

Steering Committee:
Gary VanDeaver, Chairman
Alma Allen, Vice Chairman

Angie Chen Button
Liz Campos

Mary González
Donna Howard

Ann Johnson
Ken King
Oscar Longoria

J. M. Lozano
Toni Rose

John Smithee
David Spiller

HOUSE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

daily floor report

Thursday, May 8, 2025
89th Legislature, Number 59
The House convenes at 10 a.m.
Part Three

Two bills are on the Major State Calendar, one resolution is on the Constitutional Amendments Calendar, and 81 bills are on the General State Calendar for second reading consideration today. The list of bills in Part Two of the *Daily Floor Report* begins on the following page.



Gary VanDeaver
Chairman
89(R) - 59

HOUSE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

Daily Floor Report

Thursday, May 08, 2025

89th Legislature, Number 59

Part 3

HB 4205 by Harless	Increasing LEA compensation in certain counties, revising definitions	130
HB 4279 by Davis	Requiring delivery of unclaimed money to urban scholarship funds	132
HB 4377 by Villalobos	Amending requirements for DFPS handling of genetic material	134
HB 4838 by Morales Shaw	Requiring assessment of language access in health services	136
HB 5424 by Bonnen	Establishing volunteer firefighter compensation limits	138
HB 5294 by Bonnen	Establishing coursework and admissions requirements for medical schools	139
HB 4870 by Davis	Establishing a relative and kinship care grant program	141
HB 4763 by Olcott	Requiring colleges to submit fraud, waste, abuse reports to state auditor	143
HB 5639 by J. Garcia	Requiring TDCJ to establish a veteran housing program	144
HB 4112 by Landgraf	Exempting certain nuclear reactors and research from permit prohibitions	146
HB 2275 by Morgan	Requiring Texas surplus line insurance contracts to be under Texas law	148
HB 1677 by Canales	Amending provisions on investigation of certain municipal firefighters	150
HB 5014 by Isaac	Establishing a special forces veteran designation and related exemptions	152
HB 3848 by Hernandez	Allowing electronic submission of certain inspection reports and fees	155
HB 3797 by Ashby	Updating terminology regarding ACT practice tests	156
HB 3727 by Patterson	Establishing a railroad grade separation grant program	157
HB 3709 by DeAyala	Requiring manual counts in certain countywide polling places	160
HB 3177 by Anchia	Authorizing a municipality inspector general to commission peace officers	162
HB 3057 by Landgraf	Amending coverage requirements for certain cancer treatment	164
HB 4176 by LaHood	Authorizing former peace officers to investigate certain vehicle collisions	166
HB 4202 by Swanson	Amending proof of identity for acknowledging a written instrument	168
HB 2180 by Cunningham	Allowing a defendant to waive the right to return of a seized weapon	169
HB 3528 by McQueeney	Amending vehicle safety inspection provisions	171
HB 3658 by Morgan	Requiring instruction on current building codes for insurance adjusters	173

- SUBJECT:** Increasing LEA compensation in certain counties, revising definitions
- COMMITTEE:** Intergovernmental Affairs — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — C. Bell, Zwiener, Cortez, C. Garcia Hernandez, Leo Wilson, Luther, Rosenthal, Spiller, Tepper
- 1 nay — Lowe
- 1 absent — Cole
- WITNESSES:** For — Terry Allbritton, Harris County Constable Precinct 5; Mark Herman, Harris County Constables Office Pct 4; Jack Cagle (*Registered, but did not testify*); Jennifer Szimanski, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT); James Parnell, Dallas Police Assoc; Paul Simpson and Corey Hodge, Harris County Constable Pct 3; Kenneth Key, Harris County Constables Office PCT 4; Clark Miller, Harris County Deputies' Organization; Phil Sandlin, Harris County Precinct 8 Constable; Mike Lee, Harris County Sheriff's Office; Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers' Union; Matthew Bentley, Houston Region Business Coalition; John Sierega, TMPA; Steven Deline)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that pay disparity among law enforcement agencies (LEAs) in large metropolitan areas has caused some agencies to lose experienced personnel to those able to offer higher pay.
- DIGEST:** HB 4205 would require the commissioners court of a county with a population of at least 3.3 million that increased the compensation or employment benefits for a class of police officers to increase by the same amount the compensation or employment benefits to all police officers within that class who received their compensation and employment benefits primarily through county funding.
- The county commissioners court would be required to provide funding to each law enforcement agency, office, or department of the county

necessary to provide the required increase in compensation or employment benefits and would be prohibited from reducing a component of the budget of those entities as a result of the required increase.

HB 4205 also would revise the definition of “police officer” in relevant provisions of the Local Government Code to specify that it included a paid employee who was certified or licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) and employees who served in the office of a district attorney as an investigator or in the office of the county fire marshal. The bill would amend the definition of a “political subdivision” to include a county. The definition of “public employer” would be extended to include a commissioners court.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Requiring delivery of unclaimed money to urban scholarship funds
- COMMITTEE:** Higher Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Wilson, Howard, A. Davis, Lalani, Lambert, V. Perez, Shofner, VanDeaver, Ward Johnson
- 2 nays — Shaheen, Tinderholt
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Bianca Arvin-Eagle; Isaac Chavira; Steven Deline; Susan Stewart)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that, while local exchange companies have the option to direct unclaimed funds to a scholarship fund for urban students, they are not required to do so, causing inconsistent contributions across companies that could limit the availability of scholarships for students in need.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 4279 would require, rather than authorize, a local exchange company to deliver reported unclaimed money to a scholarship fund for urban students instead of to the comptroller. The bill also would require, rather than authorize, a local exchange company to deliver the money only to a scholarship fund established by one or more local exchange companies to enable needy students from urban areas to attend a postsecondary institution.
- If a company failed to deliver property to the scholarship fund for urban students as required by the bill on or before the latest date for delivery of property to the comptroller as required by statute, a penalty equal to 10 percent of the value of the property due would be imposed on the company for each day on or after the date on which the company failed to deliver the property.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2025.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, passage of the bill would result in an indeterminate reduction in transfers of reported unclaimed money to the state.

