

State Legislative Update

September 15, 2025



Focused Advocacy Team



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Burleson Delegation



Sen. Phil King - R



Rep. Helen Kerwin - R



**Rep. David Cook – R
Tarrant County**



89th Legislature – Partisan Breakdown



Senate: **20 Republicans** **11 Democrats** 3 Freshmen



House: **88 Republicans** **62 Democrats** 31 Freshmen



Started the Session with a Speakers Race



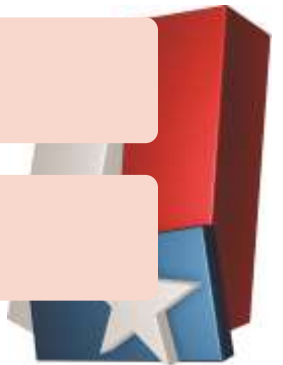
Rep. Burrows elected Speaker by vote of 88Y – 55N – 10PNV



88Y = **36R** and **49D**



No Democrat chairs in either chamber; only “subcommittee” D chairs in the House



89th Legislative Session – By the Numbers

- **9,014** bills/constitutional amendments (JRs, S.B.s & H.B.s)
- **2,500+** bills effecting municipalities (25+%)
- **1,231** bills/joint resolutions passed
- **260+** bill passed directly impacting cities (24%)



Gov. Abbott Priorities - 89th Session

	Topic	Result	Result
1	School Choice	Largest day-one school choice program in the nation	Passed
2	Property Tax Relief	\$10 billion in funding for property tax relief: Increased homestead exemption for homeowners, senior citizens; Reduced business personal property taxes	Passed
3	Water Infrastructure	Dedicated a \$20 billion generational investment in Texas' water infrastructure	Passed
4	Teacher Pay Raise	Provided \$4 billion for teacher and staff pay raises	Passed
5	Expand Career Training	Expanded career training education with an additional \$153 million so students can go directly into good-paying jobs	Passed
6	Bail Reform	Made it tougher for violent criminals to get out of jail on bail; Prohibited parole for human traffickers	Passed
7	Create a Texas Cyber Command	Established the Texas Cyber Command, the largest state-based cybersecurity department in America	Passed



Lt. Governor Patrick Priority Bills

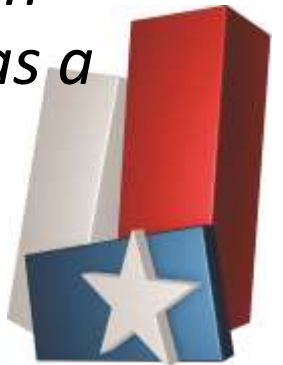
Bill #	Topic	Result
S.B. 2	School Choice	Passed
S.B. 3	Banning THC in Texas	Vetoed
S.B. 4	Increasing Homestead Exemption to \$140,000	Passed
S.B. 7	Increasing Investments in Texas' Water Supply	Passed
S.B. 9	Reforming Bail	Passed
S.B. 10	Placing the Ten Commandments in School	Passed
S.B. 11	Freedom to Pray in School	Passed
S.B. 12	Parental Bill of Rights in Public Education	Passed
S.B. 13	Inappropriate Books in Public Schools	Passed
S.B. 14	Texas DOGE	Passed
S.B. 15	Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing	Passed
S.B. 17	Stopping Foreign Adversaries' Land Grabs	Passed
S.B. 19	Stopping Taxpayer Dollars for Lobbyists	Died in House



Leadership Perspectives on Session

*“The Speaker and I don’t keep track of what’s a S.B. or a House bill. That simply depends on the flow of legislation ... **The Speaker and I, and the members from both chambers, have never had a more positive and collaborative relationship in my 18 years in office** and that’s why this session will be the most productive in history”* – Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick

“As a longtime conservative member of the Texas House, I appreciate the input and perspective from our Senate colleagues in crafting legislation and the support of Lieutenant Governor Patrick in making sure this was a banner conservative session for our state.” – Speaker Dustin Burrows



City Legislative Priorities

The City will **seek introduction** of the following legislation:

1. The approval of a **qualified hotel project** bill, as authorized under Chapter 351 of the Tax Code.

The City will **support** the following legislation:

1. That ensures **comparable workers' compensation coverage for firefighters and EMTs** deployed through Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System (TIFMAS) and Texas Task Force 1 and 2 for state deployments.
2. That **strengthens protections for firefighters and EMTs by recognizing presumptive cancers** as job-related illnesses or injuries.
3. That enables relocation of **migratory egrets** that have roosted in residential areas.
4. Support the extension of SB 2476 to **eliminate balance billing for out-of-network ground ambulance services** under commercial health plans.



