

## TCCE Legislative Update Part I

**HB 462** by Tony Dale (R-Cedar Park) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) requires **proposed state agency rules** to include the bill number for the legislation that enacted the statutory or other authority under which the rule is proposed. It requires state agencies proposing new rules to notify the authors and sponsors of legislation the proposed rule is intended to implement that rules are being proposed. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 1290** by Kevin Roberts (R-Houston) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) requires a **state agency that adopts a new rule** for which the fiscal note for the notice states that the rule imposes a cost on regulated persons, including another state agency, a special district, or a local government, to repeal a rule that imposes a total cost on regulated persons that is equal to or greater than the total cost imposed on regulated persons by the proposed rule; or amends a rule to decrease the total cost imposed on regulated persons by an amount that is equal to or greater than the cost imposed on the persons by the proposed rule. It excludes rules that:

- relate to state agency procurement;
- is amended to reduce the burden or responsibilities imposed on regulated persons by the rule or decreases the persons' cost for compliance with the rule;
- is adopted in response to a natural disaster;
- is necessary to receive a source of federal funds or to comply with federal law;
- is necessary to protect water resources of the state as authorized by the Water Code;
- is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the state;
- is adopted by the Department of Family and Protective Services, Department of Motor Vehicles, Public Utility Commission, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, or Texas Racing Commission;
- is adopted by a self-directed semi-independent agency; or
- is necessary to implement legislation unless the legislature specifically states this provision applies to the rule.

It requires state agencies to prepare a government growth impact statement for proposed rules. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2463** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) requires **state agencies** to develop **written succession plans**:

- Identifying and developing mechanisms to ensure the transfer of institutional knowledge from experienced and retiring employees who are not appointed by the governor or the governing body of the state agency to succeeding employees; and
- Identifying the skills and abilities necessary for the development of the succeeding employees.

The succession plans must be updated annually and must include a report on the implementation of the mechanisms, skills, and abilities identified and developed in the previous written succession plan. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 2647** by Phil Stephenson (R-Wharton) and Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) adds interest-bearing banking deposits that are guaranteed or insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund to the list of entities that are authorized **investments for public funds**. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 3433** by Stan Lambert (R-Abilene) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) requires **state agencies** considering adoption of a rule that would have an **adverse impact on rural communities** to reduce that effect if doing so is legal and feasible considering the purpose of the statute under which the rule is to be adopted. It requires state agencies to prepare an economic impact statement that estimates the number of rural communities subject to a proposed rule, projects the economic impact of the rule on rural communities, and describes alternative methods of achieving the purpose of the proposed rule. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3537** by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) clarifies that interest earned on federal funds subject to the Federal Wildlife Restoration Act in the **deferred maintenance fund account** are subject to the same use restrictions as other funds in the account. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 3765** by Oscar Longoria (D-Edinburg) and Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) makes appropriations in the 2018-2019 biennium to pay miscellaneous **claims and judgments** against the state. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3849** by John Zerwas (R-Fulshear) and Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) is the **funds consolidation bill** that dedicates and rededicates state funds and accounts making \$668 million from existing general revenue-dedicated accounts available for certification of the general revenue appropriations for the 2018-2019 biennium. *It was signed by the governor on June 12, 2017 and took immediate effect, except Section 9 takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 132** by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) allows state agencies to retain one-half (instead of one-fourth) of the amount of general revenue saved under the **Savings Incentive Program** and removes the 1 percent cap on the amount subject to retention. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 622** by Konni Burton (R-Colleyville) and J.M. Lozano (R-Kingsville) requires the **proposed budget of a political subdivision** to include a line item indicating expenditures for notices required by law to be published in a newspaper by the political subdivision, that allows as clear a comparison as practicable between those expenditures in the proposed budget and actual expenditures for the same purpose in the preceding year. The provisions to not apply to junior college districts. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 625** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) and Phil Stephenson (R-Wharton) requires the comptroller to establish the **Special Purpose District Public Information Database**, a searchable Internet database containing information regarding all active special purpose districts that are authorized to impose a tax, fee or assessment. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 813** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas) authorizes a claimant to bring an **action against a state agency** if the state agency takes a regulatory action against the claimant that is frivolous, unreasonable or without foundation. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**SB 1831** by Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) and Giovanni Capriglione (R-Keller) requires the comptroller to annually **report** to the legislature information for each state agency regarding each **program or function the state agency is required by law** or authorized to implement for which no appropriation was made for the preceding state fiscal year; and the amount and source of money the state agency spent, if any, to implement the program or function. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SJR 2** by Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) and Rick Miller (R-Sugar Land) proposes a constitutional amendment asking the U.S. Congress to call a **convention of the states** under Article V of the United States Constitution for the limited purpose of proposing one or more amendments to the constitution to impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, to limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and to limit the terms of office of federal officials and members of Congress. *It was filed with the Secretary of State on May 11, 2017 for ballot placement (constitutional amendments do not go to the governor).*

**SJR 6** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Mike Schofield (R-Katy) proposes a constitutional amendment allowing the Legislature to require a court in which a party to litigation files a petition, motion, or other pleading **challenging the constitutionality of a statute** to provide notice to the Attorney General. *It was filed with the Secretary of State on May 25, 2017 for ballot placement (constitutional amendments do not go to the governor).*

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

**HB 2004** by Charles "Doc" Anderson (R-Waco) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) expands the Texas Department of Agriculture's **Texas Economic Development Fund** to allow it to be used for;

- Encourage the export of Texas agricultural products or products manufactured in rural Texas; or
- An economic development program established through an agreement with a federal agency, foreign governmental entity, public university, or state governmental entity to encourage rural economic development.

It makes several other changes to the fund and its administration including:

- requiring grant recipients to provide matching funds of at least 25 percent of the amount of the grant;
- limiting the term of a loan to 20 years;

- requiring monthly payments of principal and interest beginning within 90 days of the loan;
- requiring the department to administer the fund as a perpetual source of financing for loans and grants using payments of principal and interest to make additional loans and grants;
- limiting the cumulative amount of loans and grants to any person to \$1 million;
- requiring the department to retain at least 25 percent of the money in the fund on January 1, 2017; and
- requiring the department to report on the status of the fund to the governor and legislature before each legislative session.

*It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 2761** by Philip Cortez (D-San Antonio) and Carlos Uresti (D-San Antonio) allows a **defense base development authority** to participate as a member or partner of a limited liability company, a limited liability partnership, or other entity organized to finance a project designated as a redevelopment project under Section 379B.009 of the Local Government Code. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 3045** by Tony Dale (R-Cedar Park) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) allows a city that has imposed a sales and use tax through a Type B development corporation to call an election or 10 percent of the voters could petition for an election to change the tax rate of the **Type B development corporation**. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 3294** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) makes two NASCAR races eligible for **Major Events Reimbursement Program** funding, the All-Star race and the championship race. For all events subject to the Major Events Reimbursement Program, the site selection organization is required to provide to the attorney general and the Texas Division of Emergency Management at least 30 days before the event a plan to prevent the trafficking of persons in connection with the event. *It was filed without the governor's signature on June 12, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 4038** by Dwayne Bohac (R-Houston) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) adds to the definition of "qualifying job" for purposes of the **sales tax exemption** for tangible personal property associated with a **data center** a new employment position staffed by a third-party employer if a written contract exists between the third-party employer and a qualifying owner, operator or occupant that provides that the employment position is permanently assigned to an associated qualifying data center. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 751** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) and Terry Wilson (R-Marble Falls) extends the sunset date for the **Military Base Realignment and Closure Task Force** from September 1, 2019 to September 1, 2021; and provides that any information written, produced, collected, assembled, or maintained by or for the task force is confidential and exempt from disclosure only during the task force's existence. Upon dissolution of the task force, all information must be transferred to and maintained by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission at which point it becomes public information subject to disclosure. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

