

# ★ TEXAS IMPACT ACTION ALERT

Week of April 3, 2023

**Green**=Support • **Red**=Oppose • **Tan**=Monitor Closely

The Texas House will take up the budget bill — HB 1 — on Maundy Thursday. With 150 members, the House often takes well past midnight to pass the budget. With an all-nighter looming, and hundreds of pre-filed amendments being vetted, House committees have set more modest and less controversial agendas designed to avoid late nights.

The Senate, by contrast, is likely to hear a divisive anti-Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) bill — SB 17 — on Thursday in the Senate Committee on Education's Subcommittee on Higher Education. Additionally, Senate Committees have several other culture war bills scheduled for hearings.

## House Public Health

***Get these bills moving! The following bills have not been scheduled for committee hearings yet. There are only two more weeks left in the prime window for bills to be heard in their originating chamber. Urge Chair Klick to hear these bills before April 15.***



**HB 647** by Hinojosa would allow individuals who sign advance directives and do-not-resuscitate orders to specify modifications to their orders that would apply if they are pregnant.

**HB 979** by Howard would create an exception to Texas' prohibition on abortion in cases of rape or incest.

**HB 2215** by Howard would provide vital clarification that doctors may perform abortions if in the doctor's best medical judgment, abortion is necessary to preserve the pregnant patient's life, future fertility, or physical or mental health, or is requested because of a lethal fetal anomaly.

**HB 326** by Goodwin would require a medical facility to remove all medical equipment from a deceased person's body before the body is transferred to a funeral director.

**HB 2895** by Ann Johnson would authorize water cremation, also known as aquamation and alkaline hydrolysis, as a method of disposition when a person dies. Funeral practices have always been closely connected to religious belief, and many people of faith desire a funeral that better cares for God's Creation.

[Read the 1-pager.](#)

Call the House Public Health Committee  
Chair: Rep. Stephanie Klick - (855) 701-2295  
Vice Chair: Rep. Elizabeth "Liz" Campos - (866) 695-0632  
Rep. Nicole Collier - (866) 573-1657  
Rep. Jacey Jetton - (855) 942-3074  
Rep. Ann Johnson - (866) 721-0892  
Rep. Jolanda "Jo" Jones - (866) 730-0849  
Rep. Venton Jones - (866) 631-6167  
Rep. Tom Oliverson - (855) 702-6654  
Rep. Four Price - (855) 704-0109  
Rep. Reggie Smith - (855) 918-1295  
Rep. Tony Tinderholt - (866) 573-1656

## Senate Higher Education

Likely Thursday, April 6

**Oppose SB 17** by Creighton. SB 17 would prohibit diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies in higher education. The sweeping prohibition includes admissions, employment, governance, and contracting. With the Supreme Court likely to rule on an admission case this summer, it's worth five minutes listening to [Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson explain the original intent](#) of the 14th Amendment, which was not "race-blind," but included remedial measures to eliminate historic inequities. You can also sign up with [the Texas Legislative Black Caucus](#) to stay up to date on actions to oppose SB 17 and related legislation.

Call the Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education  
Chair: Sen. Creighton - (866) 730-1355  
Vice Chair: Sen. Middleton - (866) 730-1396  
Sen. West - (866) 770-7385  
Sen. Springer - (866) 821-0530  
Sen. King - (866) 730-1395

## House Urban Affairs

Tuesday, April 4

**Support HB 1677** by Jetton. HB 1677 would comprehensively improve how birth certificates are provided — including waiving the fee — to persons experiencing homelessness.

Call the House Urban Affairs Committee  
Chair: Rep. J.M. Lozano - (866) 486-7133  
Vice Chair: Rep. Gary Gates - (866) 218-2480  
Rep. Diego M. Bernal - (866) 695-0634  
Rep. Philip Cortez - (866) 695-0546  
Rep. Charles Cunningham - (866) 700-9145  
Rep. Jessica González - (855) 921-1349  
Rep. Richard Hayes - (866) 516-3103  
Rep. Ramon Romero, Jr. - (866) 573-1648  
Rep. Carl Tepper - (866) 547-9148

## House State Affairs

Wednesday, April 5

**Support HB 4811** by Anchia. HB 4811 would create the Texas Energy Efficiency Council, which would measure the effectiveness, make recommendations for improving, and leverage federal funding for energy efficiency programs in the state.

Call the House State Affairs Committee  
Chair: Rep. Todd Hunter - (866) 419-0102  
Vice Chair: Rep. Ana Hernandez - (866) 721-0908  
Rep. Rafael Anchia - (866) 631-6169  
Rep. Jay Dean - (855) 921-1362  
Rep. Charlie Geren - (866) 629-4776  
Rep. Ryan Guillen - (855) 737-9013  
Rep. Will Metcalf - (855) 921-1374  
Rep. Richard Peña Raymond - (855) 729-6257  
Rep. Shelby Slawson - (866) 516-3108  
Rep. John T. Smithee - (866) 554-6284  
Rep. David Spiller - (866) 535-0914  
Rep. Senfronia Thompson - (866) 721-0903  
Rep. Chris Turner - (855) 736-6906

## House Ag & Livestock

Wednesday, April 5

**Support HB 2509** by Bernal. HB 2509 would create the Grocery Access Investment Fund to provide financing for grocery stores in underserved low-income “food deserts” in the state.

