



THE 2025 POST-LEGISLATIVE SESSION EDITION

# TEXAS CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

Working on issues of major importance to the  
Texas construction industry

Summer 2025



# Message from the President

As I reflect on the last legislative session, and over 25 years of TCA advocacy at the Capitol, I'm reminded that our interest and focus has always been, and remains, on the long game. TCA is not looking to pass a bill just to say we scored. Our focus is on meaningful statutory reforms that level the playing field for our members and strengthen the Texas construction industry. In light of that, while some of our issues passed, there were no sweeping reforms this time; however, as with each session before this one, progress on some of our major issues was made. Keep reading this issue to find out what construction laws are changing, and know that we will be here pushing our agenda again in 2027.



A good legislative advocacy program includes a defense of its turf. During the 89th Texas legislative session, there was an attack from electric companies on the Construction Indemnification Act, which provides protection to our members by making broad form indemnification clauses void in most construction contracts. Since its inception in 2011, the Act has stood unchanged and TCA is thankful to the Texas Senate for rejecting proposed changes and for keeping it strong. There's more on this topic in this issue.

While we keep vigil on Texas legislative actions, I encourage you to take advantage of all that comes with your membership in TCA. We have negotiated discounts on several services, including 401(k) administration. More details can be found on our webpage: [www.texcon.org](http://www.texcon.org).

And are you a TCA member who shared in the **\$42 million** distributed by Texas Mutual Insurance Company to the Texas Construction Safety Group in 2024 for its workers' compensation performance? If not, call your insurance agent TODAY to see if your company qualifies to be a member of the group.

Thanks for being a member!

*Raymond*

"Rome wasn't built in a day, but they were laying bricks every hour."

~ John Heywood

## Stay Up to Date on the Texas Construction Industry!



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# TEXAS CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

## BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP



### TCA'S WORKERS' COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Texas Mutual Insurance Co. provides premium discounts for lower workers compensation insurance costs through its group purchasing power and Safety Groups. The program was developed to benefit companies in all construction trades. In addition to participants being eligible for Texas Mutual Insurance Co.'s regular dividend, they are also eligible for the additional TCA group dividend and enhanced premium discount for upfront savings. Check out the Texas Construction Safety Group at [txconstructionwc.com](http://txconstructionwc.com)!



### OFFICE DEPOT BUSINESS SOLUTIONS/OFFICE DEPOT DISCOUNTS

Offered through TCA's member benefit program, TCA has partnered with ODP Business Solutions and Excelerate America to provide our members with discounts on almost all products. TCA members receive 10-30% off the top 100 business items purchased most and up to 55% off additional business products. In addition to product discounts, our members save up to 40% on black and white copies, 25% on color copies and 40% on finishing services.



### TCA RETIREMENT COLLECTIVE 401(K)

A multiple employer 401(k) Plan exclusively designed for TCA Member Companies to provide 401(k) Plans to their employees, our multiple employer plan functions as a company's 401(k) support team so a company's staff doesn't need to act as 401(k) experts. The TCA Retirement Collective eases plan administration, is customizable, reduces employer fiduciary liability by 95%, is fully compliant, has low fees due to volume pricing and is serviced by our experienced national providers: The Retirement Advantage, Raymond James Financial Services, and Ameritas Retirement Plans.



### TOTAL WORKPLACE SAFETY (TWS).

The Texas Construction Association (TCA) wants all their members to work in the safest, most efficient possible manner. That is why TCA has partnered with TW Safety (TWS). TWS offers services including First Aid Kit Supplies and Refill Service, AED Defibrillator Sales and Maintenance Service and Safety Database Management.



### TCA RAPID! PAYCARD

This benefit provides a member company with one of the most comprehensive PayCard benefits and ePayroll programs designed for employers choosing to convert to electronic delivery of payroll at zero cost. The PayCard is free to TCA members.



### TCA WEX FUEL CARD

This card gives members the necessary tool to help reduce costly waste and save up to 15% on fuel management costs. WEX's fuel card program offers security by helping to protect against unauthorized spending and gives your drivers the convenience of being able to fill up just about anytime and anywhere. ExxonMobil & Leasing Associates have teamed up to provide TCA members with a new and improved fuel card. The ExxonMobil fuel card powered by WEX delivers significant savings and greater control over the costs associated with fueling fleet vehicles. Start saving 5¢ on every gallon!



### MINDFORGE

Mindforge is a platform that allows you to establish a communication network with your field personnel and put just-in-time information and education in the palm of their hands. With efficient knowledge sharing across all crews, you will save time, increase your work quality, and empower your workforce to stay safe. TCA members receive a 20% discount.



### TCA RESOURCE CENTER

The TCA Resource Center on the TCA website contains a wealth of information for members with glossaries of construction industry resources and construction industry associations. In addition, the Resource Center provides members a construction contract clause library with an extensive list of contentious clauses commonly found in construction contracts. Explanations and examples are given to help members apply the information to their own specific situations. The Resource Center also contains statutory lien waiver and lien notice forms.



### NAYLOR ASSOCIATION SOLUTIONS

In collaboration with the Texas Construction Association, Naylor Association Solutions established an exclusive career center for the association's members and industry. Employers can confidently list their job openings, ensuring heightened visibility amid the clutter of conventional job boards. Simultaneously,, job seekers gain access to a tailored job board featuring Texas-based opportunities aligned with their skills and interests.



Every day during a Texas legislative session, news outlets publish information and stories about what is going on in the pink capitol building in Austin. The majority of information is about hot topic issues important to all Texans – water infrastructure; property taxes; social issues; electric grid reliability; public education – just to name a few. TCA's world is much smaller. Our government affairs team focuses on general business issues and issues that impact the construction industry. We also work closely with other associations in the industry; however, TCA is the **ONLY** association that advocates solely for subcontractors and suppliers. And although much of our time is spent advocating for priority legislation, there's a lot more to it.

Among other things, in 2025, the TCA team worked to educate legislators about the industry; advocated for budget changes that would improve access to Career & Technology Education (CTE); and opposed legislation that would be harmful to subcontractors and suppliers.

## 1. Educate

Every two years TCA works to educate newly elected officials on issues that matter to our members such as retainage, inequitable contract clauses and liens. Very seldom does an incoming legislator have any type of background in or knowledge of commercial construction. In 2025, the Texas House had 31 freshman legislators, and in 2023 there were 26 freshmen. That means that over one third of the 150-member Texas House had one, or zero, sessions under their belts.

What does this look like? It can be an introductory meeting at a fundraising event, a meeting with new staff, or a more intense explanatory session with the elected official. It all depends on the level of interest of the member. For instance, a legislator that serves a district that encompasses the medical center in Houston may have less time and interest available to learn about commercial construction compared to a legislator whose district includes downtown Dallas or a fast-growing suburb of San Antonio. Many legislators are business owners themselves who can relate to the hurdles our members face making payroll and navigating government red tape. And then there are the lawyers – they are always shocked by the complexities of our construction law statutes.