## **ENERGY:**

**HB 129** by Tom Craddick (R-Midland) and Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) requires the payor of an **oil or gas royalty payment** to provide required monthly royalty information to be included on the check stub or attached to the royalty payment form unless the payor obtains the consent of a royalty interest owner to provide the required information in another format. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 931** by Rick Miller (R-Sugar Land) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) expands to all counties (current law only applies to Harris County) the ability of **electric utilities** to enter into agreements to allow **public access to premises** owned by the utility for **recreational use**; and allows the utility to require the person to whom the utility has made the agreement to insure the utility against defense or other litigation costs by the utility as a result of allowing the recreational use. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1166** by Phil Stephenson (R-Wharton) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) expands to Fort Bend County (current law only applies to Harris County) the ability of **electric utilities** to enter into agreements to allow **public access to premises** owned by the utility for **recreational use**. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 1571** by Chris Paddie (R-Marshall) and Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) amends provisions of the **energy savings performance contracts** of local governmental entities to include anticipated equipment replacement and repair and replacement costs; and authorizes them to use any available money to pay the provider of an energy or water conservation measure (current law requires payment to be made solely from project savings realized under the energy savings performance contract). *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 1818** by Larry Gonzales (R-Round Rock) and Van Taylor (R-Plano) is the **sunset** bill for the **Texas Railroad Commission**. It extends the agency to September 1, 2029. *It was signed by the governor on May 22, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2174** by Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) and Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) defines a **motor fuel metering device** as a commercial weighing or measuring device used for motor fuel sales with a maximum flow rate of 20 gallons per minute or less. It:

- requires the inspection, testing, and calibration of motor fuel metering devices to be performed by a license holder under contract with the operator or user of the motor fuel metering device;

- exempts the motor fuel metering devices from inspection and registration requirements for weighing and measuring devices;
- adds inspection requirements for motor fuel metering devices;
- requires that the devices be inspected at least once every two years;
- adds annual registration requirements for motor fuel metering devices; and
- requires the specifications and tolerances for motor fuel metering devices to be the same as those recommended by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

*It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2277** by Drew Darby (R-San Angelo) and Kirk Watson (D-Austin) clarifies that the previous year's median drilling completion (D&C cost is fixed on the date of the calculation required under the Tax Code for purposes of the **high-cost natural gas production tax**. It requires refunds of the tax to be refunded to the taxpayer who remitted the payment, rather than the producer. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3726** by Tony Dale (R-Cedar Park) and Van Taylor (R-Plano) allows the Railroad Commission (RRC) to require an applicant for a **liquefied petroleum gas license** to complete a technical examination or attend continuing education courses. It removes the RRC's ability to require periodic re-examinations. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 735** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Byron Cook (R-Corsicana) requires the Public Utility Commission to establish a schedule for electric utilities to periodically file **rate updates**. It applies only to an electric utility, other than a river authority, that operates solely inside the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. It allows the rate schedule established by the PUC to be established on the basis of:

- the period since the commission entered its final order in the utility's most recent base rate proceeding;
- whether the electric utility has earned materially more than its authorized rate of return on equity as demonstrated by earnings reports; or
- other criteria the PUC determines is in the best interest.

*It was signed by the governor on May 27, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 736** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) requires the the **General Land Office** (GLO) to collect information on the sale of **retail electric power** by the GLO and to report to the legislature before next session for each year:

- the number of participants;
- the aggregate rates;
- the general contract terms; and
- the extent of any fiscal impact on state resources of administering the program.

*It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1145** by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) and Joe Deshotel (D-Beaumont) provides that an electric utility that elects to deploy **advanced metering and meter information networks** to recover reasonable and necessary costs incurred in the deployment; and requires the Public Utility Commission to ensure that any deployment plan and any related customer surcharges are not applicable to customer accounts that receive service at transmission voltage and are consistent with commission rules regarding consumer protections, data security, privacy, and ownership; and options given consumers to continue to receive service through a non-advanced meter. An electric utility that elects to deploy an advanced meter information network is required to deploy the network as rapidly as practicable to allow customers to better manage energy use and control costs. *It was signed by the governor on May 18, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 1541** by Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) and Stan Lambert (R-Abilene) defines “treatment” as a manufacturing, mechanical, thermal, or chemical process other than sizing, shaping, diluting, or sorting for purposes of statutes relating to the treatment and recycling for beneficial use of **drill cuttings**. It provides that a use of drill cuttings is considered to be beneficial if the cuttings are used:

- in the construction of oil and gas lease pads or oil and gas lease roads; or
- as part of a legitimate commercial product.

*It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 1871** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and Richard Raymond (D-Laredo) creates a new offense for **theft of petroleum products** with intent to deprive the owner of the petroleum product by:

- possessing, removing, delivering, receiving, purchasing, selling, moving, concealing, or transporting the petroleum product; or
- making or causing a connection to be made with, or drilling or tapping or causing a hole to be drilled or trapped in, a pipe, pipeline, or tank used to store or transport a petroleum product.

It prescribes a penalty ladder. *It was signed by the governor on May 19, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

## **ENVIRONMENT:**

**HB 294** by Armando Walle (D-Houston) and Sylvia Garcia (D-Houston) requires the attorney general, at the request of the Public Utility Commission or the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, to bring suit to appoint a receiver to collect the assets and carry on the business of a **water or sewer utility** that violated a final judgment issued by a district court in a suit brought by the attorney general under the Water Code. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 544** by Charles “Doc” Anderson (R-Waco) and Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) allows the **rural water assistance fund** to be used for water planning. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 572** by Phil Stephenson (R-Wharton) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) requires the Texas Department of Agriculture in coordination with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to organize **pesticide waste and container collection** activities statewide and facilitate the collection of canceled, unregistered, or otherwise unwanted pesticide products and containers. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 1083** by Mary Ann Perez (D-Pasadena) and Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) authorizes water utilities to establish **reduced rates for elderly customers** (65 years of age or older). *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1257** by Kyle Kacal (R-College Station) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) makes it a state jail felony to cause wholly or partly impairment or **interruption of property used for flood control** purposes or a dam. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1468** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) establishes the same sanitation and safety requirements for **artificial swimming lagoons** that are required for swimming pools. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 1573** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) requires the Water Development Board to require water audits to be completed by a person trained to conduct **water loss audits** and requires the board to make training on water loss auditing available without charge from the board's website. The training must include comprehensive knowledge of water utility systems and terminology and any tools available for analyzing audit results. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1619** by Hugh Shine (R-Temple) and Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) revises the penalties for **outdoor burning violations** involving burning heavy oils, asphaltic materials, potentially explosive materials, or chemical wastes, and insulation on electrical wire or cable, treated lumber, plastics, non-wood construction or demolition materials, furniture, carpet or items containing natural or synthetic rubber. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1625** by Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) and Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen) allows the Land Commissioner to remove a vessel or structure without providing notice if the owner or operator is not taking reasonable steps to abate a discharge, threat, or hazard, if it creates an imminent and significant threat to life or property or if it creates a significant **navigation hazard**. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1648** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) requires a retail public utility that provides potable water service to 3,300 or more connections to designate a person as the **water conservation coordinator** responsible for implementing the water conservation plan. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*