City Priority: HB 3192 by Kerwin / SB 2622 by King Qualified Hotel Project

- Authorized a 10-year rebate of state HOT and sales taxes collected at the project
- 21 other cities filed similar legislation (with some differences in certain bills)
- **HB 3192** passed the House committee and was set on the House calendar but was postponed
- However, the Burleson bill was, *as envisioned all along*, rolled into an “omnibus” bill, **HB 2974** by Craddick / **King**
- A fateful amendment that limited all qualified cities to just one project was added by Sen. Birdwell (R-Waco) to HB 2974 in the Senate
- That amendment ultimately killed the bill due to opposition from other cities



City Priority: HB 134 by Meyer

Sales Tax Destination

- Would have established destination sourcing as the state's default sourcing method, with exceptions for certain small businesses and businesses with active local economic development agreements.
- Passed committee but died in House Calendars.



City Priority: HB 2786 by Turner/Geren

Re-Appraisals

- Would have required an annual appraisal to be conducted by appraisal districts; to clarify an apparent inconsistency in the Tax Code; Section 23.01(a) that requires a reappraisal every January 1, but Section 25.18(b) appears to allow reappraisals once every three years.
- HB 2786 died in the Senate.
- However, an amendment by Rep. Charlie Geren (R-Lake Worth) was added to to **SB 973**, a bill sponsored by Rep. Chris Turner (D-Arlington) that allows for certain images and information about a property to be posted on the internet, that read simply, *“The plan may not include a standard or timeline that prevents the chief appraiser from appraising property as necessary to comply with the requirements of Section 23.01(a).”*
- SB 973 is now law (filed into law without the Governor’s signature).



City Priority: SB 916 by Zaffirini

Consumer Protection from Balance Billing

- In 2019 the Texas Legislature passed S.B. 1264. Prior to this law, when a health insurer refused to pay the full amount charged by an out-of-network doctor for a medical procedure, the doctor could bill the patient for the balance.
- S.B. 1264, however, did not cover **ground-ambulance services provided by municipalities**.
- In 2023, SB 2497 prohibited ground-ambulance services provided by municipalities from engaging in balance billing. It ensured patients were not charged exorbitant prices for urgent trips to the hospital. However, anticipating passage of federal legislation that did not materialize, S.B. 2476 had an expiration date of September 1, 2025.
- S.B. 916 extends the expiration date from September 1, 2025, **to September 1, 2027**.



Land Use Bills That Passed

- **S.B. 15** – Tiny lots (applies to land with no recorded plat, zoned for single-family homes, and is five acres or more)
- **S.B. 840** – Allows multi-family in most non-single-family residential districts
- **S.B. 1883** – Impact fees process for adoption; 2/3 vote requirement; 3 year wait time to increase
- **S.B. 1844** – Disannexation (adjacent to “navigable waterway” + not connected to water system)
- **S.B. 2477** – Allows office to residential development by right



Open Government & Elections Bills Passed

- **S.B. 1025** – “This is a tax increase” ballot language
- **H.B. 1522** – Three-day posting rule = “business days”



Bills That Did Not Pass

- Prevent cities from **hiring advocates or joining associations** that advocate for their issues at the Capitol;
- Eliminate city issuance of various types of **debt**;
- Limit **380 agreements** to 10-years with 15-year renewal limit;
- **Preempt local authority** and authorize the attorney general enforce the law by taking away city sales tax revenue;
- Place strict limitations on city council authority over **property tax rates and budget** expenditures;
- Allow **accessory dwelling units** to be located in any residential area by right;
- Allow developers to bypass the city development review and inspection process and use a **private-third parties**;
- Eliminate the concept of the **extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ)**;
- Eliminate the **May uniform election date** for bonds and council elections; and
- Require cities to pay for private **utilities' relocation** costs.
- All of these bills failed to make it to the governor's desk, and that's in no small part due to city efforts to make their voices heard.



