to parents** to allow a parent to sign a notice electronically as long as the district retains a record verifying the parent’s acknowledgement of the required notice. *The committee substitute was adopted.*

**Next Week:**

**House Calendar:**

**SB 455** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) and Mike Schofield (R-Katy) would dedicate annual **motor vehicle sales tax revenue** above $1.5 billion to the highway fund to be used for road construction, maintenance, acquisition of right-of-way, and repayment of road bonds. *It is on the House calendar for Monday, May 18, 2015.*

The **House Public Education Committee** will meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in E2.036 of the capitol extension to take up:
SB 1200 by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) and Dan Huberty (R-Humble) would establish the Texas Commission on Next Generation Assessments and Accountability to develop and make recommendations for new systems of **student assessment and public school accountability**.

SB 1896 by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) and Ken King (R-Canadian) would require Texas Education Agency to develop or contract for the development of **interactive electronic tutorials** that provide a comprehensive review for each end-of-course assessment instrument required for graduation and make them available through the virtual school network.

**TAX:**

On Tuesday, the **House Ways and Means Committee** took up:

SB 1/SJR 1 by Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) would propose a constitutional amendment increasing mandatory **homestead exemption** for school district taxes from $15,000 to 25 percent of the median market value of all residential homesteads in the state and prohibiting a real estate transaction tax. **They were left pending.**

SB 7 by Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) would reduce the business **franchise tax rate** by 15 percent. **It was left pending.**

SB 683 by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Jason Villalba (R-Dallas) would allow a property owner to direct the **payment of a tax refund** to a specified person rather than to the property owner. **It was left pending.**

SB 757 by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Drew Springer (R-Muenster) would repeal the production taxes on crude **petroleum and sulphur. It was reported favorably.**

**Passed the House:**

HB 964 by Donna Howard (D-Austin) would allow an optional calculation of the **school district tax rollback rate** to be the sum of the highest maintenance and operations tax rate adopted by the district for the 2007 tax year and the district’s current debt rate. **One floor amendment was adopted and it passed by a vote of 70-56.**

HB 2891 by John Otto (R-Dayton) would require corporations, limited liability companies, limited partnerships, and professional associations subject to the franchise tax, regardless of whether the entity is required to pay any tax, to file a **report with the comptroller** containing the name of each person or entity that owns a ten percent or greater interest in the entity, and the name, title and mailing address of each person
who is an officer, director, or general partner of the entity. *One floor amendment was adopted.*

**HB 3012** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would make several changes to the appraisal review process. *The committee substitute and one floor amendment were adopted and it passed on the Local and Consent calendar.*

**HB 3297** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) would require a court, on a motion by a property owner, to order the parties to conduct *settlement discussions* before trial if a discovery request to designate one or more expert witnesses has been made and requires all parties to make a good faith effort to settle the appeal. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed on the Local and Consent calendar.*

**HB 3484** by Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton) would make several changes to the sales tax. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed on the Local and Consent calendar.*

**Passed the Senate:**

**SB 514** by Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) would allow a franchise tax deduction for costs associated with federal contracts under Federal Acquisition Regulations by defense companies. *The committee substitute was adopted and it passed by a vote of 27-4.*

**HB 2083** by Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) would provide that appeals to the Appraisal Review Board or to court based on the selection of comparable properties and the application of appropriate adjustments be based upon the application of generally accepted appraisal methods and techniques. *There were no amendments.*

**Next Week:**

**House Calendar:**

**SB 853** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) and Angie Chen Button (R-Richardson) would provide that an *electronically filed sales tax permit application* does not have to be signed by the applicant. *It is on the House Local and Consent calendar for Tuesday, May 19, 2015.*

**Monday’s Senate Intent Calendar:**

The **House Ways and Means Committee** will meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in E2.010 of the capitol extension to take up:
SB 279/SJR 20 by Kirk Watson (D-Austin) would propose a constitutional amendment authorizing political subdivisions other than school districts to adopt a residential homestead exemption of at least $5,000.

SB 762 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would increase the exemption amount for tangible personal property held for the production of income from $500 to $2,500.

SB 1215 by Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) would re-establish the State Property Tax Board and transfer the functions and duties of the Comptroller’s Property Tax Assistance Division to the board.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS:

Passed the House:

SB 140 by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Tom Craddick (R-Midland) would institute a sales tax exemption for telecommunications services exclusively in connection with agriculture. SB 140 was substituted for HB 85 on the House floor and passed the House on the Local and Consent calendar.