**HB 1884** by Charles “Doc” Anderson (R-Waco) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) requires up to 60 hours of community service to be a part of the penalty assessed for **littering offenses**. It allows a court to credit the amount of community service performed by a defendant toward any amount of community service the defendant is ordered to perform under another provision of the Code of Criminal Procedure as a result of the defendant’s inability to pay a fine or cost imposed in the judgment for the applicable offense. *It was signed by the governor on May 19, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2215** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Borris Miles (D-Houston) requires groundwater conservation districts to submit to the Texas Water Development Board a **regional water plan** that is consistent with the desired future conditions every five years. *It was signed on June 9, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 2334** by Tom Oliverson (R-Houston) and Sylvia Garcia (D-Houston) makes it an offense to violate a rule adopted under the **Flood Control and Insurance Act** in a county with a population of more than 75,000. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 2377** by Lyle Larson (R-San Antonio) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) allows a groundwater conservation district (GCD) located over any part of a **brackish groundwater zone** to adopt rules to govern the issuance of permits for the completion and operation of a well for the withdrawal of brackish groundwater from a designated brackish groundwater production zone. The district is required to adopt rules if the district receives a petition from a person with a legally defined interest in groundwater in the district. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 2378** by Lyle Larson (R-San Antonio) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) extends the term of a permit to transfer water out of a **groundwater conservation district** on or before its expiration to a term that is shorter than the term of an operating permit for the production of water to be transferred that is in effect at the time of the extension. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 2386** by Ernie Bailes (R-Shepherd) and Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) allows a volunteer firefighter acting in the scope of the person’s volunteer duties to supervise **outdoor burning of waste** consisting of plant growth. *It was signed by the governor on May 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2533** by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) and Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) requires local governments, affected persons, or authorized agents to provide written notice to the executive director of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Attorney General before filing a **claim for a civil penalty** in a civil suit. The **written notice** must include each alleged violation, the facts that support the claim, and the specific relief sought. It allows the suit to proceed 90 days after the notification unless the AG files a civil suit. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2582** by J. D. Sheffield (R-Gatesville) and Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) exempts from regulation as an **aggregate production operation** a site at which materials being removed or extracted from the earth are specialty or terrazzo-type stone removed or extracted exclusively for decorative or artistic uses and the portion of the specialty or terrazzo-type stone horizon that is exposed for current production for commercial sale in the site does not exceed five acres. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 2654** by Lynn Stucky (R-Sanger) and Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) clarifies that a county tax assessor-collector who performs duties related to collection of assessments imposed by a local government related to **Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) projects** is not personally liable as a result of exercising those duties. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2662** by Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) requires the **Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Commission** to conduct a study on the available volume and curie capacity of the compact waste disposal facility at least once every four years. In order to conduct the study, the commission may require a generator of low-level radioactive waste to provide annually:

- information reasonably necessary to evaluate the adequacy of the capacity of the compact waste disposal facility as accurately as possible, including the amount in volume and curies that the generator intends to export or dispose of at a facility other than the compact waste disposal facility;
- the amount in volume and curies of low-level radioactive waste that was stored on-site at the generator's facility in the preceding year; and
- the length of time waste was stored at the generator's facility.

**Surcharge** - It decreases the surcharge from 20 percent to 10 percent of the total contracted rate for the disposal of nonparty compact waste at the compact waste disposal facility.

**State Fee** - It institutes a state compact waste disposal facility fee transferred quarterly to the general revenue fund of five percent of the gross receipts from compact waste received at the compact waste disposal facility and any federal facility waste received at a federal waste disposal facility.

**Legislative Oversight Committee** – It creates a legislative oversight committee to assess the compact facility. It is composed of the Chair of the House Environmental Regulation Committee and the Senate Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee, the House and Senate members who represent the county in which the compact facility is located, a House member appointed by the Speaker of the House, a Senate member appointed by the Lt. Governor, the chair of the commission, and a person appointed by each nonhost party state. The committee is to consider and make recommendations regarding:

- the annual fixed costs incurred by the operator of the compact facility;
- the party state compact waste disposal fees;
- the contract review process as carried out by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality;
- the relationship between the state, party state generators, and operator as it relates to the operation of the compact facility;
- the contingency plan required under the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact;

- the need for and effects of fees and surcharges assessed for disposal of waste in the compact facility;
- the cost of a state-run compact facility and the effect a state-run facility would have on rates and generators in compact states; and
- any other matters the committee determines are relevant to the compact facility and oversight of the compact facility.

*It was filed without the governor's signature on June 15, 2017 and took immediate effect, except Sections 1(b) and 3(b) take effect September 1, 2019.*

**HB 2771** by Dade Phelan (R-Port Neches) and Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) requires the \$10 fee related to **wastewater treatment permit** applications to be used only for awarding competitive grants to support research and demonstration projects regarding on-site wastewater treatment and reducing the cost of providing wastewater treatment to consumers, including wastewater reuse. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2798** by Jessica Farrar (D-Houston) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) allows a county with a population of more than 3.3 million to implement a pilot program to **reuse** any form of **wastewater treated on-site**, at a county owned facility for subsurface irrigation and toilet and urinal flushing. It allows Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to adopt rules to ensure that the program does not create nuisance and does not threaten human health or damage surface water and groundwater quality. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 2943** by Lyle Larson (R-San Antonio) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) requires the Texas Water Development Board to create a program promoting conservation easements funded by the **Clean Water State Revolving Fund**. Easements acquired through the program are required to have a demonstrable impact on water quality control. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 3177** by Eddie Lucio, III (D-Brownsville) and Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) allows the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's executive director to act on **an application** or request for authorization if it has **become uncontested** before parties are named because each person who requested a contested case hearing within the time allowed by law has:

- withdrawn the request for a contested case hearing without condition;
- withdrawn the request for a contested case hearing conditioned only on the withdrawal of all other hearing requests;
- agreed in writing to allow the executive director to make a final decision on the matter; or
- become uncontested because all parties have agreed in writing to the action to be taken by the executive director.

It allows a person affected by a ruling, order, or decision on a matter delegated to the executive director to, after exhausting any administrative remedies, file a petition for judicial review to set aside, modify, or suspend the ruling, order, or decision within 30 days after the effective date of the ruling, order, or decision; or if the executive director's ruling, order, or decision is appealed to the commission the earlier of the date the commission denies the appeal, or the date the appeal is overruled by operation of law in

accordance with commission rules. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3618** by Tracy King (D-Batesville) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) requires **river authorities** to submit a written summary report on the **water quality assessment** of the authority's watershed to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department on a time schedule required by TCEQ rules. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3735** by James Frank (R-Wichita Falls) and Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) allows a holder of a water right that begins using **desalinated seawater** after acquiring the water right has a right to expedited consideration of an application for an amended **water rights application** if the amendment:

- authorizes the applicant to divert water from a diversion point that is different from or in addition to the point or points from which the applicant was authorized to divert water before the requested amendment;
- authorizes the applicant to divert from the different or additional diversion point an amount of water that is equal to or less than the amount of desalinated seawater used by the applicant;
- authorizes the applicant to divert from all of the diversion points authorized by the water right an amount of water that is equal to or less than the amount of water the applicant was authorized to divert under the water right before the requested amendment; and
- does not authorize the water diverted from the different or additional diversion point to be transferred to another river basin.