Special Session(s) Agenda

#	TOPIC	RESULT
1	CAMP SAFETY: Legislation to ensure and enhance youth camp safety.	PASSED
2	FLOOD WARNING SYSTEMS: Legislation to improve early warning systems and other preparedness infrastructure in flood-prone areas throughout Texas.	PASSED
3	FLOOD EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS: Legislation to strengthen emergency communications and other response infrastructure in flood-prone areas throughout Texas.	DIED
4	RELIEF FUNDING FOR HILL COUNTRY FLOODS	PASSED
5	DISASTER PREPARATION : Legislation to evaluate and streamline rules and regulations to speed preparedness for and recovery from natural disasters.	DIED
6	ELIMINATE STAAR TEST	PASSED
7	CUT PROPERTY TAXES: Legislation reducing the property tax burden on Texans and legislation imposing spending limits on entities authorized to impose property taxes.	DIED
8	PROTECT CHILDREN FROM THC: Legislation making it a crime to provide hemp-derived products to children under 21 years of age.	DIED
9	REGULATE HEMP-DERIVED PRODUCTS	DIED
10	PROTECT UNBORN CHILDREN: Prohibits the manufacture, mailing, and distribution of abortion-inducing drugs in Texas.	PASSED

Special Session(s) Agenda

#	TOPIC	RESULT
11	BAN TAXPAYER-FUNDED LOBBYING: Legislation prohibiting taxpayer-funded lobbying, including tax dollars to hire lobbyists and pay associations that lobby the Legislature.	DIED
12	PROTECT HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS	PASSED
13	POLICE PERSONNEL RECORDS: Legislation that protects law enforcement officers from public disclosure of unsubstantiated complaints in personnel files.	DIED
14	PROTECT WOMEN’S SPACES: Legislation protecting women’s privacy in sex-segregated spaces.	PASSED
15	ATTORNEY GENERAL ELECTION POWERS: Legislation proposing a constitutional amendment allowing the Attorney General to prosecute state election crimes.	PASSED
16	CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING	PASSED
17	TITLE THEFT & DEED FRAUD	PASSED
18	WATER PROJECT INCENTIVES: Legislation that authorizes political subdivisions to reduce impact fees for builders who include water conservation and efficiency measures.	PASSED
19	STATE JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT	PASSED

Special Session(s) Agenda: Items Added During Special

#	TOPIC	RESULT
20	POLICE FILES: Legislation that protects law enforcement officers from public disclosure of unsubstantiated complaints and information related to law enforcement agency files.	DIED
21	SAME DAY VOTER REGISTRAITON: Legislation related to election procedures regarding accepting a voter with a residence address that is not current and the immediate effect.	DIED
22	QUORUM-BREAK PUNISHMENT: Legislation to establish penalties for lawmakers who intentionally absent themselves from a session.	PASSED
23	OTC IVERMECTIN: Legislation authorizing individuals to purchase Ivermectin at pharmacies, framed around themes of medical choice and access.	PASSED
24	EAST TX GROUNDWATER: Legislation directing the Texas Water Development Board to study East Texas aquifers prior to issuing permits.	DIED

Bills That Did Not Pass: Special Session

- **SB 10**, would have lowered the voter-approval tax rate calculation for certain cities, did not pass.
- As passed by the Senate, the bill lowered the revenue multiplier in the voter-approval property tax rate calculation from 3.5 percent to 2.5 percent for cities above 75,000 population.
- After the House made changes to SB 10, the bill applied to all cities and the multiplier was lowered to 1% with an exception for “public safety.”
- The Senate rejected the House amendments
- A coalition of Republican and Democrats joined together in the House to vote down the Senate conference committee report 60-71.
- Although the two parties had different reasons for their opposition, Republican members primarily objected to the report because they believed the bill should be applicable to all Texas cities, regardless of their size while Democrats believe the bill is ineffective.
- Another bill, **HB 17**, would have required a city to mail the notice of a public hearing on the property tax rate to each property owner in the city, also did not pass.
- Also not passing this special session... the city expenditure limitation proposals in **HB 46 and HB 73**.



Questions?