Call the House Agriculture & Livestock Committee

Chair: Rep. Briscoe Cain – (866) 721-0617

Vice Chair: Rep. Charles “Doc” Anderson – (866) 515-0772

Rep. Diego M. Bernal – (866) 695-0634

Rep. Vikki Goodwin – (855) 772-2323

Rep. Cody Harris – (855) 921-1364

Rep. Stan Kitzman – (866) 554-5253

Rep. Jon E. Rosenthal – (866) 721-0893

Rep. Krona Thimesch – (866) 523-0494

Rep. Terry M. Wilson – (855) 921-1379

## Senate Education

Wednesday, April 5

**Oppose SB 1515** by King. SB 1515 would require public schools to post the “Ten Commandments” in each classroom. Protestants, Jews, and Catholics number the commandments differently. Government posting any version favors one denomination over another, which is the essence of what the Establishment Clause was intended to prohibit.

**Oppose SB 1721** by Paxton. SB 1721 authorizes public schools to post the “Ten Commandments.” SB 1721 would suffer the same conundrum of SB 1515. Protestants, Jews, and Catholics number the commandments differently. Government posting any version favors one denomination over another.

Call the Senate Education Committee

Chair: Sen. Creighton – (866) 730-1355

Vice Chair: Sen. Campbell – (866) 772-1951

Sen. Paxton – (866) 730-1371

Sen. LaMantia – (866) 821-0518

Sen. West – (866) 770-7385

Sen. Parker – (866) 730-1397

Sen. Springer – (866) 821-0530

Sen. Bettencourt – (866) 730-1365

Sen. Menendez – (866) 772-1954

Sen. Middleton - (866) 730-1396  
Sen. Birdwell - (866) 770-7384  
Sen. Flores - (866) 770-7401  
Sen. King - (866) 730-1395

## House Calendars

**Support HB 12** by Rose. HB 12 would extend postpartum medicaid coverage to 12 months.

Ask House Calendars to set HB 12 for floor debate.

Chair: Rep. Dustin Burrows - (855) 767-5441

Vice Chair: Rep. Toni Rose - (855) 704-0851

Rep. David Cook - (866) 596-1702

Rep. Charlie Geren - (866) 629-4776

Rep. Charlie Hefner - (855) 706-0757

Rep. Ana Hernandez - (866) 721-0908

Rep. Ann Johnson - (866) 721-0892

Rep. Jared Patterson - (866) 631-6172

Rep. Shelby Slawson - (866) 516-3108

Rep. James Talarico - (866) 491-0258

Rep. Ed Thompson - (866) 256-4241

## House Floor

Tuesday, March 28

**Support HB 617** by Darby. HB 617 would create a pilot program on providing emergency telemedicine in rural areas.

**Support HB 1599** by Bucy. HB 1599 would create “an express lane” by eliminating bureaucratic red tape in determining eligibility and enrolling individuals in the Medicaid or child health plan program.

Call your state representative.

[Find My Representatives at Texas Tribune](#)

**TAKE ACTION!**

NOTE: We have set up toll-free numbers for all members of the Texas House and Senate. We ask that you use those numbers and save them in your phones. Dialing this number allows us to track the volume of calls to each office. If the number stops working, please let us know so we can set up a new number.

If you do not have time to make all of the calls on the weekly Action Alert, unless stated otherwise, please prioritize them based on:

1. Your representative if they are on any of the committees listed
2. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the committees listed
3. Any issues you have particular interest or expertise

Find your elected officials via the “Who Represents Me” page at <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx>

**Please email [scott@texasimpact.org](mailto:scott@texasimpact.org) if you learn anything from your calls.**

## Rapid Response Action Alert Sample Script

### Sample Script

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I live in \_\_\_\_\_. I am calling to thank Representative/Senator \_\_\_\_\_ for his/her service this Legislative Session.

As a person of faith (or clergy) I want to be constructive in working with Representative/Senator \_\_\_\_\_ and hope they will support/oppose Bill number.

*Feel free to use any of the bullet points in the Action Alert above. If your congregation has a special connection to the issue area you are referencing, feel free to briefly reference that connection. Don't forget to thank the staff member you are talking to at the end of the call, even if you disagree with their boss on the issue or bill—they are working hard and appreciate being appreciated!*

In the past, legislative offices occasionally have blocked our toll free number

because of high call volume from people of faith. If you call twice and receive busy signals, email [engagement@texasimpact.org](mailto:engagement@texasimpact.org) and we will update the number.

For updated information, visit [www.texasimpact.org](http://www.texasimpact.org), follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) or contact [engagement@texasimpact.org](mailto:engagement@texasimpact.org) To join the Texas Impact Rapid Response Team and receive updated Texas Impact Action Alerts or a Legislative Engagement Group to be connected with other members in your district, visit:

<https://texasimpact.org/take-action-2/>

Texas Impact is a membership organization. Join Texas Impact and be part of Texas' oldest and largest interfaith action network! For more information, visit:

<https://texasimpact.org/join-2022-2023/>