Overall, TCA works during the session and during the interim to educate legislators and their staff about the commercial construction industry and the particular needs of subcontractors and suppliers in Texas.

## 2. Money, Money, Money

The TCA team is not often involved in budget issues; however, we worked on two items this last session focusing on CTE funding. First, we coordinated with the Be Pro Be Proud nonprofit organization to try to secure funding to support the deployment of one of its mobile workshop trucks in Texas. Second, TCA met with budget writers to advocate for an increase in the Skills Development Fund which is used to assist companies with training and educating their workforce. Both issues had ups and downs due to the unique politics of the Texas appropriations process. Rep. Keresa Richardson was immensely successful in amending the Appropriations Bill during the House Floor debate with a rider for \$1 million per year to Be Pro Be Proud;





however, once the bill was in conference (the process by which the House and Senate budget writers work through differences in the House version of the budget and the Senate version) the amendment was removed in favor of other funding priorities.

Regarding the Skills Development Fund, the Appropriations Act includes a total fund amount as well as a target number of participants to be served. The funds are divided and the Texas Workforce Commission comes up with “x” dollars per student allowed by Fund grants. The issue brought to us by the Construction Education Foundation in North Texas was that the amount per student has not been sufficient to fully educate a candidate.

TCA met early on with budget writers in an attempt to increase the Fund’s appropriation and/or amend the number of target employees. Throughout the Senate and House processes there were many numbers thrown around. The House version of the bill was more favorable; however, again, that was tempered during the conference process. In the end, the amount per student was increased slightly, and the Fund will be opened up to additional grant opportunities -- not necessarily what TCA was working toward, but we didn’t go backwards either. In the end, more companies will receive funding to educate more employees; and we will continue to work on this issue in the future.

### **3. Oppose Harmful Proposals**

Each session thousands of bills are filed in the House and in the Senate. In 2025 alone, a record 8,719 bills were filed. The TCA team reviews each and every bill to determine whether it impacts the construction industry or Texas businesses in general. Once the bills have been reviewed, we narrow it down to a thousand or so to track and monitor as they go through the process.

As expected, each session there are proposals that would impair or harm contractors and/or subcontractors and suppliers in particular. One example from 2025 is H.B. 3306. This bill proposed an amendment to the Insurance Code chapter that prohibits broad form indemnification clauses in construction contracts. This prohibition was the result of a hard-fought battle that lasted well over a decade pitting contractors against owners and other stakeholders. In the end, in 2011, the Legislature adopted the prohibition with narrow exceptions. House Bill 3306 proposed expanding the exceptions to add the

construction of “electric utility infrastructure”. Such an exception would open subcontractors to broad form indemnity clauses which serve to shift all of the risk to the “bottom of the totem pole”.

TCA publicly opposed H.B. 3306. Although only a small percentage of our membership would have been directly impacted by the measure, any additional exception to the prohibition is unacceptable. First, allowing broad form indemnity in any construction contract is patently inequitable. Forcing subcontractors to pay for other parties’ negligent actions is completely unfair. And second, once the camel’s nose is under the tent, there’s no telling what will happen in future sessions.



TCA worked hard to prevent the passage of H.B. 3306. Our team met with the staff of every member on the Senate Business & Commerce Committee -- some on more than one occasion. Additionally, our experts testified against the bill during the committee hearing. Indemnification is not a common or well understood topic by elected officials. When we explained the impact of the proposal on subcontractors our comments were well received by the committee members.

Finally, we touched base with the Committee Chair’s office every day until the deadline for committee passage of a bill to ensure that the bill would not be moved to the Senate floor for a vote.

In the end, we were successful in defeating H.B. 3306 – for now. There is no doubt that the electric utilities will try their amendment again in 2027 and when they do, TCA will be ready to educate elected officials and work against the proposal. ★

# Interview with Texas State Representative Richard Hayes

Rep. Richard Hayes is in his second term serving the people of House District 57 in Denton County. He is a Texas native and he practices real estate and business law at Hayes, Berry, White & Vanzant, LLP.



## **Rep. Hayes, what do you do when you are not working?**

When I'm not in Austin or at the law firm, you'll often find me volunteering in the community, working in the yard, or spending time with my eight grandchildren. They keep me young and remind me why we're fighting so hard to preserve liberty for future generations. My wife and I have been blessed with 59 years of marriage, and family time is precious to us. We attend Mass at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Denton which grounds me and provides the spiritual foundation that guides everything I do.



## **You are a Professional Registered Parliamentarian -- what's that like?**

It may sound dry to some, but there's something deeply satisfying about understanding the rules that govern fair and orderly debate. Being one of fewer than 350 Professional Registered Parliamentarians in North America is both an honor and a responsibility. Parliamentary procedure isn't just about Robert's Rules, it's about ensuring fairness, protecting minority rights, and maintaining order in democratic processes. I've had the privilege of serving as Parliamentarian all across the US, to the Republican Party of Texas, and I've coached high school and college parliamentary procedure teams that have won both state and



national championships. There's real satisfaction in teaching young people that democracy works best when everyone understands and follows the rules. The skills I've gained have served me well in the Legislature, where understanding procedure can mean the difference between passing good policy or watching it die on the House Floor.



## **What is good and correct about the Texas legislature, and what needs changing?**

What's good is that Texas still operates on the principle that we meet every two years, conduct our business, and then get out of the way so Texans can live their lives. Less government is the best government. The citizen legislature model also keeps us connected to our districts rather than becoming career politicians. The committee system generally works well, and I've been blessed to work with colleagues who genuinely want to solve problems.

What needs changing? We need to streamline our House processes and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, both in how we operate and in the laws we pass. Sometimes we make things more complicated than they need to be. I'd also like to see us be more aggressive about property tax relief and truly empowering parents in their children's education.



Most importantly, we need to maintain proper process and genuine debate. I was deeply disappointed this session when we saw the House rules rammed through without allowing debate on amendments, despite promises that amendments would be considered. When you promise something in caucus meetings and then close debate without allowing a single amendment, even ones aimed at improving the process, that undermines trust and leadership credibility. Personal interests shouldn't have more influence than the working families who send us to Austin, and we shouldn't cut deals that consolidate power in ways that are contrary to caucus directives.



**Due to your service on the Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence and Pensions, Investments & Financial Services Committees, what's an issue that you have become familiar with that TCA members should pay more attention to?**

Contract transparency is huge – and it directly affects every contractor and subcontractor in Texas. Through my work on Judiciary, I've seen firsthand how some contracts incorporate documents by reference without providing access to those documents. That's why I authored H.B. 3874, which would allow contractors to void contract provisions that reference documents they weren't allowed to review before signing. While the legislature ran out of time to send the bill to the Governor, I will file it again next session.