- SUBJECT:** Amending requirements for DFPS handling of genetic material
- COMMITTEE:** Human Services — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — Hull, Manuel, A. Davis, Dorazio, C. Morales, Noble, Richardson, Rose, Schatzline, Slawson, Swanson
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Steven Deline)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Audrey O'Neill, DFPS Resource Witness)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that the retention of genetic material, such as DNA samples, in certain child welfare cases by the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) after the original purpose for the sample has been fulfilled could pose risks to individual privacy and allow for the misuse of or unauthorized access to sensitive personal data.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 4377 would require the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and any testing laboratory used by DFPS to promptly destroy any genetic material and delete any genetic information obtained from an individual for the purpose of a genetic test after the purpose for which the sample was obtained had been accomplished. The bill would require DFPS and testing laboratories to retain the results of a genetic test. These results would be confidential under statutory provisions relating to the confidentiality of DFPS information.
- By January 1, 2026, DFPS and any testing laboratory used by DFPS would be required to destroy all genetic material and delete genetic information as required by the bill.
- The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

NOTES: According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of about \$5.7 million to general revenue related funds through the biennium.

- SUBJECT:** Requiring assessment of language access in health services
- COMMITTEE:** Human Services — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Hull, Manuel, A. Davis, C. Morales, Noble, Richardson, Schatzline
- 1 nay — Slawson
- 3 absent — Dorazio, Rose, Swanson
- WITNESSES:** For — Blanca Perez, Amor Eretno Provider Services; Katherine Strandberg, Every Body Texas; Aleja Newman, NAKASEC Action Fund Texas; Sarah Syed, Woori Juntos (*Registered, but did not testify*: Terra Tucker, Alliance for Safety and Justice and Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice; Clarice Cross, Asian Family Support Services of Austin; Sameeha Rizvi, Council on American-Islamic Relations, Texas; Tanya Lavelle, Disability Rights TX; Lynn Cowles, Every Texan; Jamie Olson, Feeding Texas; Cyrus Reed, Lone Star Chapter Sierra Club; Nicole Malone, National Association of Social Workers- Texas Chapter; Katharina Dechert, Tahirih Justice Center; Sarah Crockett, Texas CASA; Molly Voyles, Texas Council on Family Violence; Matt Dowling, Texas Medical Association; Amanda Tollett, Texas Medical Association; Desiree Ingram, Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition; Kerrie Judice, TexProtects; Ashley Harris, United Ways of Texas; Hea Ja Choi, Si hwa Gi, Young Kil Han, Geum Ryeon Lee, Hyunja Norman, Steven Wu, Woori Juntos; Diana Fite MD; Mary Ibarra)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Rolland Niles, HHSC)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that language barriers may prevent non-English speakers in Texas from accessing critical health and emergency services. Some have suggested that access to these services by non-English speakers could be expanded by assessing and addressing gaps in

language accessibility across programs administered by the Health and Human Services Commission and the 2-1-1 service network.

DIGEST:

HB 4838 would require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to employ a language access coordinator to assess and identify gaps in non-English speakers' access to the agency's health and human services programs and the 2-1-1 services provided by the Texas Information and Referral Network. The coordinator would be required to submit a report to the executive commissioner of HHSC that summarized the findings and included recommendations for increasing access to health and human services programs and the 2-1-1 services statewide, within one year of employment.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025 and expire June 1, 2027.

- SUBJECT:** Establishing volunteer firefighter compensation limits
- COMMITTEE:** Intergovernmental Affairs — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — C. Bell, Zwiener, Cortez, C. Garcia Hernandez, Leo Wilson, Luther, Rosenthal, Spiller, Tepper
- 1 nay — Lowe
- 1 absent — Cole
- WITNESSES:** For — Jeff Allen, League City Fire Department; Daniel Gibbs, League City Volunteer Fire Department (*Registered, but did not testify*: Randy Cain, Texas Fire Chiefs Association; John Carlton, Texas State Association of Fire and Emergency Districts)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Government Code sec. 419.0322(c) prohibits a fire department from compensating, reimbursing, or providing benefits to a volunteer or other auxiliary fire fighter to the extent that such a person would be considered fully paid fire protection personnel.
- Concerns have been raised that, while the majority of fire departments across the state depend on the services of volunteer fire protection personnel, volunteer firefighters are not compensated for the essential services they provide to their communities.
- DIGEST:** HB 5424 would replace the prohibition on a fire department to compensate volunteer firefighters under Government Code sec. 419.0322(c) with a restriction that, in a calendar year, a fire department could not compensate, reimburse, or provide benefits exceeding 20 percent of the total compensation paid to full-time fire protection personnel in the adjacent area to any individual designated as a volunteer or auxiliary firefighter.
- The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

SUBJECT: Establishing coursework and admissions requirements for medical schools

COMMITTEE: Higher Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Wilson, A. Davis, Lalani, Shaheen, Shofner, Tinderholt,
VanDeaver, Ward Johnson

2 nays — Howard, V. Perez

1 absent — Lambert

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jared Ross, Do No Harm Action)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Amanda Garcia, Texas AFT-
AAUP; Steven Deline; Eve Margolis)

BACKGROUND: Some have suggested that provisions should be established in state law to ensure that medical school admissions policies do not conflict with the state's prohibitions on diversity, equity, and inclusion offices and programs, and that medical school grading systems reflect students' true performance.

