Taking Medicine’s Message to the Capitol

TABLE OF CONTENTS
Lobbying Tips: Do’s and Don’ts ........................................ 3
Grassroots Advocacy Tips .............................................. 4
  High-Yield Advocacy .................................................. 4
  Virtual Visits ............................................................. 5
  High-Yield Personal Visits ............................................ 5
  Using Telephone and Email Effectively ......................... 6
Tips From Legislative Offices ........................................... 7
VoterVoice ................................................................... 8
Sample Conversations .................................................... 10
How to Testify ............................................................... 11
The Life of a Bill ............................................................ 12
Texas Legislative Glossary ............................................. 13
State House Districts ..................................................... 20
State Senate Districts ..................................................... 21
Texas Capitol Building Directory .................................... 22
Capitol Building Guides ............................................... 25
Division of Public Affairs .............................................. 31
LOBBYING TIPS

DO’s
✔ Thank your legislator for meeting with you and for his or her support or consideration, even if you don’t agree on the issue.
✔ Be professional, courteous, positive, direct, concise, factual, credible, and specific.
✔ Do your homework.
✔ Be specific about the action you need from your legislator on an issue (e.g., vote “yes” next Tuesday on HB 1).
✔ Be reasonable, and realize everyone thinks his or her issue is the most important one being considered.
✔ Show your legislator how your legislative platform will help him or her and your district.
✔ Provide a one-page fact sheet outlining your issue and why it’s important.
✔ Always follow up with information you’ve promised.
✔ After a visit or telephone call with your legislator, follow up with a letter, thanking him or her for the time and summarizing what you heard the legislator say he or she would do. Add your phone number and/or email address to the letter, and let the recipient know to contact you for more information.
✔ Use correct forms of address:
  The Honorable (insert name of Senator)
  Texas Senate
  P.O. Box 12068
  Austin, TX 78711-2068
  Dear Senator (Last Name)
  The Honorable (insert name of Representative)
  Texas House of Representatives
  P.O. Box 2910
  Austin, TX 78768-2910
  Dear Representative (Last Name)
✔ Attend legislative hearings, committee meetings, budget mark-up sessions, and floor votes on your bill.
✔ Know what other issues your legislator is working on, and help when you can.
✔ Treat your legislator as you would like to be treated.
✔ Establish a reputation for reliability and credibility.

DON’Ts
✘ Make decisions on your bill without first consulting the bill’s sponsors (the legislators “carrying” it).
✘ Give inaccurate information.
✘ Threaten or be rude to a legislator or staff.
✘ Make moral judgments based on a vote or an issue.
✘ Ask the public to support or oppose candidates based on their position on an issue.
✘ Begin by saying, “As a citizen and taxpayer …”
✘ Ignore your legislator, then contact a legislator from another district for help with your issue.
✘ Publicly or privately complain about your legislator or a member of his or her staff.
✘ Hold grudges or give up.
✘ Be argumentative or abrasive.
✘ Interrupt lawmakers or staff when they are obviously busy.
✘ Cover more than one subject at a time when you contact your legislator.
✘ Write a letter longer than one page.
✘ Press for an answer on your first visit.
Grassroots Advocacy Tips

The involvement of physicians, medical students, and alliance members is vital to the success of TMA’s grassroots advocacy. You are a crucial asset to TMA’s professional lobbying team because only you can truly depict to your state legislators how the issues affect the practice of medicine and the patients of Texas. Below are some tips for working with your legislator on the issues of importance to you.

High-Yield Advocacy

1. **Know your audience.** Who is your elected official? Is your representative or senator a Republican or a Democrat? Liberal, moderate, or conservative? What issues are of the most importance to her? Does he serve on a key committee?

2. **Present one issue at a time.** Every communication—phone call, email, written letter, personal or virtual visit—should consist of one issue. You should not present a laundry list of concerns; pick the most critical one and explore it in depth. You can always call/write/visit again with another issue.

3. **Start with a letter or a phone call.** Initiate a relationship with your elected official by writing or calling before making your visit. You can even organize a few of your friends to write or call on your topic—a dozen or more letters on the same topic will get a legislator’s attention. For increased effectiveness, write an original letter or email (form letters are more likely to be ignored). Keep it to one page! When you call, ask to speak with the legislative aide. Politely explain your concerns and ask for the representative’s position on the issue.

4. **Use personal anecdotes.** Nothing drives home the importance of an issue like a personal story. Students can offer credible anecdotes from their own medical school experiences. Tell your legislators how the issue affects your colleagues and patients. This is the best way to persuade your legislators that what may seem like an abstract or arcane point really affects their constituents deeply.

5. **Know your issue and bring effective handouts.** Present your opinion and back it up with facts and background information, including statistics and studies that support your point of view. If you’re interested in a bill, include the bill number and research where the bill is in the legislative process. You are not effective if you’re asking a legislator to weigh in on an issue that has already passed out of their committee or their chamber. Know the opposing arguments and “frequently asked questions,” and be prepared to discuss the opposition. Make your legislator’s job easier. First Tuesdays at the Capitol will arm you with everything you need to be informed on the issues.

6. **Offer solutions.** Don’t just talk about how bad a problem is; offer up a solution or solutions. Help your legislator by suggesting a course of action, such as sponsoring or cosponsoring legislation, writing to a specific agency for more information, or voting for or against a bill.

7. **Build a relationship.** Making contact repeatedly, and being credible and reasonable will help build a trusting relationship between you and your legislator. The legislator’s staff will begin to know you by first name, and your legislator will try much harder to be available when you visit. You’ll quickly become part of your legislator’s support system and someone he or she calls on for advice. Nothing is more valued than an informed, active, and friendly constituent!