TCA members should also pay attention to venue protection laws. My H.B. 2960, which was signed by the Governor and took effect September 1st, addressed contract provisions that forced Texas contractors into out-of-state litigation. We successfully restored the protection ensuring that construction disputes are resolved in Texas courts, under Texas law, in the county where the project is located.



**How do you view the construction industry's contributions to the "Texas Miracle"?**

The construction industry isn't just about building structures. You're literally building the Texas Miracle. Every road, bridge, office building, and

home represents economic growth, job creation, and opportunity for Texas families. When I see a new development going up in District 57, I see skilled tradespeople earning excellent wages, families moving to Texas for opportunity, and businesses choosing to invest here because they know our infrastructure can support their growth.

The construction industry also embodies what makes Texas special: hard work, skill, innovation, and the willingness to take on big challenges. The men and women I've met in this industry, from general contractors to specialized subcontractors, are some of the most capable and dedicated professionals I know. They take pride in their craft, and that pride shows in the quality of Texas construction. Without a strong construction industry, there's no Texas Miracle.



**Are you a spiritual person? If you are, why is faith so important?**

Absolutely. As a devout Catholic, my faith is the foundation of everything I do. It shapes my worldview, guides my decisions, and reminds me that I'm accountable to something greater than myself. Our country was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. You can see it in our Constitution and in the writings of our founding fathers. The First Amendment protection of religious freedom isn't just a nice idea; it's fundamental to who we are as Americans. I am a better person for working on my faith. In June, my family went to Rome to celebrate my wife's and my 59th anniversary where three of my grandsons took their first communion at the Vatican.

Faith teaches us humility, service, and the importance of standing up for what's right even when it's difficult. It reminds me that my role as a legislator is to serve others, not myself. And frankly, dealing with politics and the pressures of public office requires a spiritual anchor. Without that foundation, it's easy to lose your way. Someone's views will govern. If God respecting and God fearing people do not run for office or serve in government, we will not have a Godly Government.



# New Construction Laws

## Out of State Venue & Laws

**H.B. 2960 by Rep. Richard Hayes  
and Sen. Bryan Hughes**

Reverses the 14th Court of Appeals' opinion in *In Re MVP Terminalling, LLC*, ruling that BUS. & COMM. CODE §272.001, which classifies out-of-state venue and out-of-state choice of law clauses "voidable", can be waived by signing a contract containing such clauses and the waiver may flow down to all subcontracts via incorporation by reference clauses. House Bill 2960 amends the statute to clearly state that such clauses are "void" as a matter of public policy. Furthermore, the statute clarifies that if such a venue provision is voided by the statute, venue is in the county in which the project is located, unless the parties agree otherwise after the dispute arises. This change applies to all contracts entered into or renewed after September 1, 2025.

## Lien Law Deadline Loophole

**S.B. 929 by Sen. Nathan Johnson  
and Rep. John Lujan**

Revisions to the lien laws in 2021 unintentionally created a potential loophole in the provision intended to push a deadline falling on a weekend or holiday to the next business day. Senate Bill 929 closed the loophole by clarifying that Property Code, Section 53.003(e) applies to all deadlines, those that are statutorily defined and those that are calculated by counting days. This change was effective upon signing by the Governor on May 21, 2025.

## Public Project Litigation

**H.B. 1922 by Rep. Jay Dean  
and Sen. Mayes Middleton**

Clarifies that a cause of action for construction liability claims on public projects accrues when the required pre-litigation report is postmarked. This change is effective Sept. 1, 2025.

## Competitive Bidding

**S.B. 1173 by Sen. Charles Perry  
and Rep. David Spiller**

Increases the threshold for requiring competitive bidding for public contracts from \$50,000 to \$100,000. This change is effective for government purchases made on or after September 1, 2025.

## Bonds on TPWD Projects

**S.B. 1066 by Sen. Charles Perry  
and Rep. Will Metcalf**

Exempts Texas Parks & Wildlife Department construction contracts under \$150,000 from bonding requirements. This exemption is effective as of September 1, 2025.

## Assignment of Trust Fund Claim

**S.B. 841 by Sen. Bryan Hughes  
and Rep. Sam Harless**

Allows for the assignment of a claim under the Construction Trust Fund Act. For instance, if the general contractor has paid the subcontractor and the subcontractor has not paid the supplier, the general contractor can pay the supplier's bill and the supplier can assign its claim under the Trust Fund Act against the subcontractor. The legislation includes some limitations:

- Assignment must be made in writing;
- Assignment cannot be before assignee receives payments;
- Assignment may not be part of the construction contract; and
- Assignee is already a participant on the project.
- This change is effective for any assignments granted on or after September 1, 2025.



## Public Prompt Pay Act

**H.B. 3005 by Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins  
and Sen. Donna Campbell**

Amends Public Prompt Pay Act to clarify that a "bona fide dispute" does not include an audit that continues for more than 60 days after substantial completion. This new provision is effective September 1, 2025. ★



# Worker Training Grant Programs

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has a diverse portfolio of programs and services to support the workforce needs of current and prospective Texas businesses. For more information contact the TWC at [skills@twc.texas.gov](mailto:skills@twc.texas.gov)

## Skills Development Fund

A Texas public community college, technical college, local Workforce Development Board, or the Texas A&M Engineering



Extension Service can apply for the grant in partnership with a business, business consortium, or trade union. Program parameters include: up to \$500,000 per business (more for a consortium) for customized training needed by the business; target average cost per trainee of \$2,000; and training for full-time employees.

## Skills for Small Business

A small business with fewer than 100 employees can apply for a Skills for Small Business Grant. Program parameters include: up to \$1,800 per new hire and up to \$900 per incumbent worker for tuition and fees in a 12-month period; training for full-time employees; and training selected from courses offered by a Texas public community or technical college or the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

## Texas Industry Partnership

The Texas Industry Partnership (TIP) program targets skills gaps and ensures a talent pipeline is available to address regional industry needs. Private employers, corporate foundations, and most 501(c)(6) organizations can collaborate with local Workforce Development Boards to apply for funding to support workforce development projects focused on high-demand, target occupations for job training in their communities. The TIP program supports collaborations between Boards and industry partners by leveraging matching contributions of up to \$150,000 for workforce-related activities including occupational job training.