It requires the applications to be accompanied by a map or plat in the form and containing the information prescribed by Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3987** by Lyle Larson (R-San Antonio) and Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen) authorizes the Texas Water Development Board to use the **state participation account** of the water development fund to provide financial assistance for the development of a **desalination or aquifer storage and recovery facility**. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 4181** by Mary Ann Perez (D-Houston) and Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) authorizes the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to provide renewal notice to a new source review **air permit** holder by **electronic communication**. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 59** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and John Kuempel requires the State Energy Conservation Office to provide **energy and water management planning** assistance to **state agencies** and institutions of higher education in preparing comprehensive energy and water management plans including assistance to the Department of Public Safety for energy emergency contingency planning. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 208** by Royce West (D-Dallas) and Eddie Rodriguez (D-Austin) makes it an offense for a person to **knowingly sell an explosive device** to a metal recycling entity; and makes it an offense for a metal recycling entity to knowingly buy, store or allowed to be stored on its premises an explosive device. It requires the Department of Public Safety to use the statewide electronic reporting system tracking regulated metals to track the sale or attempted sale of an explosive component and require metal recycling entities to report the sale or attempted sale of an explosive component. *It was signed by the governor on May 27, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 347** by Kirk Watson (R-Austin) and Dade Phelan (R-Port Neches) subjects **regional water planning groups** to open meeting and public information requirements. *It was signed by the governor on May 16, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 570** by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) and Armando Walle (D-Houston) requires a **used or scrap tire generator** that stores the tires outdoors on its business premises to store them in a secured, locked or contained manner that protects the tires from theft. It requires Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to require a person who uses more than 1,000 used or scrap tires in a construction project to obtain commission approval before using the tires in the project. It requires a retailer whose customer retains a scrap tire to keep a record of the customer's retention of the tire in accordance with commission rules for at least three years. It requires retailers who take possession of scrap tires from a customer to store or dispose of the scrap tire according to local and state laws. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**SB 864** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Tracy O. King (D-Batesville) requires the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to identify any proposed alternative source of water in the notice for a **water rights permit**. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 865** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Dwayne Burns (R-Cleburne) authorizes **groundwater conservation districts** to use electronic fund transfers for payroll disbursements or for other disbursements. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1009** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Lyle Larson (R-San Antonio) allows a **groundwater conservation district** to require in a permit or permit amendment application to include information to help determination administrative completeness and information reasonably related to an issue that a district is authorized to consider. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1045** by Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) and Kyle Kacal (R-College Station) allows Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to consolidate the **notice of intent to obtain a permit** with the notice of preliminary decision into one notice. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1105** by Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen) and Dade Phelan (R-Port Neches) abolishes the **used oil recycling account** and transfers the funds into the water resource management account. *It was signed by the governor on June 12, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1330** by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) and Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa) clarifies the fees collected to fund operations of the **Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Commission** are deposited to the General Revenue-Dedicated Low-Level Radioactive Waste Fund. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1430** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Eddie Lucio, III (D-Brownsville) directs the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to prioritize the technical review of a **water rights permit amendment application** if the amendment does not authorize the diverted water to be transferred to another river basin but does authorize the applicant to divert water:

- from a new diversion point at an amount that is equal to or less than the amount of **desalinated water** used by the applicant;
- from all authorized diversion points at an amount that is equal to or less than the amount originally authorized; and
- from all authorized diversion points at a combined rate that was equal to or less than the rate originally authorized.

*It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1446** by Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) and Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) requires the notice of a **contested case hearing** to include a statement of factual matters asserted. It allows state agencies to notify parties of a state agency decision or order by email, fax or other method provided for by the agency's rules for serving copies of pleadings. And, it removes the 20-day time limit on filing a subsequent motion for rehearing. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1511** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Four Price (R-Amarillo) requires the state **water planning process** to include consideration of implementation of projects included in the preceding state water plan that were given a high priority including an assessment of the extent to which the projects were implemented in the decade in which they were needed; and an analysis of of any impediments to the implementation of the projects that were not implemented in the decade in which they were needed. It adds a representative from the State Soil and Water Conservation Board as an ex officio member of each regional water planning group. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1525** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Lyle Larson (R-San Antonio) requires the Texas Water Development Board to study water needs and availability in the state and to use the results to produce a **comprehensive water resources map**. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**SB 1538** by Kirk Watson (D-Austin) and Dade Phelan (R-Port Neches) allows the **floodplain management account** to fund activities related to the collection and analysis of flood-related information; flood planning, protection, mitigation, or adaptation; or the provision of flood-related information to the public through educational or outreach programs. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1667** by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) and Brooks Landgraf (R-Odessa) clarifies that the **Texas Low Level Radioactive Waste Compact Commission** is an independent entity established by federal law and governed by the compact and is not an agency of the State of Texas; but allows the legislature to appropriate funds to the commission. It allows the commission to conduct activities not described by the federal law governing the commission or the compact, as long as those activities are consistent with the policies and procedures of the state. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

### **GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**HB 471/HJR 37** by Eric Johnson (D-Dallas) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) proposes a constitutional amendment allowing the legislature to authorize **credit unions or other financial institutions** to conduct promotional activities to encourage savings including **awarding a prize through a raffle**. *HB 471 was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect upon voter adoption of the constitutional amendment. HJR 37 was filed with the Secretary of State on May 24, 2017 for ballot placement (constitutional amendments do not go to the governor).*

**HB 1555** by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) allows **wine and beer permit holders to sell lottery tickets** if the permit holder derives less than 30 percent of its gross receipts from the sale or service of alcoholic beverages. *It was signed by the governor on May 18, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 1612** by Ramon Romero (D-Fort Worth) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) prohibits the **Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission** from offering a civil penalty in lieu of **suspending a permit** or license if the basis for the suspension involves consumption of or the permitting of consumption of **controlled substances or drugs**. *It was signed by the governor on May 22, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1859** by Ron Simmons (R-Carrollton) and Van Taylor (R-Plano) provides that if a merchant's merchandise is not displayed or offered to consumers primarily for lease under a **rental-purchase agreement**, the merchant is required to disclose to the consumer before presenting a rental-purchase agreement:

- The cash price of the merchandise;
- The amount of the periodic payments under the proposed agreement; and
- The total number and amount of periodic payments necessary to acquire ownership of the merchandise.

**It was VETOED by the governor.**

**HB 2097** by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) and Kirk Watson (D-Austin) clarifies that the holder of a **brewpub license** that also holds a wine and beer retailer's permit and whose sale of beer ale, or malt liquor was restricted to their own production of those products made on their premises to self-distribute their products to retailers and other qualified persons. And, it eliminates the restriction that these brewpubs sales of alcoholic beverages can only be those beverages manufactured on the brewpub's premises. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2101** by John Frullo (R-Lubbock) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) allows the holder of a wine and beer retailer's permit to be issued a **food and beverage certificate** if the total receipts from the sale of alcoholic beverages for the premises are no more than 60 percent of the total receipts for the premises. It prohibits license and permit holders whose food and beverage certificates have been canceled or who are denied renewal from applying for new certificates for at least one year after the cancellation or nonrenewal. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2299** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) allows the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission to require proof that a laboratory performing a **test to verify the alcohol content of malt beverages** to be a certified laboratory. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3003** by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) and Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) authorizes a **brewer to offer a prize** to a consumer of legal drinking age if the offer is part of a promotional sweepstakes activity. Prizes can include food, beverages, entertainment, recreation, gifts, or attendance at a private event. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3101** by John Kuempel (R-Seguin) and Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) authorizes the sale of **alcoholic beverages on passenger busses** that are designed and used for the regularly scheduled intercity transportation of passengers for compensation; has an elevated passenger deck over a baggage compartment, a passenger seating capacity of between 16 and 36 and a separate galley area; and has an attendant who is not the operator of the bus and has attended a training program approved by the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 3287** by Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) clarifies that the **production caps on the sale of beer and ale** by holders of brewer's permits apply to all premises owned directly or indirectly by the permit holder holder or an affiliate or subsidiary. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 3488** by Gina Hinojosa (D-Austin) and Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) authorizes a for-profit corporation to elect to become a **public benefit corporation**. *It was signed by the governor on June 14, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3921** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) requires an employee of a financial institution to notify the institution if the employee suspects **financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult** who has an account with the institution. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 4042** by Chris Paddie (R-Marshall) and John Whitmire (D-Houston) authorizes the Texas **Alcoholic Beverage Commission** to issue a **temporary auction permit** to a person or group of persons who are subject to recordkeeping requirements under