8. **Timing.** The most eloquent letter or call does no good if it comes after a vote. If a letter arrives too early, it is forgotten. Letters should arrive a few days before the vote, whether in committee or on the full chamber floor. However, don’t let waiting for the right time keep you from writing. It’s better to reach people early in the debate than after they have made up their mind, or not at all.

9. **Follow up.** Be polite and persistent by following up with a thank-you letter. Legislators clearly remember the constituents who follow up. It reminds your legislator how passionate you are about the issue. Ask for an update on where the issue stands. Some issues take time and come up session after session—it’s the nature of public policy.

10. **Act locally.** Every legislator has a district office and holds local meetings. Ask your county medical society executive for assistance in scheduling a Zoom meeting with your elected officials. First Tuesdays in the Districts is an easy and effective way for physicians, alliance members, and medical students to meet and strengthen their relationships with elected officials. All you need to do is show up for a 45-minute Zoom call and share your experience.
High-Yield Personal Visits

The personal visit is the single most effective advocacy technique. Like medical staff, overworked aides and legislators have triage systems for handling constituents and issues. Form letters and emails get the least attention. Next are phone calls and original letters. The personal visit rates highest priority, and your legislator will address the issues discussed more quickly and seriously. Your representative will be impressed with the effort you’re putting forth and usually will make time to meet with you. A visit to Austin makes a powerful statement, and no legislator wants to say no to you in person!

Follow commonsense rules for a successful visit.

Courtesy and respect
- Make your in-person appointment well in advance. Let the legislator know what you would like to discuss.
- Arrive on time.
- Start with a compliment.
- Address your legislator as “Representative” or “Senator.”
- Be fair, realistic, and reasonable.
- Be honest at all times. If you lose your credibility, you won’t get it back.
- Be a good listener. Don’t do all the talking. Your goal is to have a conversation.

Issues
- Discuss one issue per meeting.
- Be brief.
- Present your opinion, bolstered by facts, figures, and most importantly, a personal story.
- Know and understand opposing arguments. Be prepared to discuss them.
- Never lie, never guess. If you don’t know the answer, say, “I don’t know but I’ll get back to you,” and then get back to that person with the information.
- Gently remind your representative you’re a constituent and you always vote. All politics are local.
- Be passionate (not emotional), and never get angry.

Expectations
- Don’t be surprised if you are not able to speak directly to the legislator. Often, staff members meet with constituents – treat them in the same manner as you would your legislator.
- Fifteen minutes (possibly 20) is a realistic expectation for your meeting. Build the prospect of delay into your schedule; don’t take it personally. Use the time to relax or chat with a staff member who offers conversation. On the other hand, don’t interrupt a busy staff person or an overworked receptionist trying to cope with ringing telephones.
- Likewise, your visit is subject to interruption for any number of reasons – floor votes, committee votes, or telephone calls from other legislators on urgent matters. Accept interruptions gracefully. The legislative environment is chaotic; don’t be flustered by starting and stopping between interruptions.

Closing
- Leave when your time is up.
- Ask for a commitment from the member to support your position, but don’t apply pressure or be threatening.
- Leave behind a short printed statement or fact sheet. If it’s in writing, your message has a better chance of being remembered.
- Never end in harsh words or personal remarks. You will damage your credibility and hamper further communications.
- Say “thank you,” and indicate you’re looking forward to following up on this issue.
- Leave your contact information so they can easily follow up with you if needed.

Afterwards
- Write a brief thank-you note.
- Indicate you will be monitoring the issue closely.
- Answer any questions you couldn’t answer in the meeting.
- Consider personally inviting your legislator and his or her staff on an informal tour of your medical school or hospital.

Virtual Visits

On any given day, lawmakers and their staff will talk with many different people on many different subjects in all kinds of meetings. You are competing for the legislator’s time and attention. However, knowledgeable people who present their message with clarity, make their request in a simple and concise manner, and make it easy for the legislator or staff member are such a rarity that you will be remembered, helped if at all possible, and called upon in the future.

For those who can’t make the trip to Austin, Zoom and other virtual meeting platforms can be a great alternative for a personal meeting. However, these meetings need to run a bit differently so knowing the best practices for hosting or attending a virtual meeting with your legislator is key.

Follow these tips for a successful virtual meeting with your legislator.
Virtual platforms
- There are many virtual platforms: Zoom, Teams, Google Meet, and WebEx, to name a few. Before your meeting, familiarize yourself with the platform you will use. Consider hosting a test meeting with a friend to work out any avoidable technical difficulties.
- Each meeting platform is set up differently, but note the mute and video buttons, and the chat function. These are the three most important controls you need to monitor when attending or hosting a virtual meeting.

Virtual etiquette
- Always keep yourself on mute when you are not speaking. This cuts down on any distracting or embarrassing background noise.
- Your legislator wants to see you! Having your video on when meeting helps your elected official put a face to the name. Although you’re not meeting in person, your legislator is more likely to remember you – instead of a blank box or background picture.
- Use your full name in your profile, not an unprofessional chat name. This will make it easier for your legislator to identify you and contact you in the future.
- Body language and facial expressions say a lot, even virtually. Conduct yourself as if you were physically in front of the legislator. Make sure you are visible within your video frame and be careful not to disengage during the meeting. If a distraction at home or at your practice comes up during your meeting, respectfully turn your video off and mute yourself, or even leave the meeting.
- Use the chat feature within your virtual meeting room wisely. Keep in mind these chats are public and available to everyone in the meeting. Remember anything typed within the chat function can be saved and kept on digital record. Never type anything you would not say directly to a legislator.
- When meeting with a large group (five or more people), designate a point person to run the meeting. This person should be familiar with the topics you’re speaking about and comfortable enough to keep the group on message to make the most of your time.
- Be sure to follow up with your legislator or their staff person with a personal email to say thank you and include your contact information should they need to reach you.