DIGEST: HB 5294 would prohibit a medical school from granting preference based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin to an applicant for employment or admission to the medical school or a degree or certificate program. The bill could not be construed as prohibiting bona fide qualifications based on sex that were reasonably necessary to the normal operation of a medical school.

In making admissions decisions for a medical degree or certificate program, a medical school would be required to consider an applicant's performance on a standardized test appropriate for the program that focused on knowledge of and critical thinking applicable to science and medical practice, except that the applicant's performance on the standardized test could not be used as the sole criterion for consideration of the applicant.

The bill would require each medical school to ensure that any coursework offered in the curriculum required for a medical degree or certificate assessed a student's performance on the coursework based on the assignment of a letter grade from A to F. A medical school could not offer such coursework, including any assignment or other component of the coursework, on a pass/fail basis.

Except as required to comply with state or federal law, a medical school could not revise its academic standards for the admission of a student or the award of a degree or certificate unless the school submitted to the Legislature and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board a copy of the proposed standards, a concise general statement of the reasons for the proposed standards, and the date on which the proposed standards would become effective.

The bill would apply beginning with admission for the 2026 spring semester and would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Establishing a relative and kinship care grant program
- COMMITTEE:** Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — Leach, Johnson, Dutton, Dyson, Flores, J. González, Hayes, LaHood, Landgraf, Moody, Schofield
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Kathy Green, AARP Texas; Mercedes Bristol, Texas Grandparents Raising Grandchildren; Kerrie Judice, TexProtects (*Registered, but did not testify*); Andrea Sparks, Buckner International; Sarah Crockett, Texas CASA; Amy Bresnen, Texas Family Law Foundation; Lauren Rose, Texas Network of Youth Services; Ashley Harris, United Ways of Texas; Steven Deline; Nik Machado; Samantha Weeks)
- Against — None
- On — Crystal Leff-Pinon, Texas Indigent Defense Commission; Cindy Dyar
- BACKGROUND:** Some have suggested that removing financial barriers to legal decision-making could help support kinship caregivers and ensure children remain in safe, familiar homes.
- DIGEST:** HB 4870 would require the Office of Court Administration (OCA), using funds appropriated or otherwise available for the purpose, to develop and administer a grant program for eligible nonprofit organizations that provided legal assistance related to assuming care of a child to relative or kinship caregivers whose incomes were at or below 400 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Legal assistance would include advice, consultation, or assistance that related to:
- consent to treatment of a child by a nonparent;

- authorization agreements for nonparent adult caregivers of a child;
- temporary authorizations for care of a minor child;
- suits affecting the parent-child relationship; and
- any other legal documentation or proceedings related to assuming care of a child.

The bill would allow OCA to award a grant only in accordance with a contract between OCA and the recipient under which OCA was granted sufficient control to ensure the public purpose of providing legal assistance to relative or kinship caregivers was accomplished and that the state received the return benefit.

OCA could adopt rules to administer the grant program, including rules that established:

- grant application eligibility criteria;
- grant application procedures;
- guidelines related to grant amounts;
- procedures for evaluating grant applications; and
- procedures for monitoring the use of a grant and ensuring compliance with the conditions of the grant.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2025.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of \$241,941 to general revenue related funds through the biennium.

- SUBJECT:** Requiring colleges to submit fraud, waste, abuse reports to state auditor
- COMMITTEE:** Higher Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — Wilson, Howard, A. Davis, Lalani, V. Perez, Shaheen, Shofner, Tinderholt, VanDeaver, Ward Johnson
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Lambert
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Cary Cheshire)
- Against — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Bianca Arvin-Eagle; Steven Deline; Eve Margolis)
- BACKGROUND:** Currently, the state auditor’s office maintains a hotline for the reporting of fraud, waste, and abuse. Some have suggested that there is a lack of easy access to such reports received by many universities, however, because they are not required to share those reports with the state auditor’s office.
- DIGEST:** HB 4763 would require a public higher education institution that maintained a system for reporting suspected fraud, waste, and abuse involving state resources at the institution to submit each report received under the system to the state auditor’s office by the second business day after the date the institution received the report.
- The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Requiring TDCJ to establish a veteran housing program
- COMMITTEE:** Corrections — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 5 ayes — Harless, V. Jones, Lowe, Meza, Wharton
- 0 nays
- 4 absent — Allen, Harrison, Lozano, Schatzline
- WITNESSES:** For — Amite Dominck, Texas Prisons Community Advocates; Charlie Malouff, TX C.U.R.E., Inc. (*Registered, but did not testify*: Daniel Woodward, Texas Civil Rights Project; Steven Deline; Thomas Parkinson)
- Against — None
- On — *Registered, but did not testify*: Jason Clark, TDCJ)
- BACKGROUND:** Some have suggested that incarcerated veterans would benefit from the opportunity to live with other veterans in environments that promote rehabilitation and reintegration.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 5639 would require the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to establish a housing program for incarcerated individuals who are veterans. The program would be required to:
- dedicate specific cellblocks or dormitories for use in the program;
 - include procedures to verify the eligibility of each inmate during the diagnostic process; and
 - include procedures to allow an eligible inmate to opt in to the dedicated housing.
- TDCJ would be required to follow certain existing housing requirements and could deny housing to a veteran if doing so was necessary to protect the safety or security of other inmates or staff. A cellblock or dormitory

dedicated for the program could be used to house non-veterans if necessary.