Chapter 254 of the Election Code (campaign treasurers, candidates, and officeholders); prohibits the commission from imposing a surcharge for a temporary auction permit; and eliminates the prohibition to conduct more than one auction in each calendar year by a permit holder. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 371** by Kirk Watson (D-Austin) and John Cyrier (R-Lockhart) requires the **biennial report** submitted to the legislature by the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission to specify the number of individuals or establishments found to be consuming or permitting **consumption of an alcoholic beverage during prohibited hours**. It also specifies grounds for refusal, cancellation, or suspension of **alcoholic beverage licenses**. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 560** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) transfers enforcement authority for the **credit card surcharge prohibition** from the Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner to the Office of the Attorney General. *It was signed by the governor on May 27, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 714** by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) and Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) requires a **financial institution to notify a customer of the type of account the customer has selected**; and allows that requirement to be satisfied that requirement by providing the customer with a copy of the account opening or modification documentation in paper or electronic format. It also clarifies that if a type of multiple-party account is not available from the financial institution, the institution is not required to make a disclosure about that type of account. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1381** by Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Oscar Longoria (D-Mission) allows a merchant to require an individual using a **credit or debit card** in a point of sale transaction to provide photo identification verifying the identity of the cardholder. Transactions conducted with a mobile wallet are exempted. *It was signed by the governor on June 12, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1400** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) and Justin Holland (R-Frisco) requires the banking commissioner to promptly notify an **applicant for a state bank** when an application is informationally complete. It prohibits a safe deposit company from terminating an agreement for the rental of a **safe deposit box** unless the lessee receives 90 days notice, or the payment is at least six months delinquent. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1401** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) and Jay Dean (R-Longview) authorizes the **banking commissioner to regulate** the services or activities of a **third-party service provider** that a state bank or state bank affiliate has contracted for or arranged to be performed on behalf of the bank or affiliate. Third-party service provider includes an entity that provides **Internet-related services**, including web services, processing electronic bill payments, developing and maintaining mobile applications, system and software development and maintenance and security monitoring. It does not include a provider of an interactive computer service or a general audience Internet or communications platform, except to the extent that the service or platform is specially designed or adapted for the business of banking and activities related to the business of banking. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1517** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Rene Oliveira (D-Brownsville) adds to the definition of “person” under the Business Organizations Code a **series of a domestic limited liability company** or a foreign entity; and establishes procedures for service of process on series of limited liability companies or foreign entities. It also makes several changes to statutes related to limited liability companies. *It was signed by the governor on May 22, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1518** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Rene Oliveira (D-Brownsville) brings Texas into conformity with the **Model Business Corporation Act**. *It was signed by the governor on May 22, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

## **HEALTH:**

**HB 10** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) requires health benefit plans that provide benefits for **mental health conditions and substance use disorders** to provide those benefits under the same terms and conditions as the plan’s medical and surgical benefits.

**Behavioral Health Ombudsman** - It establishes a behavioral health ombudsman, creates a mental health parity work group, and requires state agencies and other stakeholders to submit reports on behavioral health care access issues. It requires the Health and Human Services Commission to designate an ombudsman for behavioral health access to care to help consumers and behavioral health care providers to navigate and resolve issues regarding consumer access to behavioral health care, including for mental health conditions and substance abuse disorders. The ombudsman is also required to monitor and report potential parity violations and receive and report complaints related to inappropriate care.

**Mental Health Parity Work Group** – It requires the Health and Human Services Commission to create a mental health condition and substance use disorder parity work group to increase the understanding of and compliance with state and federal rules on the availability and terms of behavioral health care benefits. The work group will be composed of the ombudsman, mental health and substance use disorder consumers, advocates, providers, and professions and representatives from health benefit plans and state agencies. The group is required to make reports to the legislature prior to each regular session. The workgroup sunsets on September 1, 2021. *It was signed by the governor on June 14, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 13** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) requires the Health and Human Services Commission to establish a matching **grant program** for mental health services **to support community mental health programs** for individuals experiencing mental illness. Grant recipients can be nonprofit or governmental entities. The selection criteria must:

- Evaluate and score fiscal controls for the project, project effectiveness, project cost, and an applicant's previous experience with grants and contracts;
- Address whether the services proposed would duplicate services already available in the applicant's service area;
- Address the possibility of and method for making multiple awards; and
- Include other factors that the executive commissioner considers relevant.

Each application must be accompanied by a letter of support from each local mental health authority with a local service area that is covered wholly or partly by the proposed community mental health program. Matching funds of at least 50 percent from non-state sources are required to receive a grant in a county with a population less than 250,000; 100 percent of the grant amount for a program located in a county with a population 250,000 or more. It earmarks 50 percent of total grant funding for counties with a population of 250,000 or less. The commission is required to submit an annual report to the legislators. *It was signed by the governor on June 14, 2017 and took immediate effect, but only if specific appropriation to implement the law is included in the general appropriations act.*

**HB 271** by Rick Miller (R-Sugar Land) and Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) establishes the **Veterans Recovery Pilot Program** to provide diagnostic services, hyperbaric oxygen treatment, and support services to eligible veterans who have post-traumatic stress disorder or a traumatic brain injury. *It was signed by the governor on June 14, 2017 and took immediate effect, if a specific appropriation for the grant program is provided in the general appropriations act.*

**HB 280** by Donna Howard (D-Austin) and Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) creates a grant program administered by the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies to fund innovative approaches for reducing verbal and physical **workplace violence against nurses**. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 284** by Drew Springer (R-Muenster) and Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) allows residents in assisted living centers to have the right to request self-release **seatbelts for their wheelchairs**. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 490** by Rodney Anderson (R-Grand Prairie) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) requires a health benefit plan to cover the cost of a **medically necessary hearing aid** or cochlear implant and related services and supplies for a covered individual who is 18 years of age or younger. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 785** by John Raney (R-Bryan) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) requires the Department of State Health Services to make **embryo donation information** available online, and requires a physician who performs a procedure involving the creation of a human embryo to inform the patient of the option of embryo donation for unused human embryos. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 810** by Tan Parker (R-Flower Mound) and Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) makes a patient with a severe chronic disease or terminal illness eligible to access **investigational stem cell treatments**. *It was signed by the governor on June 12, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 970** by Philip Cortez (D-San Antonio) and Carlos Uresti (D-San Antonio) requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to establish a state plan for **streptococcus pneumonia education** and prevention. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 995** by John Wray (R-Waxahachie) and Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) updates the law regarding **medical powers of attorney**. It clarifies the circumstances under which a medical power of attorney may be revoked and modifies the required text to be used in the form for a medical power of attorney. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017, except Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 take effect January 1, 2018.*