Group Presentations
Use group presentations sparingly, with caution and careful planning. One person must be in charge and manage the individual presentations smoothly but firmly. A staff director advised:

Plan carefully who is going to say what. Don’t have a confusing scene in the [legislator’s] or staff member’s office about what is going on. Don’t get into side discussions within the group or contradict each other. And think about this mathematical fact: Three people cannot give a 10-minute presentation in a 20-minute appointment. This seems obvious, but it is tried often enough to boggle your mind.
It is even more important for a group to have an advance dry run than it is for a single presenter. Have a presentation outline and know what role each person will play to advance the message. One long-winded presenter can ruin your entire meeting by forcing a carefully crafted closing of five minutes to be done in one.

Using Telephone and Email Effectively
Use of the telephone dominates the legislative environment. In the fast-paced setting of the Capitol, this is one of the preferred modes of communication for legislators and staff. Using the telephone skillfully can advance your relationship with staff members.
People often get upset when they call their legislators but can’t talk to them or are referred to a staff member. Don’t be put off if you are referred to a staff member. Understanding the reality of working with lawmakers involves recognition of the special role of their staff. This applies to telephone calls as well as meetings. Also, within the staff hierarchies it is more difficult to reach some staff members than others.

Even for a telephone call, and even with a staff member, prepare a checklist. Making the checklist will help you avoid rambling or conveying confusion because you’re not sure you’ve covered everything you intended.

The first order of business is to get your name, organization, and purpose out on the table. If you have a personal connection with the individual you are asking for, use it. Very often, you will be going through a busy receptionist, so have this information ready. If you are put through, or the person answers directly, ascertain that it’s a good time to talk and say you would like five minutes. Stating your business clearly and quickly is essential.
As much as possible, do your homework before making a call. Don’t waste the time of a busy staff person asking for routine information on legislation or other matters that is readily available on websites or other sources.
Not every subject or problem is appropriate for the telephone. If an issue is complicated, make an appointment. Send a letter in advance of a telephone conversation or appointment, and allow a reasonable
time for the letter to be read before contacting the legislator.

Be patient but persistent. Remember legislators and staff are under horrendous time pressures. They may not be able to return calls immediately or even the same day. Some staff return calls late in the day, so consider leaving a home or mobile number. There is nothing wrong with being persistent if you have not heard back after several days.

Depending on the nature of your telephone conversation, consider sending a follow-up note or email. It may be a simple “thank you” or a summary of the details of the issues or discussion.

Email is intended primarily for members to communicate with their constituents, and it’s not the best way for you to initiate communication with them. This is not surprising considering how easy it would be for a grassroots lobbying effort to flood members’ mailboxes with email.

Remember: Use the same kind of planning for your email communication as you would for meetings and telephone calls. Don’t fall into the trap of sloppy use of email. Never be rude or demanding; politeness, patience, and persistence will pay off.

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY TIPS (continued)

TIPS FROM LEGISLATIVE OFFICES

1. Leave time for Q&A:
   - “I expect to ask questions, and I like straightforward answers.”
   - “Give a short, clear answer first – and a long answer if the circumstances call for it. Only add details and qualifications with encouragement.”
   - “Be open to all questions even if you think they are stupid or ill-informed – or reflect the views of your opposition.”
   - “Consider the legislator[s] as bright intelligent students who are not well-informed on your issue.”

2. Don’t fake it. If you don’t know the answer to a question, say so. “Don’t pontificate” and don’t ever “fake it” with a guess or a confusing nonanswer, a staff member said. Your credibility can sometimes be enhanced by saying, “I don’t know but I will get back with you.” TMA lobby staff can help provide the appropriate answer so you can follow up.

3. Gain credibility. Work hard at building your credibility; it is a tremendous asset – even if your issue is weak or unpopular. To further enhance your credibility, acknowledge as accurately as you can those who disagree with you or are opposed to what you are suggesting; tell your legislator or staff person as best you can why this is so. Don’t make the legislator’s office research this information or be surprised by your opponent’s messages.

4. Don’t overwhelm your legislator and his or her staff with details. Instead, stay on message. If they want more detail, they will ask you for it. In the words of one senator: “Time is of the essence. Make your best case quickly and up front – and let the rest happen.”