TDCJ would be required to establish the program as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Exempting certain nuclear reactors and research from permit prohibitions
- COMMITTEE:** Environmental Regulation — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 6 ayes — Landgraf, Anchía, K. Bell, Bumgarner, Reynolds, Toth
0 nays
3 absent — Ordaz, Morales Shaw, Oliverson
- WITNESSES:** For — None
Against — Carolyn Croom, Texas Nuclear Watchdogs; Susybelle Gosslee
On — Cyrus Reed, Lone Star Chapter Sierra Club; Adrian Shelley, Public Citizen (*Registered, but did not testify*: Ashley Forbes and Robert Sadlier, TCEQ)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that current law prohibiting the storage and disposal of high-level radioactive waste in Texas lacks clarity regarding exemptions for all relevant nuclear facilities.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 4112 would expand the prohibition against the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) from issuing certain permits for the construction or operation of high-level radioactive waste storage facilities to include high-level radioactive waste disposal facilities.

The bill also would expand the exception to the prohibition to include facilities that stored high-level radioactive waste at the site of nuclear power reactors and university-operated nuclear research and test reactors. The bill would remove the requirement that such reactors be “currently or formerly operating.” Any high-level radioactive waste stored at an exempted facility would have to originate from the reactors located at the site at which the waste was stored.

CSHB 4112 would make similar changes to the prohibition against any person disposing of or storing high-level radioactive waste in the state by

exempting storage at the site of all, rather than currently or formerly operating, nuclear power reactors and university-operated nuclear research and test reactors. High-level radioactive waste stored at a facility under the exception would also be required to originate from the nuclear power reactors or nuclear research and test reactors located at the site at which the waste was stored.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Requiring Texas surplus line insurance contracts to be under Texas law
- COMMITTEE:** Insurance — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Dean, Vo, J. González, Goodwin, Hopper, Morgan, Paul, Spiller, Wharton
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Jay Simon, Chad T. Wilson Law Firm; Jeff Raizner, Raizner Slania; Ronald Cooper, Ron Cooper Public Adjusting; Ches Bostick, Texas Association of Public Insurance Adjusters (TAPIA); Craig Eiland, Texas Trial Lawyers Association; Ware Wendell, Texas Watch; Dale Terry (*Registered, but did not testify*: Charles Cascio, AARP Texas; Jake Posey, National Association of Public Insurance Adjusters (NAPIA))
- Against — Shannon Meroney, Velocity Risk; Jay Thompson, Wholesale Specialty Insurance Association (*Registered, but did not testify*: Walter Gonzales, American Property Casualty Insurance Association; Mike Meroney, Chubb; Jon Schnautz, Insurance Council of Texas; Ward Tisdale, National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies)
- On — Regan Ellmer, Independent Insurance Agents of Texas (*Registered, but did not testify*: Marianne Baker, Texas Department of Insurance)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that some high-risk surplus lines insurance policies contain provisions subjecting the policy to laws and arbitration outside the state and do not provide the same protections as Texas law.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 2275 would require a surplus line insurance contract for a risk located wholly in this state that contained an arbitration agreement to provide that the insurance contract would be interpreted in accordance with Texas law and the arbitration would be conducted by Texas law unless:
- the insurer and policyholder agreed to a different venue after the insurer provided written notice to the policyholder of the insurer’s request for a different venue; and

- the insurer provided the policyholder with a premium credit for the costs incurred by the policyholder as a result of the change in venue.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025, and would apply only to a surplus line insurance contract delivered, issued for delivery, or renewed on or after January 1, 2026.

- SUBJECT:** Amending provisions on investigation of certain municipal firefighters
- COMMITTEE:** Intergovernmental Affairs — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — C. Bell, Zwiener, Cole, Cortez, C. Garcia Hernandez, Lowe, Luther, Rosenthal, Spiller, Tepper
- 1 nay — Leo Wilson
- WITNESSES:** For — Leo Mendoza, Texas State Association of Fire Fighters
(*Registered, but did not testify*: Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers' Union; Steven Deline)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised regarding a lack of legal protections for firefighters employed by certain municipalities. Some have suggested that the law should be amended to prohibit municipalities from taking punitive action against a firefighter without conducting an appropriate investigation.
- DIGEST:** HB 1677 would prohibit a municipality with a population of 10,000 or more people from taking punitive action against a firefighter without conducting an investigation of the firefighter's alleged misconduct. An investigation would have to meet existing statutory standards and procedures, including, if applicable, the requirement to inform the firefighter in writing of the allegations in a complaint not less than 48 hours before an initial interrogation. The bill also would require the investigation to comply with any additional requirements imposed by a meet and confer or collective bargaining agreement.
- A municipality to which certain existing statutory standards and procedures under the Local Government Code did not apply would be required to adopt and comply with substantially identical procedures and with any additional procedures or requirements imposed by a meet and confer or collective bargaining agreement.