## Texas Workforce Solutions

TWC partners with the 28 Workforce Development Boards located statewide to further assist businesses with solutions to their workforce needs, including assistance in obtaining tax credits and labor market information. These valuable services can significantly reduce the cost of recruiting, retaining, and training employees. ★



**Proposition 1, which is on the ballot on November 4th, would provide \$850 million from the state's general revenue to support critical capital needs for the Texas State Technical College System (TSTC) including facility expansion, land acquisition, and modern equipment purchases.**

**With Texas facing a serious skilled labor shortage, the investments in Prop 1 would give TSTC more**

**capacity to train more students to enter the workforce and get good-paying jobs, especially in high-growth, high-need regions.**

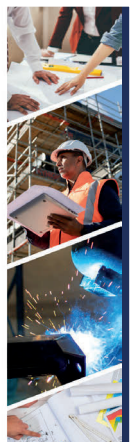
**Prop 1 is an investment in our workforce that will benefit all Texans, creating jobs, attracting businesses, and strengthening our economic future for years to come.**

**For more information visit  
[www.voteforprop1.com](http://www.voteforprop1.com)**

**VOTE  
YES  
ON PROP 1**

**HELP MORE  
TEXANS  
ENTER THE  
WORKFORCE**

**NOV. 4 VOTE FOR PROP 1**



# Interview with Texas State Senator Nathan Johnson



Senator Nathan Johnson is in his third term representing almost a million people in Senate District 16 in Dallas County. Sen. Johnson practices law at Thompson Coburn LLP, where he specializes in trial litigation and dispute resolution.



**According to your official biography, you are a musical composer – tell us a little about that experience.**

In between stints as a lawyer, I composed classical concert music and eventually broke into composing for television. Those years were full of wonder, at times difficult, and in important ways formative. Writing music draws on creativity, of course, but it's also hard work! Though it's a very different craft than legislating, it fosters an ability to see relationships between disparate things and arrange them in ways that connect with people, and I think that has been helpful in political life.



**What skills do you use in both your private sector and public service worlds?**

In both law and public service, a primary skill is listening in an active way. It means thinking as you listen, trying to understand what people say, to appreciate its significance, and to actively explore how it fits into the broader context of things. Because it's in this broader context that you have to make good decisions and direct your next efforts to find solutions.



**The need for an increase in skilled workers and education options for students in construction trades is an ongoing issue. Do you see anything on the horizon to help TCA members meet their workforce needs?**

Yes. I expect continued support for high school P-TECH programs and greater access to and coordination with community college programs, to meet the need for young people to move toward fulfilling careers and for industry to be able to recruit and employ from our local workforce. Likewise for apprenticeships and partnerships between industry and schools. At the risk of venturing onto controversial terrain, I also believe that the federal government, or the state of Texas in cooperation with the federal government, should significantly expand legal guest worker and legal resident work permit programs.



**Sen. Johnson, what has surprised you the most about serving in the Senate?**

How political it is. Seriously. But also, I think everyone who gets into the Legislature and takes the work seriously is quickly awed, as I have been, simply by how much has to get done by the Legislature in order for this state to function for people and for commerce.





**You have announced your candidacy for Texas Attorney General. Why are you running?**

I'm running – to win – to restore the Attorney General's office to its rightful role as an attorney for the people and for the state. To a large degree the OAG has been used for personal gain and political advance, while its power to do good – to protect people from commercial scams and political corruption, and to serve as a guardian of market competition – has been neglected. There are good people there and some good work has been done. But respect for the Texas independent spirit has been lacking, as has respect for the rule of law and constitutional foundations. Good leadership at the OAG will restore checks and balances in government, markets that function on competition, and justice for all Texans.



## Lightning Round !



**Best sport?**

*Running & Swimming*

**Scariest animal?**

*Homosapiens & Mosquitoes*

**Most used phone app?**

*Text - It's why I don't take my phone on runs.*

**Aisle or window?**

*Aisle (easy exit)*

**Rep. Hayes Interview** *Continued from page 7...*

## Lightning Round!



**Best sandwich?**

*Pimento cheese. You can't beat it!*

**Favorite smell?**

*Clean sheets!*

**Flat or sparkling?**

*Flat. I'm a simple man with simple tastes.*

**What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?**

*Be a pilot and fly planes.*

**Favorite place to relax?**

*I'm a firm believer that life is too short to relax. But if I do relax, I enjoy sitting in the garden or patio of a winery enjoying a glass of wine.*



**How important is it for elected officials to hear from constituents? What's the best way for TCA members to convey their thoughts to legislators?**

It's absolutely critical. I work for the people of District 57, and I can't represent them effectively if I don't know what's on their minds. Some of my best legislation has come from constituents who brought real-world problems to my attention.

For TCA members, the best approach is to be specific and factual. Don't just tell me there's a problem – help me understand exactly how it affects your business and your workers. Bring real examples, and if possible, suggest specific solutions. I also appreciate when industry groups like TCA speak with one voice on major issues rather than having competing messages from different factions.

Personal meetings are always valuable, but well-written emails with specific information work well. And don't forget – when we pass good legislation that helps your industry, let other legislators know you appreciate it. Positive feedback helps us make the case for more pro-business policies.



# Career & Technology Education Legislation

**“Vital to education is expanding career training. Many of the most in-demand jobs are careers like welders, plumbers, and electricians. To prepare students for these careers, high schools must provide more career training programs so students can go from graduation directly into a good-paying job. ... That’s why I am making life-changing career training an emergency item.”**

*~ Governor Greg Abbott  
State of the State Address  
February 2, 2025*

In response to Governor Abbott’s call to strengthen career and technology education and training, the Legislature adopted a handful of new provisions to improve access to and funding for career and technology education (CTE) programs in Texas.

## **H.B. 120 by Rep. Keith Bell & Sen. Charles Schwertner**

House Bill 120 increases access to CTE for students through additional funding and expansion of services. More specifically, the bill allows select students to enroll at no cost in a dual credit course; covers the cost of an 11th grade student to take a career readiness assessment instrument in place of a college-prep assessment test; expands access to counseling and career advising to high school graduates for up to 2 years after graduation; and increases the number of subsidies students may receive for CTE certification examinations from one to two.

The bill also strengthens ROTC programs by adding them to the list of programs considered as CTE and requires that schools notify parents of ROTC students

of early scholarship programs available to students in military-related training programs.

Finally, Foundation School Program funding is increased from \$50 to \$150 per CTE student; the New Instruction Facility Allotment for CTE facilities is increased from \$100 million to \$150 million each year; and the cap on the Rural Pathway Excellence Partnership Allotment and Outcomes Bonus increases to \$20 million.

## **S.J.R. 59 by Sen. Brian Birdwell & Rep. Stan Lambert**

Unlike other public higher education institutions, the Texas State Technical College System (TSTC) does not currently have a source of funding for capital improvements such as property taxes (e.g. community college districts) or a constitutionally dedicated fund (e.g. Permanent University Fund benefitting the University of Texas and A&M University systems). Therefore, in order to expand or build new campuses, the Legislature must appropriate capital funds to TSTC each biennium. This process has stymied TSTC’s growth.