5. Welcome a meeting with staff members. Staff members can be powerful and influential, often serving as gatekeepers who can help you communicate with their legislators. Don’t underestimate their value by thinking you’ve been passed off to an underling if a legislator can’t make your meeting. “Staff members have a lot of discretion on who sees legislators, who testifies at hearings, what is read by legislators, and what goes into legislation in the form of specific words and sections,” said a committee staff director. In setting up meetings with your lawmakers, it is often useful to enlist the aid of a staff member before approaching the legislator.
TMA has upgraded its Grassroots Action Center with VoterVoice, which will enable TMA's physician and alliance member advocates to respond to action alerts immediately via email, text or a direct phone call. Here's how to use it:

1. **Find Association.** Start typing in "Texas Medical Association" and an option for "Texas Medical Association" will appear. Select "Texas Medical Association" to enter your email address. Please use the email address associated with your TMA account. A verification code will be sent to your email account. After verifying your email, you will be brought to a "Find Association" page. Start typing in "Texas Medical Association" and an option for "Texas Medical Association" will appear directly below where you were typing. Click/touch that, and you will then have access to VoterVoice.

a. **Search for VoterVoice.** One word in your app store.

b. After downloading the app, you will be prompted to enter your email address. Please use the email address associated with your TMA account. Verification code will be sent to your email account. After verifying your email, you will be brought to a "Find Association" page. Start typing in "Texas Medical Association" and an option for "Texas Medical Association" will appear directly below where you were typing. Click/touch that, and you will then have access to VoterVoice.

c. **Enter your TMA account password.** You will be brought to a "Find Association" page. After typing in "Texas Medical Association," select "Find Association." After verifying your email, you will be brought to a "Find Association" page. Start typing in "Texas Medical Association" and an option for "Texas Medical Association" will appear directly below where you were typing. Click/touch that, and you will then have access to VoterVoice.

**NOTE:** The following images are examples to illustrate using the app.

Images used on this guide are taken from an iPhone. If you have an Android device, your screens may vary slightly in appearance.

**DOWNLOAD THE APP**

a. Search for "VoterVoice" in your app store.

b. After downloading the app, you will be prompted to enter your email address. Please use the email address associated with your TMA account. Verification code will be sent to your email account. After verifying your email, you will be brought to a "Find Association" page. Start typing in "Texas Medical Association" and an option for "Texas Medical Association" will appear directly below where you were typing. Click/touch that, and you will then have access to VoterVoice.
VoterVoice gives you an option to use a prewritten email message or tweet straight from the app.

HOW VOTERVOICE TOOLS WORK FOR ADVOCACY

ACCESS THE MENU

HOME SCREEN

Help Project Patients

Spruce bills

Help Project Patients

Spruce bills

Support from Patients

Support from Patients

Advocate

Contact state officials directly by responding to Action Alerts.

Explore the Menu Options
SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

Use the following sample as a guide in a personal conversation between an elected official and you – the constituent – regarding a health and human service issue.

Note: This conversation will most likely take place with the elected official and his or her staff person specializing in your issue, since you will have made the appointment before the meeting.

Obviously, the details of the conversation will vary considerably from issue to issue. Also, if the matter is a funding item in the appropriations bill, you’ll be advised to proceed one way. If the matter is a statutory issue, then it will be dealt with in legislation, and you’ll proceed in yet another way. Know your legislative process, and how you want that legislator to help you (e.g., vote in committee) before you go see him or her, so you can specifically say how you need help.

Official: Good afternoon. I am Senator Smith. How may I help you?
Visitor: Good afternoon, Senator. I am Dr. _____ from _____ County with the Texas Medical Association. As you know, our office is in your district. We have admired your work over the years and appreciate your leadership on behalf of health and human service programs.
Official: Thank you. I appreciate your kind comments. How may I help you?
Visitor: We’re here today to speak with you (and your staff person, _____ ) about _____. We recently conducted a needs assessment in our community and found that _____. This bill (or funding matter) will be of significant help in addressing this problem. We have prepared this one-page fact sheet on the issue, and I have attached my business card for your reference. If we can provide you with further information, please feel free to contact me.
Official: This is a very informative fact sheet. It provides me with some understandable figures about the issue that I can quote on the Senate floor during the Senate’s consideration of this matter. It also gives me some brief anecdotes about families in my district that are affected by this issue. Thank you. I will have my staff contact you when there is a public hearing on the bill, so that you can testify. Is there anything further I can do for you?
Visitor: No, you have been extremely helpful, and we are most appreciative of your concern and support. Thank you again for meeting with us today.
Official: You are welcome. Good-bye.

Use the following sample as a guide when conversing via telephone with an elected official regarding a health and human service issue.

Note: Be prepared when you call to give some facts about how the bill will affect your community, service, program, and the like. Hopefully, you’ve sent this information in advance and are simply calling to remind your legislator of the information and to vote in favor of this bill. If the vote is to be taken some time in the future, follow up your call with a letter confirming the conversation.

Office: Good afternoon, Senator (Representative, Congressman/ woman) Smith’s office.
Caller: Hello. My name is _____, and I’m calling on behalf of the Texas Medical Association. Senator Smith will be voting soon on Senate Bill _____ relating to _____. May I speak with the staff person who deals with this issue for the senator, if the senator is not available?
Office: Certainly, one moment please. This is Jane Doe. May I help you?
Caller: Yes, my name is _____, and I am calling on behalf of the Texas Medical Association. Senator Smith will be voting soon on Senate Bill _____ relating to _____. We would simply like the senator to know we strongly support this legislation and would like her support on it.
Office: Thank you for calling. I will be happy to share your views with the senator.
Caller: If you or the senator would like more information about how this bill will affect the medical community and our patients, I’ll be happy to provide it.
Office: Thank you. How can the senator reach you?
Caller: You can reach me at ____ (mailing address) or by phone at _____.
Office: I will give the senator your message. Thank you for calling.
Caller: Thank you. Good-bye.
HOW TO TESTIFY AT A HEARING – MESSAGING TIPS

MAKE IT PERSONAL. MAKE IT RELEVANT

- Convey what is important to your patients and community.
- Position your message from the perspective of “my patient,” “my practice,” and patient access to care.
- TALK to legislators and share stories; do not simply READ your testimony.