HB 1677 would supersede a conflicting provision in a meet and confer or collective bargaining agreement entered into on or after the bill's effective date. The bill would specify that a meet and confer or collective bargaining agreement could impose additional investigation requirements that did not conflict with the law. The bill would apply to a firefighter employed by a municipality with a population of 10,000 or more people, regardless of whether that municipality was covered by a meet and confer or collective bargaining agreement.

The bill would add to certain Government Code provisions that a municipal firefighter also would be entitled to receive a copy of a signed complaint against the firefighter in accordance with applicable procedures established by the bill.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

SUBJECT: Establishing a special forces veteran designation and related exemptions

COMMITTEE: Homeland Security, Public Safety & Veterans' Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 10 ayes — Hefner, R. Lopez, Canales, Dorazio, Hickland, Holt, Isaac, Louderback, McLaughlin, Pierson

0 nays

1 absent — Cortez

WITNESSES: For — Lesley Lehrmann, Mercy Gate Ministries; Erwin Ballarta; Keith Parry; Adam Ticknor; Sean Williamson (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jennifer Szimanski, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT); Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers' Union; Carlos Ortiz and Adrian Martinez, San Antonio Police Officers Association (SAPOA); Brian Hawthorne, Sheriffs' Association of Texas; Bryan Flatt, TMPA; Steven Deline; Karen Marshall)

Against — Jeff Moore, Associated Security Services and Investigators of the State of Texas; Mark Gillespie, Texas Association of Licensed Investigators (TALI)

BACKGROUND: Penal Code secs. 46.02 and 46.03 establish provisions on the unlawful carrying of weapons and places where weapons are prohibited. The Private Security Act, established in Occupations Code ch.1702, regulates the private security industry in Texas and provides exceptions to its provisions for government employees, law enforcement, and certain private security employees.

Some have suggested certain provisions of state law regarding the carrying of firearms and private security should be revised to acknowledge the unique training and firearms knowledge of special forces veterans and ensure that these individuals can more fully apply their skillsets to promote safety in Texas.

DIGEST: HB 5014 would amend provisions in the Penal Code, Occupations Code, and Government Code to exempt special forces veterans from offenses related to carrying a concealed handgun and require the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to include special forces veteran designations on handgun licenses and applications.

A special forces veteran would be defined as qualified as a veteran under state law and who served for at least 12 consecutive months in certain positions in the U.S. Army Special Forces, the U.S. Army 75th Ranger Regiment, U.S. Navy SEAL, the U.S. Marine Corps, or the U.S. Air Force at the enlisted pay grade of E5-E9, at the warrant officer pay grade of W1-W5, or at the commissioned officer pay grade O1-O10.

Exemptions. HB 5014 would amend Penal Code Sec. 46.15(a) to exempt a person who was carrying a handgun and held a lawful handgun license with a special forces veteran designation from the offenses of unlawfully carrying a weapon or possessing a weapon in places where weapons are prohibited. This exemption would apply only to an offense committed on or after January 1, 2026.

The bill would exempt from the Private Security Act a special forces veteran who held a license to carry a handgun with a special forces designation or a charitable, nonprofit organization that provided services only to further its mission, was exempt from the payment of federal income by being listed as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt entity, and was managed by a special forces veteran.

DPS requirements. The bill would require the DPS to include the special forces veteran designation on the face or reverse side of any original, duplicate, modified, or renewed handgun license if the license was issued to a special forces veteran who requested the designation and provided sufficient proof of military service and honorable discharge. The DPS director would have to adopt rules to implement the bill by December 1, 2025.

The bill also would require that a handgun license and an application for a handgun license provide space for an applicant to disclose military service that could qualify the applicant to receive a special forces veterans

designation in addition to a veteran's designation in the current application and space for the veteran to include proof to receive that designation.

The bill would prohibit DPS from accepting an application for or granting a special forces veteran designation before January 1, 2026, and would prevail over enacted codes that conflicted with the bill's provisions.

HB 5014 would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Allowing electronic submission of certain inspection reports and fees
- COMMITTEE:** Licensing & Administrative Procedures — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 12 ayes — Phelan, Thompson, Gerdes, Geren, Harless, Harris, Hernandez, Longoria, McQueeney, Patterson, M. Perez, Romero
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Walle
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jesus Moreno, Elevator Work Industry Preservation)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Doug Jennings, Charlotte Melder, TDLR)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that elevator and escalator inspection reports cannot be filed in an efficient manner due to restrictions on electronic submission.
- DIGEST:** HB 3848 would authorize the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation to permit inspection reports, other documents, and fees to be filed in a manner prescribed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR), including electronically.
- The bill would amend requirements for the purpose of determining timely filing of an inspection report for elevators, escalators, and related equipment to include that an inspection report and filing fees would be considered filed on the earlier of certain existing date requirements or the date of electronic submission, if filed in an electronic manner prescribed by TDLR.
- The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Updating terminology regarding ACT practice tests
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 15 ayes — Buckley, Bernal, Allen, Ashby, Bryant, Cunningham, Dutton, Frank, Hinojosa, Hunter, Kerwin, Leach, Leo Wilson, Schoolcraft, Talarico
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Crystal White, Texas Association of Community Schools; Amy Beneski, Texas Association of School Administrators; Raif Calvert, Kelly Rasti, Texas Association of School Boards; Jennifer Easley, Texas PTA)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jose Rios, Texas Education Agency)
- BACKGROUND:** ACT, Inc. discontinued its ACT-Plan test in 2014 and replaced it with the PreACT test in 2016. Some have suggested that Texas statute regarding standardized testing and campus academic distinction designations should be updated to reflect this change.
- DIGEST:** HB 3797 would replace references in the Education Code to “ACT-Plan” with references to “PreACT.”
- The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2025.