To give TSTC the tools it needs to expand and reach more students, the Legislature adopted S.J.R. 59 which will create a dedicated fund, outside of the regular appropriations process, to provide around \$52 million per year for capital projects. This will be a constitutionally dedicated fund; thus it must be approved by voters in November in order to be effective.

*Continued on page 23*







Helping to raise funds for the TCA PAC, the August 22 ASA North Texas Clay Shoot in Fort Worth was attended by Vice President of Operations, Patrick Finnegan.

A TCA representative will be happy to attend any Member Association events! Contact the TCA office.

## Spotlight on Executive Director Tamara Hancock

**American Subcontractors Association  
- Houston Chapter**

Tamara Hancock has an extensive background in construction association management. Her experience includes three years managing membership and communications for the Powder Coating Institute, 20 years at the Associated General Contractors of America in Houston in various roles, including chief operating officer, and currently in her fifth year leading the American Subcontractors Association – Houston Chapter. She has a passion for supporting issues important to the construction industry and its workforce.



Tamara has a BBA in Management from Lamar University, Beaumont, TX. She serves on the board of the Construction Career Collaborative (C3), the Construction Industry Education Foundation (CIEF) – Houston Chapter, and the Houston Society for Association Executives.

She and her husband have two children – a daughter who is a first grade teacher in Katy ISD, and a son who is a freshman at Sam Houston State University. In her “spare time,” she piddles around in her urban garden with her two dogs where she raises chickens, grows herbs, vegetables, and more.



# Summary of the 89th Texas Legislative Session

By Eric Woomer, Woomer Policy Solutions

The 89th Texas Legislature adjourned Sine Die on June 2nd. While productive, inasmuch as most of the identified priorities of state leadership were ultimately passed, many tenured observers have remarked that this was among the most unique session in recent memory. Many of the legislative milestones were effectively preordained before the final gavel fell.

In the aftermath of the House's failed impeachment of Attorney General Ken Paxton and its refusal to pass a school voucher proposal in 2023, Governor Greg Abbott and General Paxton embarked on a statewide political campaign aimed at reshaping the composition of the Texas House Republican Caucus. With the backing of motivated donors, they targeted incumbents deemed insufficiently loyal—removing those who opposed their priorities and elevating candidates aligned with school choice and reflecting a pro-Paxton sentiment. The result was a transformed legislative body, with a wave of newly elected Republican members who shifted the House further to the right and positioned the chamber to fulfill campaign promises long championed by the Governor and the grassroots.

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**The State of the State Address served as Gov. Abbott's opening salvo for the legislative session, outlining the initial agenda for lawmakers.**

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## House Speaker and Chamber Rules

Following the General election, House members next turned to a crucial election of their own: the selection of the Speaker of the House was a showdown between Republican Rep. David Cook of Mansfield and Rep. Dustin Burrows of Lubbock. Cook stood as the champion of the GOP's right flank, vowing to preside over a conservative agenda and to ban Democrats from committee leadership. However, Burrows prevailed

on an 85-55 vote, with more support of the minority party than the majority. As a result, much of the session reflected a balanced approach, as Democrats received their fair share of bills on the House calendar.

Shortly following Speaker Burrows's rise, the House adopted their Rules of Procedure, the guardrails that outline how the chamber will conduct the legislative process. Notably, in addition to the Democrat relegation to vice chair spots, the 89th House rules abolished several existing committees (combining Urban Affairs and County Affairs into a single Intergovernmental Relations Committee, for example) and established a Delivery of Government Efficiency (DOGE) Committee with the aim to identify waste, fraud, and abuse in state agencies.

The Senate saw much less turbulence and fewer changes. Three new members joined the upper chamber: Sen. Brent Hagenbuch (R - Denton); Sen. Molly Cook (D - Houston); and Sen. Adam Hinojosa (R - Corpus Christi). Sen. Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) was elected President Pro Tempore. The Senate eliminated some committees, created new ones, and shifted some duties between existing and new committees. Following Sen. John Whitmire's retirement from the Senate, all committees were led by the majority party, with a few key committees seeing supermajority party representation.

## Filing

Once again, legislators broke a record in the volume of legislation filed, with 9,236 bills and joint resolutions introduced over the course of the session. Despite this surge in activity, the number of bills actually passed and sent to the Governor was slightly less than prior sessions—approximately 1,300 in total. This outcome underscores a recurring reality: while the number of ideas brought forward may grow, the legislative system's human and procedural capacity remains largely unchanged.

## Setting the Agenda

The State of the State Address served as Gov. Abbott's opening salvo for the legislative session, outlining the initial agenda for lawmakers. In his remarks, the Governor made clear that the Legislature should prioritize passing a school voucher initiative, advancing significant water supply infrastructure, expanding property tax relief, creating a Texas Cyber Command, and overhauling the state's bail system. While his list of priorities was considerably more concise than the Lieutenant Governor's forty-item agenda, the Governor's office can now tout that most of its major proposals were enacted—effectively shaping the historical narrative of the session.

## Water Supplies

Led by Sen. Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Rep. Cody Harris (R-Palestine), natural resources policymakers were devoted to making historic investments into Texas' water supply. Through SB 7, expanding the Texas Water Fund's investment scope for new water supply projects and centralizing water infrastructure planning, and HJR 7, establishing a \$1 billion annual dedicated fund in the state constitution, the pair of legislators crafted a future tailored to support new sources of water, such as desalination. The constitutional amendment will face the voters in November on the constitutional proposition ballot.

## Public (and Private) School Funding

Gov. Abbott made it unequivocally clear that school choice was his most important issue, but that he'd also support public schools if they promised not to impede his priority. Promising Texan teachers substantial pay raises, he worked with the House to craft HB 2 by House Education Chairman Brad Buckley (R-Salado), dedicating \$8.5 billion for increases for experienced teacher salary, special education, and additional funds for costs if school districts met certain metrics.

A mid-session fight between the two chambers saw HB 2 being rewritten by Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick and Senate Education Chairman Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe), reducing the funding included in the per-student allotment given to every school district by lowering the raise from \$395 as set by the House to \$55. In the end, Speaker Burrows and Chairman Buckley were able to negotiate with Senate leaders to give school districts some degree of fixed-cost flexibility and include a provision for non-teaching staff salaries.

The final version of the bill allocates about \$8.3 billion over the next two years.

## Making Texas Healthy Again

Senator Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham), Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services, led the charge to “make Texas healthy again” through a package of bills relating to nutritional standards. Senate Bill 25 establishes nutritional education and dedicated exercise periods in schools, creates the Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee to independently research ultra-processed foods, and requires food labels on a wide variety of ingredients. She was joined by Senator Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) with SB 314, banning certain chemicals in school lunches, and Senator Mayes Middleton (R-Galveston) with SB 379, banning the purchase of candy, soda, and chips with SNAP benefits. All of these measures will be incorporated into various areas of law over the next two years.