**HB 1036** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) and John Whitmire (D-Houston) includes **breast tomosynthesis or digital mamography** in the definition of low-dose mammography for the purposes of health benefit plan coverage requirements. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1076** by Tom Oliverson (R-Houston) and Don Huffines (R-Dallas) requires the Health and Human Services Commission to determine the appropriate **spinal screening** ages based on the most recent nationally accepted and peer-reviewed scientific research (instead of requiring spinal screenings of children in grades 6 and 9). *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1227** by John Smithee (R-Amarillo) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) clarifies the disclosure requirements for individual health benefit plans to provide publicly displayed **prescription drug coverage formulary** information. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1296** by John Frullo (R-Lubbock) and Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) establishes guidelines requiring health benefit plans that provide **prescription drug coverage**, pharmacies, and health care providers to work together to **synchronize the dates** of an enrollee's prescription drug coverage and the dates a pharmacy dispenses a covered drug for a chronic illness in order to benefit the enrollee. It defines "chronic illness" to mean an illness or physical condition that could reasonably be expected to continue for an uninterrupted period of at least three months and than could be controlled but not cured by medical treatment. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1407** by J. D. Sheffield (R-Gatesville) and Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) requires the Department of State Health Services to establish the **emergency medical services assistance program** to provide financial and educational assistance to eligible emergency medical services providers. Grant eligibility must require that:

- An emergency medical services provider demonstrate financial need;
- A general academic teaching institution, medical and dental unit, other agency of higher education, or public technical institute applying to offer the educational curriculum demonstrate the qualifications necessary to develop and offer the educational curriculum; and
- The educational curriculum provide to rural emergency medical services personnel the remote instructional courses and training necessary for the personnel to achieve department certification.

*It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1428** by John Smithee (R-Amarillo) and Joan Huffman (R-Houston) extends the out-of-network claim **dispute resolution** process involving **balance billing** to health benefit plans administered by the **Teacher Retirement System**. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1543** by Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale) and Kirk Watson (D-Austin) entitles a client to access their records from a license holder or specialty practice pertaining to the testing for, and **fitting and dispensing of, hearing instruments** upon written request. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1642** by Cecil Bell Jr. (R-Magnolia) and Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) requires the Health and Human Services Commission to submit a written report to an appropriate law enforcement agency regarding **a claim of abuse, neglect, exploitation against residents of residential care facilities**, or other complaint if HHSC determines the claim is substantiated at the end of an investigation of the claim. It removes the requirement that HHSC notify the district attorney. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1697** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) requires the Health and Human Services Commission to establish the **Pediatric Tele-Connectivity Resource Program for Rural Texas** to award grants to nonurban health care facilities to connect the facilities with pediatric specialists and subspecialists who provide telemedicine medical services. Grants can be used to:

- purchase equipment necessary for implementing a telemedicine medical service;
- modernize the facility's information technology infrastructure and secure information technology support to ensure an uninterrupted two-way video signal that is compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996;
- pay a service fee to a pediatric tele-specialty provider under an annual contract with the provider; or
- pay for other activities, services, supplies, facilities, resources, and equipment the commission determines necessary for the facility to use a telemedicine medical service.

*It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect on September 1, 2017.*

**HB 1978** by J.D. Sheffield (R-Gatesville) and Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) exempts a **physician assistant** from supervision and delegation requirements while serving as a volunteer for a charitable organization or at a public or private event, including a religious event, sporting event, community event, or health fair. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2007** by Scott Cospers (R-Killeen) and Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) authorizes the Board of Dental Examiners to issue a **military limited volunteer license to practice dentistry or dental hygiene** to a qualified dentist or hygienist if they only practice at a clinic that primarily treats indigent patients, and if they do not receive compensation for services rendered. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2025** by Yvonne Davis (D-Dallas) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) requires licenses issued to **long-term care facilities** to expire on the third anniversary of the date the license was issued. It requires the Health and Human Services Commission to review and develop efficiencies in the methods used to issue informational materials to a licensed entity; and requires HHSC to develop and implement a system to track the scope and severity of violations of rules and standards regulating long-term care facilities that is comparable to the system used by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to categorize the scope and severity of violations for nursing homes. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2425** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Van Taylor (R-Conroe) requires the hospital to provide **caregiver training** and information to persons taking care of a **loved one released from a hospital** or rehabilitation facility. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 2501** by Larry Phillips (R-Sherman) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) deletes entities arranging **nonemergency medical transportation** under contract with the state or a managed care organization for individuals qualifying for Medicaid or Medicare from the definition of "transportation network company." *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2561** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) is the sunset bill for **Texas State Board of Pharmacy**. It continues the agency until September 1, 2029. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2765** by Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) and Van Taylor (R-Plano) enacts the **Physical Therapy Licensure Compact** to facilitate interstate practice of physical therapy with the goal of improving public access to physical therapy services. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2886** by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) and Konni Burton (R-Colleyville) limits the liability of a healthcare provider who is unable to apply the prophylaxis to prevent **ophthalmia neonatorum** at childbirth due to the objection of the parents, managing conservator, or guardian of the newborn. In such cases, the health care provider is not subject to criminal, civil, or administrative liability or any professional disciplinary action for failure to administer the prophylaxis. The health care provider is required to ensure that the objection of the parent, managing conservator or guardian is entered into the medical record of the infant. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2891** by John Smithee (R-Amarillo) and Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) prescribes a form for medical authorization to release protected health information in a **health care liability claim**. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**HB 2933** by Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton) and Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) authorizes the Texas Optometry Board to issue a **military limited volunteer license to practice optometry** or therapeutic optometry to a qualified applicant who will practice only at a clinic that primarily treats indigent patients, and who does not receive compensation for services rendered. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 2950** by Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale) and Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) is the sunset bill for the **Texas Board of Nursing**. It continues the agency until September 1, 2029. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017, except Section 20(b) takes effect December 31, 2018.*

**HB 3078** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) is the sunset bill for Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation and **Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation**. It continues the commission and department to September 1, 2021. And, it transfers **regulation of podiatry** from the Texas State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, and abolishes the Texas State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners on September 1, 2017. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3083** by Four Price (R-Amarillo) and Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) includes a **chemical dependency counselor** among the mental health professionals eligible for **education loan repayment**, and clarifies eligibility and payout requirements for the mental health professional education loan repayment program. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3218** by Larry Phillips (R-Sherman) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) allows **health maintenance organizations** to provide or arrange for health care services through providers or groups of providers who were under contract with an entity that was under contract with the HMO to provide a network of providers. The subcontract is only allowed if the contract between the entity and the health maintenance organization expressly provides that it:

- did not limit the HMO's authority or responsibility, including financial responsibility, to comply with any regulatory requirement that applied to a function performed by the entity; and
- required the entity to comply with all regulatory requirements that applied to a function the entity performed.