SUBJECT: Establishing a railroad grade separation grant program

COMMITTEE: Transportation — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 12 ayes — Craddick, M. Perez, Curry, Gámez, Harris Davila, Hefner,
LaHood, Little, C. Morales, E. Morales, Patterson, Paul

0 nays

1 absent — Canales

WITNESSES: For — Scott Piekarski (*Registered, but did not testify*: Steven Albright, AGC of Texas; Ross Milloy, Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council; Ben Wright, Blet TXSLB; Lindsay Mullins, BNSF Railway; T. J. Patterson, City of Fort Worth; Joshua Sanders, City of Houston; Kent Souriyasak, City of Leander; Nadia Islam, City of San Antonio; Rick Thompson, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas; Myra Leo, CPKC Railroad; Josie Castro Garcia, Dallas County; Elisa M. Tamayo, El Paso County; Amanda Posson, Every Texan; Katrina Miller, Farm&City; Neftali Partida, Greater Houston Partnership; Santiago Franco, Harris County Commissioners Court; Heidi Ruiz, Houston Police Department; Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers' Union; Cindy Irwin, Hutchinson County, County Judges and Commissioners Association; Jose Pulido, Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County; James Beauchamp, MOTRAN Alliance; Jeff Burdett, NFIB; Christopher Lee, North Texas Commission; Vic Boyer, San Antonio Mobility Coalition; Leonard Aguilar, Texas AFL-CIO; Jeff Emerick, Texas Association of Business; Marti Luparello, Texas City Terminal Railway Company; John Wilkerson, Texas Municipal Police Association (TMPA); Scott Rubin, Texas Police Chiefs Association; Lorena Campos, Texas Rail Advocates; Dennis Kearns, Texas Railroad Association; Jay Crossley, Vision Zero Texas; Bryce Dondero; Judah Rice)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Allan Rutter, Texas A&M Transportation Institute; Jeff Davis, Texas Department of Transportation)

BACKGROUND: Concerns have been raised that the state's population growth has increased the need for freight movement and generated roadway congestion. Some have suggested that establishing a grant program for projects that separate roads from railroads could improve safety, emergency response times, and economic productivity.

DIGEST: CSHB 3727 would require the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to establish and administer a program to award grants to political subdivisions to fund:

- rail-roadway grade separation projects that were located at intersections of railroads and public roadways that were not part of the state highway system; and
- rail-pedestrian grade separation projects that were located at railroad intersections and public pedestrian crossings.

CSHB 3727 would require each grant to be approved by the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC). Approval would be prohibited unless TTC determined that at least 10 percent of total project costs would be funded from non-state sources. The bill would limit grant program funding to legislative appropriations, gifts, or grants, including federal grants. TxDOT would be authorized to solicit and accept gifts and grants from any source for the program. The bill would prohibit the use of state highway fund money for any grants awarded under the bill.

A grant recipient would be required to designate TxDOT to manage the contracting, planning, and construction of the funded project. The recipient also would be required to enter into an agreement with TxDOT outlining the terms of the designation. As the recipient's designee, TxDOT would be responsible for executing all contracts related to the project in accordance with the law governing the making of contracts by or on behalf of the state.

CSHB 3727 would require the TTC, no later than October 1, 2025, to adopt rules to implement the grant program.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2025.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the fiscal implications of the bill cannot be determined because the amount and timing of legislative appropriations and amounts of gifts and grants that would be received by the Department of Transportation to fund rail-roadway grade separation project grant awards would be unknown.

- SUBJECT:** Requiring manual counts in certain countywide polling places
- COMMITTEE:** Elections — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Shaheen, Bucy, Isaac, Morales Shaw, Plesa, Swanson, Toth
1 nay — Wilson
1 absent — Raymond
- WITNESSES:** For — Laura Rogers, County & District Clerks Association; Andrew Eller, Election Integrity Committee and Secure Texas Elections Subcommittee of the State Republican Executive Committee, Self; Ed Johnson, Harris County Ballot Security; Katherine Cano; Ken Moore (*Registered, but did not testify*: Fred Shannon, Hart InterCivic; Daniel Hunt, SREC Committeeman SD3; Kathy Haigler; Russell Hayter; Wilma Putnam)
Against — Dr. Laura Pressley, True Texas Elections (*Registered, but did not testify*: Debbie Lindstrom, Citizens Defending Freedom; Veronikah Warms, Texas Civil Rights Project; Lucila Seri; Susan Valliant)
On — Christina Adkins, Texas Secretary of State; Terry Putnam
- BACKGROUND:** Election Code sec. 127.201 requires the general custodian of election records to conduct a manual count of all the races in at least 1 percent of the election precincts or in three precincts, whichever is greater, in which the electronic voting system was used.
Some have suggested that standardizing the post-election audit process, regardless of how or when Texans cast their votes, would improve the integrity and transparency of the process.
- DIGEST:** HB 3709 would revise Election Code sec. 127.201 to require the general custodian of election records to conduct a manual count of all the races in either:

- at least 1 percent of the election precincts or in three precincts, whichever is greater, in which the electronic voting system was used; or
- at least 1 percent of polling places participating in the Countywide Polling Place Program or in three countywide polling places, whichever was greater, in which the electronic voting system was used on election day and during early voting by personal appearance.