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In what may be one of the most successful sessions for the lieutenant governorship, the majority of his 40 priority pieces of legislation were marched through the legislature to passage.

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## Cybersecurity + Artificial Intelligence

Gov. Abbott also pushed for the creation of the Texas Cyber Command in partnership with UT San Antonio, to combat the increasing number of cyberattacks and reinforce the state's security stance. With Rep. Gio Capriglione (R-Keller) authoring HB 150, legislators passed substantial measures moving duties from the Department of Information Resources to the new cyber center to help state agencies and local governments in cyberspace. Rep. Capriglione also put tireless work into HB 149, the Texas Responsible Artificial Intelligence Governance Act, to establish guardrails and disclosures for AI usage by state agencies in addition to a specialized council to oversee a sandbox development program for responsible AI usage. House Bill 149 enshrines consumer protections into artificial intelligence software, such as unlawful discrimination on protected class or political viewpoints.

*Continued on next page*



### **Foreign Land Ownership**

Appearing throughout several landmark bills of the session was the GOP fight against hostile adversaries and land ownership of foreign entities. Senate Bill 17 by Sen. Kolkhorst, banning real estate purchases by those domiciled in or companies owned by China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia. Similar provisions soon appeared in several other bills, sparking an organized opposition movement. House Bill 130 by Rep. Greg Bonnen (R-League City) seeks to protect Texan DNA by prohibiting genomic sequences sourced from foreign adversary companies from being used in medical and research facilities and SB 2514 by Sen. Hughes creates a Hostile Foreign Organizations Unit and requires state employees to report every interaction with representatives of foreign adversaries. The bills, primarily SB 17, spurred Democrats to organize in support of Asian American immigrants, labeling the bills as fear-mongering that will only serve to harm immigrant populations in Texas. Regardless, SB 17 and the accompanying bills were sent to the Governor a day before Sine Die and all became effective September 1, 2025.

### **THC Ban/Texas Compassionate Use Program Expansion**

Among the most high-profile policy debates of the 89th Legislative Session was the renewed effort to regulate THC products in Texas. Lt. Gov. Patrick elevated the issue to a legislative priority, culminating in the advancement of SB 3, authored by Sen. Perry. As originally filed, SB 3 would prohibit the sale of all consumable THC products in the state, limiting lawful access exclusively to patients enrolled in the Texas Compassionate Use Program (TCUP). Although the bill initially lacked significant backing outside of the Senate, it gained momentum in the House, where members amended it to instead establish a regulatory framework, carve out exemptions for certain THC-infused beverages, and implement mechanisms for tax collection—an approach that aimed to balance public health concerns with economic and industry realities. However, that compromise effort was upended late in the process.

When SB 3 was on the House floor for consideration, Rep. Tom Oliverson (R-Tomball) introduced an amendment that restored the bill's original prohibitionist

language, eliminating the House's negotiated revisions. The amendment passed, and the House ultimately sent SB 3 back to the Senate in alignment with Lt. Gov. Patrick's vision of a near-total ban. Following the session, thousands of constituents submitted letters urging Gov. Abbott to veto the bill—viewing his actions as a symbolic test of Gov. Abbott's political alignment—whether he will side with social conservatives in support of prohibition, or veto the measure and respond to growing public sentiment against a blanket ban.

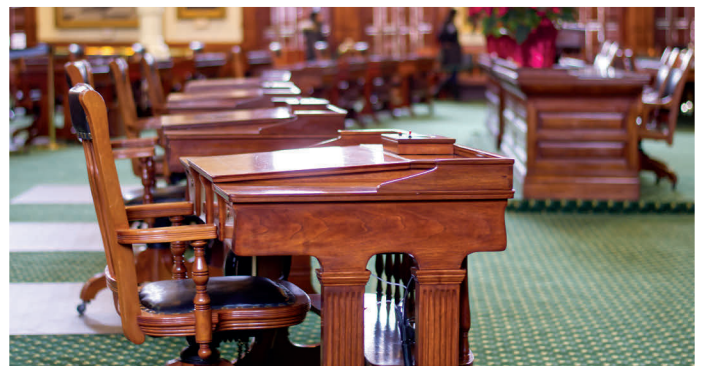
In the end, Gov. Abbott did in fact veto SB 3, asserting valid constitutional challenges that would prevent it from becoming effective. He then placed the issue on the agenda for the 1st Called Special Session and the following 2nd Called Special Session. Thus, this issue is still “live”.

### **Property Tax Relief**

A common refrain over the last few sessions has been to return “excess” taxpayer funds in the form of property tax relief. The main focus of the Senate was on residential property owners, whereas the House split its focus between residential and commercial property owners. In the end, the Legislature adopted relief for both. If approved by voters in November, the business personal property tax exemption would increase from \$2,500 to \$125,000; and the homestead exemption for school taxes would increase from \$100,000 to \$140,000, with an additional \$60,000 for homeowners over 65.

### **Patrick Priorities**

By describing the session as 'boring', Lt. Gov. Patrick revealed more than his feelings on the monotony of the legislative process—he also demonstrated his increasingly centralized power over both the Senate



and House. In what may be one of the most successful sessions for the lieutenant governorship, the majority of his 40 priority pieces of legislation were marched through the legislature to passage - most notably, even bills that likely wouldn't have stood a chance in a different legislature. Not only did Lt. Gov. Patrick craft and pass SB 2, enacting private school vouchers, and SB 30, a package of tort reforms that faced staunch opposition, he also managed to get SB 3 to the finish line, banning all THC products in the state. This is in addition to passing dozens of other priority bills a once-tentative House would have scrutinized, such as SB 10, placing the Ten Commandments in every public school classroom.

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While statewide leaders had about as much success as they could expect, legislators still left behind a full morgue of bills that couldn't quite cross the finish line.

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### **Superior Health Surveillance**

The newly established House DOGE Committee was quick to unearth a seemingly scandalous plot early in the session: chaired by Rep. Capriglione, the committee held a legislative hearing in March involving the CEO of Superior HealthPlan, a contractor with the state Medicaid office. Unrelated to the bill at hand, Chairman Capriglione dramatically accused the CEO of hiring private investigators to collect potentially illegal information on clients, journalists, and legislators for blackmail. Rep. Capriglione followed his confrontation with a letter to the HHSC demanding Superior be cut off from all future contracting and procurement, and sparked the late filing of HB 5061 by Rep. Jeff Leach (R-Plano), a bill to codify specific prohibitions and penalties on surveillance-like conduct by state contractors and vendors. While General Paxton eventually found no illegal wrongdoing by Superior, HB 5061 was swiftly pushed through the legislative process to define concrete limits on private-public information.