It also exempts an entity that did not assume risk and the HMO with which it contracted from provisions in the Insurance Code related to HMO delegation including financial, solvency and reserve requirements. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3276** by Tom Oliverson (R-Houston) and Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) requires a **freestanding emergency medical care facility** to post a notice that lists the health benefit plans in which the facility participates in the provider network, or that states the facility is not a participating provider in any health benefit plan provider network. A facility can satisfy the notice requirement by giving notice on its website listing the health benefit plans in which the facility is a participating provider and providing to a patient written confirmation of whether the facility is a participating provider in the patient's health benefit plan provider network. *It was signed by the governor on May 26, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3296** by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) decreases, from 10 to eight, the number of persons that must be regularly employed before **nursing peer review committees** are required to be established for vocational and professional nurses. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3359** by Scott Cospers (R-Killeen) and Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) allows the Department of Public Safety to make information about **bone marrow donation** in a publicly accessible area of a driver's license office. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3564** by Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) clarifies provisions establishing the office of the state **long-term care ombudsman**. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3576** by Bobby Guera (D-McAllen) and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) clarifies provisions requiring the collection and release of information on the **Zika virus** and other high consequence communicable diseases for statistical and health care purposes. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**HB 3934** by Cecil Bell, Jr. (R-Magnolia) and Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) requires the Department of Aging and Disability Services to provide **training and continuing education requirements for a surveyor** with no previous experience working in a long-term care facility. The department can waive the requirement for a surveyor who has completed in the two years preceding the inspection, survey, or investigation one year of full-time employment in a nursing facility in Texas as a nursing facility administrator, licensed vocational nurse, registered nurse, or social worker. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*



**SB 8** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale) prohibits **partial-birth abortions** and dismemberment abortions except in a necessary medical emergency. And, it prohibits the sale or trade of human fetal tissue. *It was signed by the governor on June 6, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 27** by Donna Campbell (R-New Braunfels) and Cesar Blanco (R-El Paso) authorizes the University of Texas System to establish the **National Center for Warrior Resiliency** at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio to provide clinical care and research on issues relating to **combat-related post-traumatic stress disorder** and comorbid condition. It requires the Health and Human Services Commission to include training and technical assistance for peer service coordinators and licensed mental health professionals in the mental health program for veterans. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 74** by Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) and Four Price (R-Amarillo) authorizes behavioral health providers to provide Targeted Case Management and **psychiatric rehabilitation services** to children, adolescents, and families through **Medicaid managed care organizations** (MCO). It requires the Health and Human Services Commission contracts with Medicaid MCO's to:

- require sharing and integration of data between the MCO and the third party or subsidiary;
- encourage the colocation of physical health and behavioral health care coordination staff;
- require warm call transfers between physical health and behavioral health care coordination staff;
- require warm call transfers between physical health and behavioral health care coordination staff;
- require the implementation of joint rounds for physical health and behavioral health services providers or some other means for sharing clinical information; and
- ensure the availability of a seamless provider portal for both physical health and behavioral health services providers, to the extent allowed by federal law.

*It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 81** by Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) and Sarah Davis (R-Houston) extends the sunset date for the **Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas** from September 1, 2021 to September 1, 2023. It allows the oversight committee to conduct a closed meeting to discuss issues related to managing, acquiring or selling securities or other revenue-sharing obligations. And, it requires oversight committee members to file financial disclosure reports with the Texas Ethics Commission. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 304** by Van Taylor (R-Plano) and Richard Raymond (D-Laredo) is the sunset bill for the **Texas Board of Chiropractic Examiners**. It continues the board until September 1, 2019. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 313** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale) is the sunset bill for the **State Board of Dental Examiners**. It extends the agency until September 1, 2019. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017, except Sections 258.155, 258.156, and 258.1554 of the Occupations Code take effect March 1, 2018; and Sections 258.002, 258.054, and 265.001 of the Occupations Code take effect September 1, 2018.*

**SB 314** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Dan Flynn (R-Van) is the sunset bill for **Texas Optometry Board**. It extends the agency until September 1, 2019. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 315** by Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) and Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale) clarifies the authority of the Texas Medical Board to regulate **pain management clinics** including inspection of non-certified pain management clinics and adopting guidelines for prescribing of opioids and other controlled substances. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 317** by Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) and Cindy Burkett (R-Sunnyvale) is the sunset bill for the **Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners and Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners**. It continues the agencies until September 1, 2029. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017, except Sections 2.08, 2.10, 2.23, 2.25, 2.26(1) and \*4), 4.10 and 4.22(5) of the act, and Sections 453.1061, 453.357, 454.1061, 454.307, and 454.3521(a) of the Occupations Code take effect September 1, 2019.*

**SB 491** by Kirk Watson (D-Austin) and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) allows the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to contract with one or more organizations to operate the **statewide preceptorship program in family medicine** for students enrolled in Texas medical schools. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 507** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and John Frullo (R-Lubbock) addresses the practice of **balance billing**. It allows mediation of balance bills from all types of out-of-network providers treating patients at in-network hospitals and other facilities. It expands mediation for out-of-network health benefit claim disputes to include the Teacher Retirement System (It already applies to the Employee Retirement System). *It was signed by the governor on May 23, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 546** by Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) and Nicole Collier (D-Fort Worth) requires the Health and Human Services Commission to seek guidance from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to ensure the **quality of drinking water** supplied to **state supported living centers**. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 584** by Royce West (D-Dallas) and Toni Rose (D-Dallas) requires the Texas Medical Board to adopt **guidelines for the prescription of opioid antagonists**. The guidelines must address:

- prescribing an opioid antagonist to a patient to whom an opioid medication is also prescribed; and
- identify patients at risk of an opioid-related drug overdose and prescribing an opioid antagonist to that patient or to a person in a position to administer the opioid antagonist to the patient.

It provides that a physician who acts in good faith and with reasonable care is not subject to criminal or civil liability or any professional disciplinary action for:

- prescribing or failing to prescribe an opioid antagonist; or
- any outcome resulting from the eventual administration of an opioid antagonist prescribed by a physician.

*It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 589** by Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) and Ron Simmons (R-Carrollton) requires **behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts** to have a state-issued license administered and enforced by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017, except Section 506.251 and Chapter 506, Subchapter I of the Occupations Code take effect September 1, 2018.*

**SB 654** by Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) and John Smithee (R-Amarillo) authorizes an **advanced practice registered nurse** to be included as a primary care provider by a managed care organization's provider network, even if the physician supervising the advanced practice nurse is not included in the network. *It was signed by the governor on May 29, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 674** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Sarah Davis (R-Houston) requires the Texas Medical Board to create an **expedited licensing** process for an applicant who:

- holds an unrestricted license to practice medicine issued by another state;
- is **board certified in psychiatry** by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology or the American Osteopathic Board of Neurology and Psychiatry; and
- whose license in another state is not restricted for cause.

*It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 679** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Tony Dale (R-Cedar Park) authorizes a **chiropractor** to form a **health organization corporation** in partnership with other licensed practitioners to perform a professional service that falls within the scope of practice of those practitioners. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 680** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) requires a health benefit plan issuer that requires a **step therapy protocol** before providing coverage for a prescription drug to establish, implement, and administer the step therapy protocol in accordance with clinical review criteria readily available to the health care industry; and to take into account the needs of atypical patient populations and diagnoses in establishing the clinical review criteria. The clinical review criteria must consider generally accepted clinical practice guidelines that are:

- developed and endorsed by a multidisciplinary panel of experts;

- based on high quality studies, research, and medical practice;
- created by an explicit and transparent process that minimizes bias and conflicts of interest, explains the relationship between treatment options and outcomes, rates the quality of the evidence supporting the recommendations, and
- considers relevant patient subgroups and preferences, and updated at appropriate intervals after a review of new evidence, research, and treatments.