The bill would require the general custodian to post notice of the count on the county's website rather than in the custodian's office and would make certain other conforming changes.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Authorizing a municipality inspector general to commission peace officers
- COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security, Public Safety & Veterans' Affairs — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — Hefner, R. Lopez, Canales, Dorazio, Holt, Isaac, Louderback, McLaughlin
- 0 nays
- 3 absent — Cortez, Hickland, Pierson
- WITNESSES:** For — Bart Bevers, City of Dallas; Charles Reed, Dallas County Commissioners Court (*Registered, but did not testify*: M. Paige Williams, Dallas Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot; Steven Deline)
- Against — None
- On — Cullen Grissom, Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (*Registered, but did not testify*: Brian Hawthorne, Sheriffs' Association of Texas)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that when a large municipality establishes an Office of the Inspector General to investigate and resolve ethical issues within the city, the office does not have sufficient law enforcement authority to fully pursue its assigned tasks, forcing it to rely on external agencies.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 3177 would amend the Local Government Code to authorize a municipality with an Office of the Inspector General to commission investigators from the office as peace officers. This authorization would only apply to municipalities with a population of more than 1.2 million.
- The bill would prohibit inspector general investigators from investigating alleged misconduct committed by a peace officer if the law enforcement agency employing the peace officer maintained a unit within the agency responsible for investigating alleged misconduct committed by the

agency's peace officers, including an internal affairs unit or public integrity unit.

The bill would add inspector general investigators to the list of authorized peace officers in statutory provisions regarding the installation and use of tracking equipment, as well as access to certain communications.

CSHB 3177 also would amend certain provisions in the Code of Criminal Procedure, Human Resource Code, Occupations Code, Natural Resource Code, and Local Government Code related to types of peace officers to conform with certain acts of the 88th Legislature.

CSHB 3177 would take effect September 1, 2025, and would prevail over other acts of the 89th Legislature.

- SUBJECT:** Amending coverage requirements for certain cancer treatment
- COMMITTEE:** Insurance — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — Dean, Vo, J. González, Goodwin, Hopper, Morgan, Paul, Wharton
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Spiller
- WITNESSES:** For — Aaron Lyss, OneOncology and The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders; Theresa Cameron (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jesse Lewis, Bristol Myers Squibb; Mark Vane, HB Strategies; Lauren Fleming, Texas Coalition For Patients; Danielle Lobsinger Bush, Texas Healthcare and Bioscience Institute; Will Holleman, Texas Hospital Association; Ware Wendell, Texas Watch)
- Against — None
- On — Blake Hutson, Texas Association of Health Plans (*Registered, but did not testify*: Rachel Bowden, Texas Department of Insurance)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised about patient access to Chimeric Antigen T-cell (CAR T) therapy, a treatment that uses T-cells in a person’s immune system to target and destroy cancer cells and requires inpatient monitoring for 28 to 30 days at an authorized facility. Some have suggested requiring coverage for the therapy under health benefit plans could expand access to additional certified facilities and improve patient access to treatment.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 3057 would require a health benefit plan that provided coverage for chimeric antigen receptor T-cell (CAR T) therapy to provide coverage for such therapy if it was medically necessary and administered by a health care provider who was both enrolled in an approved risk evaluation and mitigation strategy under applicable federal law and participating in the health benefit plan’s network.

The bill would specify the types of health benefit plans to which it applied, including an insurance company, a small employer health benefit plan, a standard or basic health benefit plan, a primary care coverage, a plan providing basic coverage, or a self-funded health benefit plan sponsored by a professional employer organization.

The bill would exempt any issuer or provider of health benefits under the state Medicaid program, including the Medicaid managed care program, or the child health plan program. The bill also would exempt pharmacy benefit managers administering pharmacy benefits under either program.

The bill would require the commissioner of insurance to adopt rules as necessary to administer the bill.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025, and would apply only to a health benefit plan delivered, issued for delivery, or renewed on or after January 1, 2026.

- SUBJECT:** Authorizing former peace officers to investigate certain vehicle collisions
- COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security, Public Safety & Veterans' Affairs — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Hefner, R. Lopez, Canales, Dorazio, Hickland, Holt, Isaac, McLaughlin, Pierson
- 1 nay — Cortez
- 1 absent — Louderback
- WITNESSES:** For — Jonathan Blanchard, Dallas Police Department (*Registered, but did not testify*: Geraldine Garcia, Andrade Van De Putte; Kathy Mitchell, Equity Action; Kirsten Budwine, Texas Civil Rights Project; Thomas Parkinson)
- Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jennifer Szimanski, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT); James Kershaw, Harris County Deputies' Organization FOP #39; James Smith, San Antonio Police Department; Brian Hawthorne, Sheriffs' Association of Texas (SAT); Bryan Flatt, TMPA)
- BACKGROUND:** Some have suggested that authorizing former peace officers to respond to and investigate minor motor vehicle accidents under certain conditions would help to increase responsiveness to vehicle collisions.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 4176 would authorize a former peace officer, who was designated by a law enforcement agency and had successfully completed a motor vehicle collision investigation training program approved by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE), to investigate a motor vehicle collision, regardless of whether the collision occurred on a property to which to rules of the road related to collisions apply, provided that no offense was committed during the collision and no injury or death resulted.