### **Opposition and Breakdown**

While Democrats won their “lesser of two evils” in the speaker election, the party's continual marginalization

made for a frustrating session: in what ultimately turned out to be a hollow threat against the passage of school vouchers, Democrat representatives vowed in April to abstain from voting on every joint resolution to kill Republican bills amending the constitution. While the blockade, dubbed 'Operation White Light' for the color of casting a 'present-not-voting' vote, succeeded in temporarily taking down a single bipartisan measure, centrist Dems led a breakdown that ended the abstention within a week.

For the remainder of the session, Democrats then turned to points of order (a motion to challenge the bill against the established parliamentary rules of the chamber) to stall and attempt to take down rival bills. The more than 200 points of order this session, regardless of success in killing or recommitting a bill, rarely took less than 30 minutes to arrive at a ruling and often consumed over an hour of the legislative day. While House members are unable to formally filibuster, the use of unnecessarily long, drawn-out speeches, persistently taking time consuming questions, and using points of order were common tools of “chubbing” to delay debate and passage or even kill bills.

### **End-of-Session Fatalities**

While statewide leaders had about as much success as they could expect, legislators still left behind a full morgue of bills that couldn't quite cross the finish line. The historic battle of monied interests - Texans for Lawsuit Reform vs. the Texas Trial Lawyers Association - was a game of tug-of-war in drafting and revising SB 30 by Sen. Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown), which would have been a historic tort reform bill to end multi-million dollar “nuclear verdicts” in personal injury suits. After enduring long hours of testimony and a near total rework to trim the bill down to something able to pass the House, lawmakers ultimately couldn't reconcile their differences and let the bill died in conference.

Similarly, to the dismay of teachers and students alike, the bill that would have finally axed STAAR testing in public schools and replaced it with a 3-staged student progress test, HB 4 by Rep. Buckley, also fell victim to a late-stage session conference. However, this issue saw new light in the 1st Called Special Session.

*Continued on page 22*

# Join us for the 2025 HOUSTON TCA PAC CLAY SHOOT!

Tuesday, October 7th



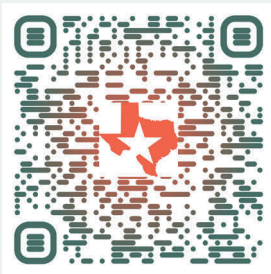
Get ready for an afternoon of  
networking, fun, and friendly competition  
all while supporting the TCA PAC!

The annual Houston Area Subcontractors  
Clay Shoot is one of our most popular events,  
bringing industry leaders together  
for a great cause.

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<https://shorturl.at/22tp9>

## Registration

We welcome individuals  
& teams of all sizes!

Register by  
October 2nd

## Event Schedule

Registration: 1:00 PM  
Shooting: 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM  
Dinner & Awards: 5:00 PM

## Entry Fee

\$250 per shooter  
Includes game day  
ammo & dinner



## TEXAS CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

### **The Texas Legislature is involved in your business:**

*your taxes, your tort liability, your contracts, your insurance protection,  
the roads you travel, the education and regulation of your workforce,  
and a myriad of other issues.*

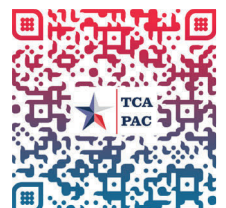
**To have a say in these issues, you have to be involved.**

**How do you get involved?** Contribute to the TCA PAC.

**Why?** The TCA PAC is able to pool resources to have a greater impact.

**Is this really important?** YES! If TCA doesn't have a well-funded PAC  
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To contribute, visit the TCA PAC website at **[www.tcapac.org](http://www.tcapac.org)**.







*Gina O'Hara (l),  
TCSG Program  
Manager; Cassie  
Doolittle (r),  
TCSG Team*

Since 2005, TCA has endorsed the Texas Construction Safety Group (TCSG), a workers' compensation program through Texas Mutual Insurance, the largest workers' compensation insurance carrier in Texas. Are you already insured by Texas Mutual? Be sure to confirm you are part of the Group.

For many businesses, safety group programs provide the most cost-effective and advantageous workers' comp insurance options. With the TCSG you'll get lower premiums and excellent tools and resources to help keep your workers safe. Plus, being covered by Texas Mutual means you have award-winning service, cost saving claims handling and innovative safety training. There is also a proven history of both individual and group dividend payouts.

The TCSG continues to have phenomenal success in growth dividends and loss ratios. As of September 1, 2025, it has over 1,900 policyholders. It is the largest workers' compensation safety group for construction companies in Texas.

Texas Mutual distributed general dividends in June, 2025 to reward insured members for their commitment to workplace safety and loyalty to Texas Mutual. Members of TCSG were paid approximately \$33 million of the \$330 million awarded! If you're new to Texas Mutual, hang tight—your turn is coming if you maintain a strong safety record. Since 2005, the TCSG has earned more than \$64 million in dividends for the group's performance.

TCA member companies receiving group dividends (in addition to the individual company dividends from Texas Mutual) were those who are insured with Texas Mutual

and enrolled in the TCSG. Dividends are not guaranteed, but Texas Mutual has a proven track record of never missing a year in paying one. The longer a company is insured with Texas Mutual and in the Group, the higher the percentages can be because the dividend has a loyalty component.

**TEXAS CONSTRUCTION  
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**BETTER TOGETHER**

**PREMIUM DISCOUNT**

**TWO DIVIDEND  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**VALUABLE SAFETY  
RESOURCES**

**Texas Mutual**  
WORKERS' COMP INSURANCE

Dividends are based on performance and are not guaranteed.

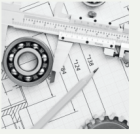
Joining the TCSG is simple. Just ask your agent to request a quote in the group from Texas Mutual. Additional answers can be found at [www.txconstructionwc.com](http://www.txconstructionwc.com), by calling the program administrator, Gina O'Hara at (512) 330-9836, ext. 6324, or by emailing [info@txconstructionwc.com](mailto:info@txconstructionwc.com). ★

# Constitutional Amendment Election

## November 4, 2025

### Proposition 1 (S.J.R. 59)

The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the permanent technical institution infrastructure fund and the available workforce education fund to support the capital needs of educational programs offered by the Texas State Technical College System.



### Proposition 2 (S.J.R. 18)

The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of a tax on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or trust.



### Proposition 3 (S.J.R. 5)

The constitutional amendment requiring the denial of bail under certain circumstances to persons accused of certain offenses punishable as a felony.



### Proposition 4 (H.J.R. 7)

The constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the revenue derived from state sales and use taxes to the Texas water fund and to provide for the allocation and use of that revenue.



### Proposition 5 (H.J.R. 99)

The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation tangible personal property consisting of animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail.



### Proposition 6 (H.J.R. 4)

The constitutional amendment prohibiting the legislature from enacting a law imposing an occupation tax on certain entities that enter into transactions conveying securities or imposing a tax on certain securities transactions.