Keys to success: Know your message. Develop an outline. Use a story or practice example. Get to the point.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Not knowing main message; no focus
- Too complicated, too much information, too many facts
- Not practicing your testimony
- Not anticipating questions
- Reading your testimony
- “Winging it”

IF YOU CAN’T ANSWER THE QUESTION EXACTLY AS THE LEGISLATOR ASKS, HERE ARE A FEW WAYS TO ANSWER AND GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS:

- “I’m not certain of that, but here’s what I do know…”
- “This is what I see in my practice every day…”
- “This is what is important to my patients…”
- “The reality of today’s health care system is…”
- “That’s not my expertise…”

SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO A LAWMAKER’S “YES” OR “NO” QUESTION

- “Sir, I wish this issue were that easy…”
- “Ma’am, this issue [or medicine in general] is simply not black and white…”
- “It’s not that simple; though there are trends and protocols, every patient is different…”

TIPS FOR TAKING CONTROL OF THE TESTIMONY

Redirecting: Technique to help you deliver the message you want delivered – different from the premise that’s been stated

- “The real issue is…”
- “My experience is…”
- “What I see in my practice is…”
- “The patient suffers when…”
- “What’s important to my patients is…”

Bridging: Using legislator’s lead to make your point

- “That’s a good point and in fact I see [x] in my practice every day…(elaborate)’’
- “That’s one perspective and in truth…”
- “Some people say that and the situation in my town is…”
- “Yes, and the reality in my practice [or for my patients] is…”
Chair can refuse to schedule a bill for a committee hearing. A 3/5 vote required to bring bill to Senate floor. A senator may filibuster and hold the floor for an unlimited debate. A tie vote or failure to gain a simple majority is required for a simple majority of committee membership. Majority vote of committee membership is required to set for House Floor. The governor may veto a bill — legislature may override by 2/3 vote. The LIFE of a BILL.

The house has 150 members. The Senate has 31 members. Session is held biennially for 140 days. Bills can originate in either chamber. The People Introduce Legislation to House 60 days prior to session. The People Public Hearings 1st Reading Referral to Committee Committee Report Committee Vote Committee Referal to Reading 2nd Reading Debate and Amend Vote House Floor House Bill sent to Senate 3rd Reading Senate on Senate Floor Committee Work Senate amended bill and sent to House for approval. Committee Referal to Reading Approved House Bill and amendments printed and sent to Senate for consideration. Committee Referal to Reading House concurs with amendments. Each conference committee must report to their respective chambers and both the House and Senate must pass before the bill goes to enrollment. The People for more information visit www.texmed.org/Legislature. TMA'S GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY GUIDE.
TEXAS LEGISLATIVE GLOSSARY

A

ACT
A public law enacted by the Texas Legislature. A bill that has been passed by both houses of the legislature and presented to the governor becomes law if it is signed by the governor or if it is not signed by the governor within a specified period of time or if the governor vetoes the bill and the veto is overridden by a two-thirds vote in each house.

ACTION
A description of a step that a bill undergoes as it moves through the legislative process.

ADJOURNMENT
The termination of a meeting. Adjournment occurs at the close of each legislative day upon completion of business, with the hour and day of the next meeting set before adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE
Final adjournment of a legislative session. Literally, the phrase means adjournment “without a day” specified to reconvene.

ADOPTION
Approval or acceptance; usually applied to amendments or resolutions.

ADVICE AND CONSENT
Procedure by which the senate gives approval or confirms appointments made by the governor to state offices.

AMENDMENT
Any proposed alteration to a bill or resolution as it moves through the legislative process. Amendments to a measure may be proposed by members in their assigned committees or by any member of a chamber during that chamber’s second reading or third reading consideration of the measure.

APPORTIONMENT
The proportionate distribution of elected representatives, either among the states in the case of U.S. Congress or within the state in the case of the state legislature. The division of the state into congressional and state senate and house districts of equal population for purposes of representation.

APPROPRIATION
An authorization by the legislature for the expenditure of money for a public purpose. In most instances, money cannot be withdrawn from the state treasury except through a specific appropriation.

AUTHOR
The legislator who files a bill and guides it through the legislative process.

B

BICAMERAL
A legislature consisting of two houses, such as the house of representatives and the senate.

BIENNIAL
Occurring every two years; a term applied to the scheduled regular session of the legislature.

BILL
A type of legislative measure that requires passage by both chambers of the legislature and action by the governor. A bill is the primary means used to create and change the laws of the state. The Legislative Information System also uses the term “bill” generically to refer to the various types of legislative measures that may be introduced during a legislative session. Bill types include: senate and house bills, senate and house joint resolutions, senate and house concurrent resolutions, and senate and house resolutions.

BILL ANALYSIS
A document prepared for all bills reported out of committee that explains in nonlegal language what a bill will do. A bill analysis may include background information on the measure, a statement of purpose, and a section-by-section analysis.

BIPARTISAN
A term used to refer to an effort endorsed by both political parties or a group composed of members of both political parties.

C

CALENDAR
A list of bills or resolutions that is scheduled or eligible to be taken up for consideration on a specified date by the members of a chamber.

CALENDAR DAY
A day of the year on which the legislature may be in session.

CALLED SESSION
See SESSION in this glossary.

CAPTION
A statement that gives the legislature and public reasonable notice of the subject of a bill or resolution. For bills and joint resolutions, the first sentence of the text that summarizes the contents of the bill or resolution. For other types of resolutions, a brief description of the contents of the resolution.

