

Open Forum on Legislative Needs for 2023



September 18, 2021



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Welcome!

- 8:30am Welcome and Intro to the Texas Legislature and Legislative Process
- 8:50am Future Legislative Issues
 - Additional Topics/Priorities
- 9:15am Building Relationships with your Legislators
 - Local Races, Introduction to Candidates
- 9:30pm Adjourn
- **NEXT SESSION: LEGISLATIVE PLANNING**



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The State of Texas

Judicial Branch

Supreme Court
Court of Appeals
Appellate Courts
District Courts

Legislative Branch

Texas Legislature

Executive Branch

Governor
Lt. Governor
State Agencies
Local Government



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LEGISLATIVE BRANCH



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Texas Legislature

- Legislative Branch of government in Texas
- Meets every odd-numbered year
- Begins on the second Tuesday in January and lasts 140 days, is called the regular session
 - Governor may direct the legislature to meet at other times also
 - Special sessions last no more than 30 days and limited to issues chosen by the Governor



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Texas House

- 150 members of the state house
- Members of the house of representatives are elected to two-year terms
- Represent districts of about 167,500 people each (subject to change because of census)



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Texas House

- Speaker elected on the first day of each regular session
 - presiding officer
 - maintains order, recognizes members to speak during debate, and rules on procedural matters
 - appoints the chairs and vice chairs of the committees that study legislation
 - decides which other representatives will serve on those committees, subject to seniority rules
 - 31 committees, each of which deals with a different subject area, and five committees that deal with procedural or administrative matters for the house
 - Most members serve on two or three different committees.



Texas Senate

- 31 members of the state senate
- Senators serve four-year terms
- Serve about 811,000 people each (subject to change)
- Presiding officer is lieutenant governor



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Texas Senate

- Lieutenant governor
 - Second-highest ranking officer of the executive branch of government
 - Four-year term by popular vote in a statewide election.
 - Appoints Chairs and Vice-Chairs and Committee Members
 - 17 Standing Committees
 - Not actually a member of the senate.



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Important Legislative Dates

- March 1, 2022 - Primary Election
 - High political motivation of electorate from each party
- November 8, 2022 – General Election
 - Election Day: High political motivation of electorate
- November 14, 2022
 - Prefiling Bills for 88th Session Begins
- January 10, 2023
 - 88th Legislature convenes
- May 29, 2023
 - Sine Die, 88th Legislature adjourns



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FUTURE LEGISLATIVE ISSUES



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Future Issues

- Other Funding Sources
- Sales Tax Protection
- Municipal Issues and Conflicts
- Continued Property Tax Reform Impacts
- Expansion of Prohibitions on Use of Public Funds to Advocate for Legislation



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Additional Topics/Priorities?

- *(Discussion)*



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Positions on Issues

- The WATCH List
 - Governor
 - Lt. Governor
 - Texas Association of Counties (TAC)
 - Texas Municipal League (TML)(cities)
 - Texas Fire Chiefs Association (TFCA)(management)
 - Texas State Association of Firefighters (TxSAFF)(labor)
 - Texas State Firemen and Fire Marshals Association (SFFMA)
 - Texas Conservative Coalition Research Institute (TCCRI)
 - Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF)(conservative think tank)
 - Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP)(progressive think tank)
 - Texas Association of Business (TAB)



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BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS



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Building Relationships

- Introduction
 - Name
 - Entity
 - Service area
 - Population
 - Personnel, facilities and equipment
 - Budget - income and expenses
 - Plans for future
 - Tour offer



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Building Relationships

- BEFORE November Election
 - Letter of Introduction
 - Follow Up Phone Call
 - Request for Meeting
- To Current Member
- If Contested Election AND the outcome is in doubt, to opposing candidate too.



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Building Relationships

- NOT the time to ask for legislative action
 - Focus on:
 - Education of issues
 - Building relationship
- ONCE relationship is established
 - Let SAFE-D know!
 - Focus on:
 - Challenges facing District
 - Explore possible solutions to gauge interest



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Building Relationships

- Other Groups
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Homeowners Association
 - Political Party Chairs for County
 - Other Politically influential individuals



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Building Relationships

- Working Groups?
 - Property Tax
 - Sales Tax
 - ESD Services
 - Service Provider Relations
 - Government Transparency
 - Municipal Issues



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Online Resource for Legislative Information

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>



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Questions?



www.safe-d.org



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