



88th Texas Legislature Fourth Called Session Updates

December 4th, 2023

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4th Called Session Updates

- Began on Tuesday, November 7th, at 6:00 PM
(same day that the previous special session ended)
- The Governor's proclamation included:
 - Legislation related to school safety measures and related state funding mechanisms.
 - Legislation relating to primary & secondary education, including the establishment of an education savings account program, the certification, compensation, and health coverage of certain public school employees, the public school finance system, special education in public schools, measures to support students that include certain educational grant programs, reading instruction, and early childhood education, the provision of virtual education, and public school accountability.
 - Legislation to do more to reduce illegal immigration by creating criminal offenses for illegal entry into this state from a foreign nation and illegal reentry or presence following denial of admission, exclusion, deportation, or removal; authorizing the removal of illegal immigrants from Texas; and providing indemnification and immunity for public officials, employees, or contractors in connection with the foregoing.
 - Legislation to impede illegal entry into Texas by providing more funding for the construction, operation, and maintenance of border barrier infrastructure, and additional funding for the Department of Public Safety for border security operations, including additional overtime expenses and costs due to an increased law enforcement presence to preserve public safety and security in the Colony Ridge development in Liberty County, Texas.

Bills to Discuss – 88th 4(S)

SB 1/HB 1 by Huffman/Jetton— Relating to primary and secondary education, including the certification, compensation, and health coverage of certain public school employees, the public school finance system...

House: Recommitted to Educational Opportunity Select committee, 11/17/2023

- \$7 billion omnibus bill (also boosts spending for public schools)
- Increases the basic allotment (base amount allocated to districts per student— from \$6,160 to \$6,700, would be adjusted for inflation starting in the 2026-27 school year)
- Includes a one-time \$4,000 bonus for full-time teachers, counselors, nurses and librarians
- Created a voucher program (40,000 students to exit the state's public education system to either receive \$10,500 annually for private school expenses or up to \$1,000 for homeschooling)

Bills to Discuss – 88th 4(S)

SB 3/HB 3 by Huffman/Jetton– Relating to an appropriation to provide funding for the construction, operation, and maintenance of border barrier infrastructure and border security operations, including funding for additional overtime expenses and costs due to certain increased law enforcement presence

Senate: Passed, 11/09/2023 House: Passed as Amended, 11/14/2023

- Appropriates \$1.54 billion in general revenue to the Trusteed Programs within the Office of the Governor for border security operations and the construction, operation, and maintenance of border barrier infrastructure
- \$40 million of the appropriation must be transferred to the Department of Public Safety for border security operations, including overtime expenses and costs due to increased law enforcement presence in the Colony Ridge development in Liberty County

Bills to Discuss – 88th 4(S)

SB 4/HB 4 by Perry/Spiller– Relating to prohibitions on the illegal entry into or illegal presence by a person who is an alien

Senate: Signed in the Senate, 11/21/2023

House: Signed in the House, 11/27/2023

- Creates a statewide criminal offense for illegal entry and reentry into the country
- Illegal entry is a Class B misdemeanor and carries a maximum six-month sentence; the offense may become a felony if the individual has previously been convicted for illegal entry or attempts to reenter after the initial conviction
- Reentry into the country following a previous denial of admission, deportation, or removal is a Class A misdemeanor
- Individuals cannot be detained or arrested for enforcement of this offense at a primary or secondary school, a religious place of worship, or a healthcare facility
- In lieu of prosecution individuals may agree to be returned to the foreign nation they entered from

SB 4/HB 4 by Perry/Spiller (cont'd)

- Upon conviction, the judge must enter an order requiring the individual to return to the foreign nation they entered from after completion of their sentence
- Prosecution may not be abated due to a pending federal determination
- Refusal to comply with an order to return to the foreign nation is a second-degree felony
- A local government official, employee, or contractor is immune from liability for damages arising from a cause of action under state law resulting from an action taken by the official, employee, or contractor
- A local government must indemnify an official, employee, or contractor for damages and attorney's fees

CUC and TAC updates

- CUC roundtable on State MH & Forensic Capacity last month:
 - discussed State Hospital Waitlist and Forensic Capacity and the impact on county jails
 - HHSC is getting ready to allocate funding for jail-based competency restoration services in El Paso through EHN
- TAC position on HB 4, 3(S)
 - Communication with Sen. Birdwell's office about neutrality of counties after amendments to the bill
 - Several urban counties did not approve of this, testified against the bill

Broadband Development Office Initial Plan

- The comment period is open for the Broadband Development Office's (BDO) initial proposal (ends Dec. 4th)
- This is an opportunity for Counties to express our unique needs to the BDO in response to their Initial Plan (attached to the backup)
 - The current plan only includes single family homes, and we are asking for multi-family dwelling units to be considered as well
 - This is an ask for all constituents to get funds and services as promised
- Education Super Highway (a national nonprofit working to increase internet connectivity) has been assisting counties with public comment submissions, drafted the template and we added our data



Questions?