CHAIR
A legislator appointed to preside over a legislative committee. A traditional designation for the member currently presiding over a house of the legislature or one of its committees.
TEXAS LEGISLATIVE GLOSSARY (continued)

CHAMBER
The place in which the senate or house of representatives meet. Also a generic way to refer to a house of the legislature.

CHIEF CLERK
The chief clerical officer of the house of representatives. The chief clerk is the custodian of all bills and resolutions in the possession of the house and is responsible for keeping a complete record of their introduction and all subsequent house actions taken on them throughout the legislative process.

COAUTHOR
A legislator authorized by the primary author to join in the authorship of a bill or resolution. A coauthor must be a member of the chamber in which the bill was filed.

COMMITTEE
A group of legislators, appointed by the presiding officer of the house or the senate, to which proposed legislation is referred or a specific task is assigned.

COMMITTEE REPORT
The text of a bill or resolution and its required attachments that is prepared when the measure is reported from a committee for further consideration by the members of the chamber. The committee report includes the recommendations of the committee regarding action on the measure by the full house or senate and is generally necessary before a measure can proceed through the legislative process.

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
A complete, new bill or resolution recommended by a committee in lieu of the original measure. A committee will report a committee substitute rather than a large number of individual amendments when the committee wishes to make a substantial number of changes to the original measure. The committee substitute must contain the same subject matter as the original measure.

COMPANION BILL
A bill filed in one chamber that is identical or very similar to a bill filed in the opposite chamber. Companion bills are used to expedite passage as they provide a means for committee consideration of a measure to occur in both houses simultaneously. A companion bill that has passed one house can then be substituted for the companion bill in the second house.

CONCURRENCE
When the originating chamber votes to accept, or concur in, the amendments made by the opposite chamber.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
A type of legislative measure that requires passage by both chambers of the legislature and generally requires action by the governor. A concurrent resolution is used to convey the sentiment of the legislature and may offer a commendation, a memorial, a statement of congratulations, a welcome, or a request for action by another governmental entity. (Concurrent resolutions are also used for administrative matters that require the concurrence of both chambers such as providing for adjournment or a joint session. These types of concurrent resolutions do not require action by the governor.)

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
A committee composed of five members from each house appointed by the respective presiding officers to resolve the differences between the house and senate versions of a measure when the originating chamber refuses to concur in the changes made by the opposite chamber. Upon reaching an agreement, the conferees issue a report that is then considered for approval by both houses.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT
The text of a bill and its required attachments that is issued when a conference committee has completed its work in resolving the differences between the house and senate versions of a measure.

CONGRATULATORY AND MEMORIAL CALENDAR
A list of congratulatory and memorial resolutions scheduled by the House Committee on Resolutions for consideration by the house that must be distributed to the members 24 hours before the house convenes.

CONSTITUENT
A citizen residing within the district of an elected representative.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
A change to the state constitution. A constitutional amendment may be proposed by the legislature in the form of a joint resolution that must be adopted by both houses of the legislature by a two-thirds vote and be approved by a majority of the voters to become effective.

CONVENE
To assemble or call to order the members of a legislative body.

COSPONSPOR
A legislator who joins with the primary sponsor to guide a bill or resolution through the legislative process in the opposite chamber. A cosponsor must be a member of the opposite chamber from the one in which the bill was filed.

COUNCIL DOCUMENT NUMBER
The unique number assigned to a bill or resolution draft prepared by the Texas Legislative Council. If a filed bill or resolution has been prepared by the council, the number will appear in the lower left-hand corner of the document.
D

DAILY HOUSE CALENDAR
A list of new bills and resolutions scheduled by the House Committee on Calendars for consideration by the house that must be distributed to the members 36 hours before the house convenes during regular sessions and 24 hours before the house convenes during special or called sessions.

DISTRICT
A geographic division of the state made on the basis of population and in accordance with conditions dictated by state law and the state constitution.

DUPLICATE BILL
A bill that is identical to a bill filed in the same chamber.

E

ELECTION
The process of choosing government officials by a vote of the citizens.

EMERGENCY CLAUSE
Normally the last paragraph of a bill. Neither house of the legislature can suspend the constitutional rule requiring a bill to be read on three separate days if a bill does not have an emergency clause. The specific language of the emergency clause also determines whether a bill that receives a two-thirds record vote in both houses can take effect immediately after the governor signs the bill or files it without a signature.

ENACT
To pass a law.

ENACTING CLAUSE
A clause required by the Texas Constitution to precede the body of each bill. The enacting clause must read “Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:” and follow the caption.

ENGROSSED
The stage in a bill’s legislative progress when it has been passed by the chamber in which it was filed and all amendments to the bill have been incorporated into the text of the bill, which is then forwarded to the second house for consideration.

ENROLLED
The stage in a bill’s legislative progress when it has been passed by both chambers of the legislature in identical form and is prepared for signature by the presiding officers of both houses. If the bill is not passed in identical form by both houses, any changes made by the opposite chamber must be accepted by the originating chamber or a conference committee report must be adopted by both chambers before the bill may be enrolled.

EX OFFICIO
A member of a governmental body who holds his or her position as the result of holding another governmental position.

F

FILED
The stage in a bill’s legislative progress when it is given a bill number and introduced into the legislative process. Members of the house of representatives file bills with the chief clerk of the house. Senators file bills with the secretary of the senate.

FIRST READING
See READING.

FISCAL NOTE
An estimate, prepared by the Legislative Budget Board, of the probable costs that will be incurred as an effect of a bill or joint resolution.