The designated peace officer would be required to make a written report summarizing the findings of the investigation and would be authorized to make a change or modification that would alter a material fact.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Amending proof of identity for acknowledging a written instrument
- COMMITTEE:** Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — Leach, Johnson, Dyson, Flores, J. González, Hayes, LaHood, Landgraf, Moody, Schofield
- 1 nay — Dutton
- WITNESSES:** For — Martin Renteria, Texas Notary Training Forum; Annette Donker (*Registered, but did not testify*: Guy Herman, Statutory Probate Judges of Texas)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Some have proposed that certain statutory provisions should be revised to allow identification of a credible witness who presents valid identification before an officer, such as a notary public, taking the acknowledgment of a written instrument to clarify the law and align the statute with notary provisions in the Texas Administrative Code.
- DIGEST:** HB 4202 would amend the definition of a credible witness providing an oath at the time the witness acknowledged a written instrument before an officer to include a person who provided the officer with a current identification card or other document issued by the federal government or any state government that contained the photograph and signature of the witness.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Allowing a defendant to waive the right to return of a seized weapon
- COMMITTEE:** Criminal Jurisprudence — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 6 ayes — Smithee, Cook, Little, Louderback, Money, Virdell
- 2 nays — Bowers, J. Jones
- 3 absent — Wu, Moody, Rodríguez Ramos
- WITNESSES:** For — Dan Zientek, Humble Police Department (*Registered, but did not testify*: Joshua Sanders, Houston Forensic Science Center; Nathan Carroll, Houston Police Department; Katy Mata, San Marcos Police Department; Tracy Engler, Tapeit)
- Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Chris McNutt, Texas Gun Rights; Elaina Brown James Brown, Shelia Franklin, Charlene Reagan, and Fran Rhodes, True Texas Project; Steven Deline; Brita Treat; Mark Treat)
- On — Brady Mills, Texas Department of Public Safety
- BACKGROUND:** Under current law, law enforcement agencies must preserve seized weapons in cases where a defendant has entered a guilty or nolo contendere plea, which has created storage burdens in evidence rooms. Some have suggested that allowing defendants in these cases to waive the right to return a seized weapon could reduce unnecessary storage costs and streamline the evidence disposition process.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 2180 would authorize a defendant in a criminal case who had entered a guilty or nolo contendere plea, with the advice of counsel, to waive the right to preservation of evidence and return of a seized weapon in connection with the case. The bill would require the waiver to be executed in substantially the same form provided in the bill, including the defendant's acknowledgment of rights.

If a court determined the waiver was knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily executed, the bill would require the court to enter an order providing for the disposition of the evidence or weapon, on or after the 120th day following the date of the order. The evidence or weapon could be:

- returned to a person, other than the defendant, claiming a right to or interest in the evidence;
- used for law enforcement purposes;
- sold by law enforcement; or
- destroyed.

A defendant who executed this waiver could revoke it within 120 days after the date of the court's order.

CSHB 2180 also would prohibit a prosecutor from requiring a defendant to waive these rights as part of a plea bargain and would allow crime laboratories to retain evidence or work product as needed.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

- SUBJECT:** Amending vehicle safety inspection provisions
- COMMITTEE:** Transportation — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Craddick, M. Perez, Curry, Hefner, LaHood, Little, C. Morales, Patterson, Paul
- 0 nays
- 4 absent — Canales, Gámez, Harris Davila, E. Morales
- WITNESSES:** For — Don Schwent, Enterprise Mobility (Enterprise, Alamo, National Car Rental) (*Registered, but did not testify*: Steven Deline)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Annette Quintero, TxDMV)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised that the three-year safety inspection period provided in statute is obsolete, as vehicle safety inspections are no longer statutorily required for noncommercial vehicles. Some have suggested that repealing unnecessary statutory provisions and reconciling corresponding statutory references would help clarify the law.
- DIGEST:** HB 3528 would repeal provisions related to mandatory vehicle safety inspections for noncommercial vehicles, including provisions that provide for an initial three-year inspection period for certain rental vehicles and the corresponding inspection fees.
- The bill would revise provisions related to inspection program replacement fees imposed during vehicle registration. The bill would require an applicant for initial registration of an applicable rental vehicle to pay a one-time fee of \$22.25, which the bill would require the comptroller to deposit by transferring \$16.25 to the Texas Mobility Fund and \$6 to the credit of the clean air account.

In addition, the bill would require the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to designate a 24-month vehicle registration period beginning on the first day of a calendar month and ending on the last day of the 24th month for passenger cars or light trucks that are sold in Texas or purchased by a commercial fleet buyer for use in the state, provided the vehicle had not been previously registered in Texas or another state and was from the current or preceding model year at the time of sale.

HB 3528 would make conforming changes to provisions regarding the composition of the clean air account and provisions providing for a three-year emissions inspection period for certain rental vehicles.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.

SUBJECT: Requiring instruction on current building codes for insurance adjusters

COMMITTEE: Insurance — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — Dean, Vo, J. González, Goodwin, Hopper, Morgan, Paul,
Spiller, Wharton

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Steven Deline)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Matt Tapp, Texas Department of
Insurance)

BACKGROUND: Some have suggested that required continuing education for insurance
adjusters should be amended to ensure that courses include building code
topics applicable to insured losses.

DIGEST: HB 3658 would require a continuing education program required for
licensed insurance adjusters to include at least one hour in each licensing
period of education relating to state and local building codes, including
information relating to:

- damage assessment and claim adjustment;
- policy coverage interpretations involving building codes; and
- mitigation and reconstruction standards applicable to insured
losses.

The bill would require the Department of Insurance to develop or certify a
course for adjusters on building code requirements and to ensure that the
course was available through continuing education program providers in
multiple formats, including self-paced study.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.