Next Week:

Monday’s Senate Intent Calendar:

HB 80 by Tom Craddick (R-Midland) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) would prohibit the use of a wireless communication device to read, write, or send a text-based communication while operating a motor vehicle unless the vehicle is stopped and is outside a lane of travel. (committee substitute)

TORT:

Passed the House:

HB 1692 by Kenneth Sheets (R-Dallas) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) would amend the forum non conveniens statute to require a court to give substantial deference to a plaintiff’s choice of a Texas court. The committee substitute and two floor amendments were adopted and it passed by a vote of 132-5. It is set for a hearing in the Senate State Affairs Committee on May 18, 2015.

Next Week:

The House Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence Committee will meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in E2.026 to take up:
SB 1457 by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) and Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) would prohibit a person from sending ten or more written communications per calendar year in which the person makes a bad faith claim of patent infringement against a person located or doing business in Texas.

WORKERS’ COMPENSATION:

Passed the House:

HB 1390 by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) would waive a governmental entity’s immunity from retaliation lawsuits brought by public employees. It would effectively overrule the Texas Supreme Court’s decision in Travis Central Appraisal District v. Norman. It passed by a vote of 126-16.

Next Week:

House Calendar:

SB 978 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) and Kenneth Sheets (R-Dallas) would require the Texas Department of Insurance to annually produce to the public information concerning the department’s general process and methodology for rate review, including factors that contribute to the disapproval of a workers’ compensation insurance rate. It is on the House Local and Consent calendar for Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

End-Of Session Slow-Down Rules – Rules that institute deadlines prior to the end of the legislative session begin to kick in Monday, May 11 2015:

May 11, 2015 – Last day for House committees to report House Bills and House Joint Resolutions (119th day).

May 12, 2015 – Last House Daily Calendar with House Bills and House Joint Resolutions must be distributed by 10:00 p.m. due to the 36-hour layout rule for calendars (120th day).

May 13, 2015 – Last House Local and Consent Calendar with Consent House Bills must be distributed by 9:00 a.m. due to the 48-hour layout rule for Local and Consent calendars (121st day).

May 14, 2015 – Last day (midnight deadline) for the House to consider Second Reading House Bills and House Joint Resolutions on the regular calendar (122nd Day).
May 15, 2015 – Last day (midnight deadline) for House to consider consent House Bills on Second and Third Reading and all Third reading House Bills and House Joint Resolutions on the regular calendar (123rd Day).

May 20, 2015 – Last House Local and Consent Calendar with local House Bills must be distributed by 9:00 a.m. due to the 48-hour layout for Local and Consent calendars (128th day).

May 22, 2015 – Last day for the House to consider local House Bills on Second and Third Reading. First day the Senate can consider bills and resolutions the first day they are posted on the Intent Calendar (130th Day).

May 23, 2015 – Last day for House Committees to report Senate Bills and Senate Joint Resolutions (131st Day).

May 24, 2015 – Last House Daily Calendar with Senate Bills and Senate Joint Resolutions must be printed and distributed (10:00 p.m. deadline) due to the 36-hour layout rule for regular calendars (132nd Day).

May 25, 2015 – Last House Local and Consent Calendar with Senate Bills must be distributed by 9:00 a.m. due to the 48-hour layout rule for Local and Consent calendars (133rd Day).

May 26, 2015 – Last day for the House to consider Second Reading Senate Bills and Senate Joint Resolutions on the regular calendar (134th Day).

May 27, 2015 – Last day for the House to consider local and consent Senate bills on Second and Third Reading and to consider all Third Reading Senate bills and Senate Joint Resolutions on the regular calendars. Last day for the Senate to consider all bills and joint resolutions on Second or Third Reading (135th Day).

May 28, 2015 – All Senate amendments must be distributed in the House before midnight due to the 24-hour layout rule (136th Day).

May 29, 2015 – Last day for the House to act on Senate amendments. Senate copies of conference committee reports on tax, general appropriations and reapportionment bills must be printed and distributed before midnight due to the 48-hour lay-out rule (137th Day).

May 30, 2015 – In the House, all conference Committee reports must be printed and distributed by midnight due to the 24-hour layout rule. In the Senate, all conference committee reports must be printed and distributed (other than those required to be printed the 137th day) before midnight due to the 24-hour lay-out rule (138th Day).
May 31, 2015 – Last day for the House to adopt conference committee reports and to discharge conference committees and adopt Senate amendments. Last day for the Senate to adopt conference committee reports or concur in House amendments (139th Day).

June 2, 2015 – Corrections only in the House and Senate. Last day of the session with midnight deadline to adjourn *Sine Die* (140th Day).

State Websites - Additional information can be obtained via the Senate, House, and capitol websites:

www.senate.state.tx.us
www.house.state.tx.us
www.capitol.state.tx.us