FISCAL YEAR
A 12-month period at the end of which accounts are reconciled. The fiscal year for state agencies in Texas begins on September 1 of each year and ends on August 31 of the following year.

FLOOR
A traditional term for the meeting chamber of either house.

FLOOR ACTION
Action taken by either house on a bill reported by a committee. Subject to rules adopted by the respective house, its members may propose amendments, enter debate, seek to promote or prevent a bill’s passage, and vote on its final passage in that house.

FORMAL MEETING
A meeting of a house committee or subcommittee during which formal action may be taken on any measure or matter before the committee or subcommittee. Public testimony cannot be heard during a formal meeting.

G

GERREYMANDER
To divide a state, county, or other political subdivision into election districts in an unnatural manner to give a political party or ethnic group advantage over its opponents.

H

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
The lower house of the Texas Legislature, consisting of 150 members elected from districts of roughly equal population, all of whom are elected every two years for two-year terms.
IMPACT STATEMENT
An estimate, prepared by the Legislative Budget Board, of probable costs incurred when proposed legislation impacts the following areas: public retirement system, criminal justice, public school financing, higher education, open government, taxes/fees, or water development.

INTENT CALENDAR
A list of bills and resolutions for which senators have filed with the secretary of the senate written notice to suspend the regular order of business for consideration. Normally, a bill may not be brought up for consideration by the full senate unless it is listed on the Intent Calendar.

INTERIM
The period between regular legislative sessions.

INTERIM COMMITTEE
A group of legislators, appointed by the presiding officer of the house or senate when the legislature is not in session, to study a particular issue or group of issues for the purpose of making recommendations to the next legislature.

INTRODUCED
The version of a bill or resolution as it was filed in the house or the senate.

JOINT COMMITTEE
A committee composed of members from each house appointed by the respective presiding officers. Joint committees are normally created by special proclamation issued by the speaker and lieutenant governor for the purpose of studying a particular issue or group of issues when the legislature is not in session. Joint committees are rarely, if ever, created during a session, and house and senate rules do not permit bills and resolutions to be referred to a joint committee.

JOINT RESOLUTION
A type of legislative measure that requires passage by both chambers of the legislature, but does not require action by the governor. A joint resolution is used to propose amendments to the Texas Constitution, to ratify amendments to the U.S. Constitution, or to request a convention to propose amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Before becoming effective, the provisions of joint resolutions proposing amendments to the Texas Constitution must be approved by the voters of Texas.

JOURNAL
The official publication that records the legislative proceedings of each chamber, including record vote information. The journal of each house is printed daily in pamphlet form and subsequently compiled and indexed for publication in bound volumes after the conclusion of a regular or special session of the legislature.

LAME DUCK
An elected official who has been defeated for re-election or who has chosen not to run for re-election but whose current term has not yet expired.

LAST ACTION
The description of the most recent step a bill has gone through in the legislative process.

LEGISLATIVE DAY
That period from convening after an adjournment until the next adjournment. The house or the senate may convene for a daily session in the morning, recess for lunch, and adjourn that same evening, completing a legislative day on the same calendar day. However, if a chamber recesses at the end of the day, that particular legislative day continues until the next time the chamber adjourns.

LEGISLATURE
The lawmaking body of the State of Texas. It consists of two chambers, the house of representatives and the senate. The Texas Legislature convenes in regular session at noon on the second Tuesday in January of each odd-numbered year for no more than 140 days.

LIST OF ITEMS ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION
Prepared by the chief clerk of the house, upon request of the speaker, when the volume of legislation warrants (normally during the last few weeks of a regular session). The list must be distributed six hours before it may be considered and contains: (1) house bills with senate amendments eligible to be considered; (2) senate bills for which the senate has requested the appointment of a conference committee; and (3) conference committee reports eligible to be considered.

LOBBY
The act of a person or group of persons (lobbyists) seeking to present their views on an issue to the members of the legislature and its committees and working for the passage or defeat of proposed legislation.

LOCAL AND UNCONTESTED CALENDAR
A list of local or noncontroversial bills scheduled by the Senate Committee on Local Government for consideration by the senate that must be distributed to the senators by noon of the day preceding the day the calendar is to be considered.

LOCAL, CONSENT, AND RESOLUTIONS CALENDAR
A list of local or noncontroversial bills scheduled by the House Committee on Local and Consent Calendars for consideration by the house that must be distributed to the members 48 hours before the house convenes.
MAJORITY
A number of members that is greater than half of the total membership of a group and that has the power to make decisions binding on the whole. There are two types of majorities that may be required for legislative approval of bills and other actions—a simple majority and an absolute majority. A simple majority consists of more than half of those members present and voting. An absolute majority consists of more than half of those members entitled to vote, whether present or absent.

MOTION
A formal suggestion presented to a legislative body for action by one of its members while the body is meeting.

NONPARTISAN
Free from party domination.

OMNIBUS BILL
A bill regarding a single subject that combines many different aspects of that subject.

OVERIDE
To set aside or annul, as to override a veto.

PAIRING
A procedure for voting whereby, under a formal agreement between two members, a member who will be present for a vote agrees with a member who will be absent for a vote that the member who is present will not vote but will be “present, not voting.” When two members are paired, the journal reflects how each member would have voted. Two members may be paired only if one would have voted “aye” and one would have voted “nay” on a particular measure or motion.

PASSAGE
Approval of a measure by the full body.

POINT OF ORDER
A motion calling attention to a breach of the procedural rules.