### Proposition 7 (H.J.R. 133)

The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a veteran who died as a result of a condition or disease that is presumed under federal law to have been service-connected.



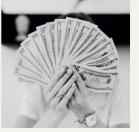
### Proposition 8 (H.J.R. 2)

The constitutional amendment to prohibit the legislature from imposing death taxes applicable to a decedent's property or the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift.



## Proposition 9 (H.J.R. 1)

The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation a portion of the market value of tangible personal property a person owns that is held or used for the production of income.



## Proposition 10 (S.J.R. 84)

The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire.



## Proposition 11 (S.J.R. 85)

The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district of the market value of the residence homestead of a person who is elderly or disabled.



## Proposition 12 (S.J.R. 27)

The constitutional amendment regarding the membership of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, the membership of the tribunal to review the commission's recommendations, and the authority of the commission, the tribunal, and the Texas Supreme Court to more effectively sanction judges and justices for judicial misconduct.



## Proposition 13 (S.J.R. 2)

The constitutional amendment to increase the amount of the exemption of residence homesteads from ad valorem taxation by a school district from \$100,000 to \$140,000.



## Proposition 14 (S.J.R. 3)

The constitutional amendment providing for the establishment of the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, establishing the Dementia Prevention and Research Fund to provide money for research on and prevention and treatment of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and related disorders in this state, and transferring to that fund \$3 billion from state general revenue.



## Proposition 15 (S.J.R. 34)

The constitutional amendment affirming that parents are the primary decision makers for their children.



## Proposition 16 (S.J.R. 37)

The constitutional amendment clarifying that a voter must be a United States citizen.



## Proposition 17 (H.J.R. 34)

The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the market value of real property located in a county that borders the United Mexican States that arises from the installation or construction on the property of border security infrastructure and related improvements.





### **Special Sessions**

The Governor called the first special session on July 21, 2025, with an agenda of 18 different items. Following the Legislature's adjournment on June 2nd, the tragic floods in the Texas Hill Country occurred in July, necessitating the addition of several flood-related issues for consideration. The agenda also included mid-decade congressional redistricting aimed at increasing the number of Republican seats in Congress by five. Thus, before any legislation reached the Governor's desk, over 51 House Democrats fled the state to deny the House a quorum. Without a quorum the House was unable to conduct business. As a result, the House and the Senate adjourned sine die on August 15th – five days in advance of the 30-day special session period.

The Governor promptly called a Second Special Session to begin on August 15th at noon with the same agenda. The House Democrats returned the following Monday and both the House and the Senate promptly went to work. The Governor expanded the agenda to include additional items, and in the end, the House and Senate concluded their business on September 4th and sent 20 bills aligning with the conservative Republican agenda to the Governor's desk. In addition to congressional redistricting, the measures passed were bills increasing youth camp safety; granting the Attorney General jurisdiction to prosecute election fraud; prohibiting the manufacture, distribution and delivery of abortion-inducing drugs; replacing the STAAR test in public schools; allowing pharmacists to dispense Ivermectin without a prescription; and requiring all public entities to restrict bathroom access to individuals of one sex.

### **Beyond Sine Die**

Texas politicians now look forward to the 2026 midterm elections. Most notably, Texas will see its embattled Attorney General Ken Paxton challenge U.S. Senator John Cornyn. Texas Sen. Mayes Middleton was quick

to throw his hat in the ring to replace Paxton, followed by Sen. Joan Huffman, former Department of Justice lawyer Aaron Reitz, and Congressman Chip Roy, on the Republican side and Sen. Nathan Johnson on the Democratic side. The second highest seat in all the land, the lieutenant governorship, won't be up for grabs by other Republicans – Dan Patrick has declared that he will run for another term. So far, Rep. Vikki Goodwin is the only challenger -- an ambitious bid for the five-term Democrat Representative from Austin.

Comptroller Glenn Hegar announced earlier this year he would be leaving his post to serve as chancellor of the Texas A&M University System, prompting current Railroad Commissioner Christi Craddick and former Dallas Senator Don Huffines to immediately enter the race. However, Sen. Kelly Hancock resigned from his post to take over the agency in the interim and is running a strong race to keep the job. Finally, Governor Greg Abbott will campaign for his continued dominance of the highest office. But, perhaps most importantly, will be the dozens of legislators currently reevaluating their career choices.

To date, there have been several announcements of retirement or intent to run for another office. Notable House retirements include Rep. Alma Allen who has represented her district in Houston since 2004, and former Speaker Dade Phelan who has been in office since 2014 and survived a vicious reelection fight in 2024. In the Senate, Sen. Brian Birdwell and Sen. Robert Nichols will be hanging up their hats after 15 and 19 years, respectively. House members hoping to move to the Senate include Rep. Trent Ashby, Rep. David Cook, and Rep. Dennis Paul, and those running for Congress include Rep. Briscoe Cain, Rep. John Lujan and Rep. Steve Toth.

As Lt. Gov. Patrick remarked on Sine Die, several members of the Texas Senate may not return for the 90th Legislative Session. In light of this, voters would be prudent to look beyond the prominence of statewide officeholders and consider the pivotal role played by the 181 legislators who comprise the Texas House and Senate. These individuals will be central in shaping the direction of policy for the 31 million Texans they represent—making their elections no less consequential than those for executive leadership. ★



# MEET TCA LEGAL COUNSEL FRED WILSHUSEN

Fred Wilshusen is a founding partner of Thomas, Feldman & Wilshusen, LLP ("TFW") in Dallas and has practiced construction law for 40 years. TFW has been counsel to TCA from the very beginning – over 25 years – and for ASA of North Texas for over 50 years! Fred has also held leadership positions in the construction law field such as Chair of the Texas State Bar Construction Law Section and Chair of the Construction Law Section of the Dallas Bar Association.

Fred has been recognized by his peers as a Fellow in the American College of Construction Lawyers, which is an “invitation only” organization of approximately 200 construction lawyers nationwide.

For Fred, fun means family! Traveling with his wife, Leslie, and spending time with children and their first grandchild is their favorite way to spend their free time.

**FUN FACT:** Fred and TCA's own Raymond Risk both attended Austin College in Sherman, Texas, for undergraduate studies. When they get together, they can reminisce for hours about life as a Kangaroo!



THOMAS, FELDMAN  
& WILSHUSEN, L.L.P.  
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS

## CTE Legislation *Continued from page 12.....*

### H.B. 20 by Rep. Gary Gates & Sen. Charles Schwertner

House Bill 20 establishes the Applied Sciences Pathway Program in Texas schools. The Program is intended to provide opportunities for students to concurrently earn high school diplomas and certificates from institutions of higher education in one of several named career and technology industries (e.g. plumbing and pipe fitting; electrical; welding; sheet metal; carpentry; masonry; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning; and construction management and inspection). The Commissioner is required to adopt rules to implement the program beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. ★







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