If clinical practice guidelines are not reasonably available, the guidelines may be based on peer-reviewed publications developed by independent experts, which may include physicians, with expertise applicable to the relevant health condition. It requires health benefit plan issuers to establish a user-friendly process through which an exception request may be submitted by the provider. *It was signed by the governor on May 23, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 790** by Borris Miles (D-Houston) and Donna Howard (D-Austin) continues operations of the **women's health advisory committee** until 2019. **It was VETOED by the governor.**

**SB 919** by Jose Rodriguez (D-El Paso) and Garnet Coleman (D-Houston) authorizes an **advanced practice registered nurse** or physician assistant of a deceased person to sign a death certificate. A physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse can only complete the medical certification for a death certificate or fetal death certificate if:

- a patient who has executed a written certification of a terminal illness has elected to receive hospice care and is receiving hospice services from a qualified hospice provider; or
- a patient is receiving palliative care.

*It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 922** by Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) and Larry Gonzales (R-Round Rock) requires the Health and Human Services Commission to ensure that Medicaid reimbursement is provided to a school district or open-enrollment charter school for **telehealth services provided through the school district** or charter school by a health professional, even if the health professional is not the patient's primary care physician if the school district or charter school is an authorized health care provider under Medicaid and the parent provides consent. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 924** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) transfers authority over the informal **dispute resolution** process for violations of health and safety standards at **assisted living facilities** from the Department of Aging and Disability Services to the Health and Human Services Commission. *It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1049** by Carlos Uresti (D-San Antonio) and Stephanie Klick (R-Fort Worth) requires the Executive Commissioner of Health and Human Services to specify an edition of the Life Safety Code of the National Fire Protection Association to be used in establishing the life safety requirements for a **licensed assisted living facility**. *It was signed by the governor on May 22, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1076** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) prohibits a **health benefit plan** issuer that covers prescription drugs from requiring an enrollee to make a **payment for a prescription drug** at the point of sale in an amount greater than the lesser of:

- the applicable copayment;
- the allowable claim amount for the prescription drug; or
- the amount an individual would pay for the drug if the individual purchased the drug without using a health benefit plan or any other source of drug benefits or discounts.

*It was signed by the governor on June 12, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1107** by Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) and Four Price (R-Amarillo) establishes a definition of “telehealth service” and “**telemedicine**” in state law and clarifies that the same standard of care that applies in a traditional, in-person setting also applies to telemedical services. It allows practitioners to interact with patients through a real-time audiovisual interaction, or through an asynchronous "store and forward" process that includes clinically relevant diagnostic imagery as well as the patient's relevant medical history, laboratory results, and prescriptive history. *It was signed by the governor on May 27, 2017 and took immediate effect, except Sections 1455.001(3), 1455.004, and 1455.006 of the Insurance Code take effect January 1, 2018.*

**SB 1148** by Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway) and Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) prohibits a **managed care plan** issuer from differentiating between physicians based on a **physician's maintenance of certification** in regard to:

- paying the physician;
- reimbursing the physician; or
- directly or indirectly contracting with the physician to provide services to enrollees.

It allows a managed care plan issuer to differentiate between physicians based on a physician's maintenance of certification only if the designation under law or certification or accreditation by a national certifying or accrediting organization of an entity under the Occupations Code is contingent on the entity requiring a specific maintenance of certification by physicians seeking staff privileges or credentialing at the entity. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect January 1, 2018.*

**SB 1171** by Craig Estes (R-Wichita Falls) and Dennis Paul (R-Webster) authorizes the **Texas Health Reinsurance System** to operate only when an order authorizing operation of the system is in effect. *It was signed by the governor on May 23, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 1492** by Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and John Smithee (R-Amarillo) repeals provisions requiring the Commissioner of Insurance to stabilize **long-term care premium rates** based on nationally recognized models from 2001. *It was signed by the governor on June 1, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1599** by Borris Miles (D-Houston) and Armando Walle (D-Houston) requires the Department of State Health Services to post on its Internet website information on the systematic protocol for **pregnancy-related death investigations** and the best practices for reporting pregnancy-related deaths to the medical examiner or justice of the peace of each county. The information must include guidelines for:

- when a comprehensive toxicology screening should be performed on a person whose death was related to pregnancy;
- determining when a death should be reported to or investigated by a medical examiner or justice of the peace; and
- correctly completing the death certificate of a person whose death was related to pregnancy.

*It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1625** by Carlos Uresti (D-San Antonio) and Philip Cortez (D-San Antonio) provides that the prescriptive authority of a **physician assistant** requires periodic meetings between the physician assistant and the physician at least once a month and include:

- the sharing of information relating to patient treatment and care, needed changes in patient care plans, and issues relating to referrals; and
- discussion of patient care improvement.

It allows the Physician Assistant Board to conduct deliberations relating to a license application or disciplinary action in an executive session. It requires physician assistant applicants to submit fingerprints and undergo a criminal background check. It allows a physician assistant to refuse to engage in an act or omission relating to patient care that would constitute grounds for reporting the physician assistant to the board for a law or rule violation and prohibits a person from suspending, terminating, discriminating against or retaliating against a physician assistant who refuses to engage in such an act or omission. It sets forth disciplinary procedures for a physician assistant suspected of wrongdoing. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1633** by Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and Tom Oliverson (R-Houston) allows a telepharmacy system to be located at a **telepharmacy remote dispensing site**. It requires the Texas State Board of Pharmacy to adopt rules regarding license requirements for eligible locations in medically underserved areas, areas with a medically underserved population, and health professional shortage areas. *It was signed by the governor on June 15, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1680** by Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) and Richard Raymond (D-Laredo) requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in collaboration with the Office of Border Health, to establish the **Task Force of Border Health Officials** to advise the commissioner of health and human services on policy priorities addressing major issues affecting the border region residents' health and safety conditions; raising public awareness of issues related to border health and safety condition; and other health issues impacting the border region including:

- barriers to accessing health care;
- health problems afflicting the region including diabetes, infant mortality, heart disease and stroke, obesity, cervical cancer, and communicable diseases;
- factors that impede access to health care including socioeconomic conditions, linguistic and cultural barriers, low population density, and lack of health insurance;

- surveillance and tracking of communicable diseases, environmental factors, and other factors negatively influencing health;
- standardization of data to ensure compatibility with data collected by border states on both sides of the international border with Mexico;
- public health infrastructure that includes education and research institutions to train culturally competent health care providers
- establishment of local and regional public health programs that build on local resources and maximize the use of public dollars to address the needs of the indigent population; and
- collaboration and cooperation with Mexican counterparts of the task force at the state and federal level, and collaboration with federal counterparts in the United States.

*It was signed by the governor on June 12, 2017 and takes effect September 1, 2017.*

**SB 1693** by Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) and Richard Raymond (D-Laredo) establishes the **Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee** to determine the appropriate level of independent living services for the growing number of seniors in the state with visual impairment, and make recommendations on the provision of services to those seniors. It requires the advisory committee to study projected growth and geographic distribution of seniors with a visual impairment in the next 5 to 10 years and methods for improving and expanding services including independent living services. The study must:

- identify the barriers to expanding health care services to seniors with a visual impairment;
- include methods for expanding coordination efforts with and involvement by public and private entities;
- recommend a training curriculum for state agency personnel who provide direct intervention and independent living services to seniors with a visual impairment;
- identify and recommend a strategy to increase the number of state agency personnel who provide direct intervention and independent living services to seniors with a visual impairment; and
- determine potential public and private collaborators that provide services to seniors with a visual impairment.

*It was signed by the governor on June 9, 2017 and took immediate effect.*

**SB 2087** by Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) and Larry Phillips (R-Sherman) creates the **Temporary Texas Health Insurance Risk Pool** to provide a temporary mechanism for maximizing available federal funding to assist Texans in obtaining access to quality health care at minimum cost to the public. *It was signed by the governor on June 12, 2017 and took immediate effect.*