PREFILING
Filing of bills and other proposed legislation prior to the convening of a session of the legislature.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE
The presiding officer of the senate. The state constitution provides that the lieutenant governor serves as the president of the senate.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR
Permission to view the proceedings from the floor of the chamber rather than from the public gallery.

PRO TEMPORE OR PRO TEM
Temporarily; literally, for the time. The term is used particularly to apply to a temporary presiding officer of either the house or the senate.

PUBLIC HEARING
A meeting of a house or senate committee or subcommittee during which public testimony may be heard and formal action may be taken on any measure or matter before the committee or subcommittee.

QUORUM
The number of members required to conduct business. Two-thirds of the elected members constitute a quorum in each house. A majority of the appointed members of a committee forms a quorum for the purpose of conducting committee business.

READING
The presentation of a bill before either house by the recital of the caption of the bill. The Texas Constitution requires that every bill be read in each house on three separate days. Until a bill is finally passed, it will be in the process of a first, second, or third reading. The first reading of a bill is the point in the process when the bill is referred to committee by the appropriate presiding officer. The second reading of a bill is the first point in the process when the entire membership of a chamber has the opportunity to debate the bill and amend it by majority vote. The third reading of a bill is the next point in the process when the entire membership of a chamber may debate a bill and the final opportunity the members of a chamber have to offer amendments to the bill.

RECESS
A temporary termination of a meeting. Recesses are called for short breaks (e.g., for lunch or dinner) or occasionally at the close of a daily session to allow the legislative day to continue into the next calendar day. (See ADJOURNMENT in this glossary.)

RECONSIDERATION
A procedure by which the house, senate, or one of its committees may, after approval by majority vote, repeat the vote on an action previously taken to either annul or reaffirm the action.

RECORD VOTE
A listing of the individual vote of each member of a committee or the full house or senate on a particular motion or measure.
REDISTRICTING
A geographical division of the state into congressional, state representative, senatorial, or other legislative districts on the basis of the relative distribution of the state’s total population. District boundaries are redrawn every 10 years following the publication of the U.S. census to ensure an appropriate number of districts of approximately equal population.

REGULAR SESSION
See SESSION in this glossary.

RESOLUTION
A formal expression of opinion or decision, other than a proposed law, that may be offered for approval to one or both houses of the legislature by a member of the house or senate.

SECOND READING
See READING in this glossary.

SECRETARY OF THE SENATE
The chief administrative officer of the senate, responsible for the day-to-day operations of the senate and its departments.

SENATE
The upper house of the Texas Legislature, consisting of 31 members elected from districts of roughly equal population, one-half of whom are elected every two years for four-year terms.

SENATE AGENDA
The document prepared daily for the senators and the public that contains the following information: (1) the intent calendar; (2) a list of senate bills returned from the house with amendments; (3) the status of bills in conference committee; (4) the local and uncontested calendar; (5) gubernatorial appointments reported favorably from the Committee on Nominations and awaiting confirmation by the senate; (6) committee hearings scheduled, with a list of measures to be considered by the committees; (7) the regular order of business, listing bills that have been reported favorably from committee; (8) senate floor action from the previous day; and (9) senate committee action from the previous day.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS
An officer of the house or senate charged with maintaining order and carrying out the directives of the presiding officers and the members.

SESSION
The period during which the legislature meets. There are two types of sessions. The regular session convenes every two years and may last no more than 140 days. A called session, commonly referred to as a special session, is so designated because it must be called by the governor. A called or special session may last no more than 30 days.

SIMPLE RESOLUTION
The type of legislative measure that is considered only within the chamber in which it is filed. It can offer a commendation, a memorial, a statement of congratulations, a welcome, or another statement of legislative sentiment.

SINE DIE
“Without fixing a day for a future meeting”: the last day of a legislative session.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
The presiding officer of the house of representatives elected from and by the membership of the house at the beginning of each regular session.

SPECIAL SESSION
See SESSION in this glossary.

SPONSOR
The legislator who guides the bill through the legislative process after the bill has passed the originating chamber. The sponsor must be a member of the opposite chamber of the one in which the bill was filed.

STANDING COMMITTEE
A committee created in the rules of either house that meets during the legislative session or an interim to consider and report on measures referred or tasks assigned to it by the respective presiding officers.

STATUTE
A codified law. (NOTE: “Codify” means “to arrange laws systematically.”)

SUBCOMMITTEE
A group of committee members, appointed by the chair of a committee of the house or the senate, to which proposed legislation is referred or a specific task is assigned.

SUPPLEMENTAL HOUSE CALENDAR
The primary agenda followed by the house during its deliberations. It is prepared by the House Committee on Calendars and is required to be distributed two hours before the house convenes. The Supplemental House Calendar contains: (1) measures passed to third reading on the previous day; (2) measures on the Daily House Calendar for a previous day that were not reached for consideration; (3) measures on the Daily House Calendar for the current day; and (4) postponed business from a previous day.

TABLE
Reference to stopping bills from further action in committees or on the floor: a bill is tabled by a vote, after a non-debatable motion from a member.

THIRD READING
See READING in this text.
W

WITNESS
A person who testifies before a legislative committee.

WORK SESSION
A meeting of a house committee or subcommittee during which the members may only discuss measures or matters before the committee or subcommittee. Public testimony cannot be heard and formal action cannot be taken during a work session.

V

VETO
The rejection of an enrolled bill by the governor.

VOICE VOTE
A vote during which the presiding officer will request the members who are voting in favor of a measure or motion to respond collectively by saying “aye” and those who are voting against the measure or motion to respond collectively by saying “nay.”
TEXAS CAPITOL BUILDING DIRECTORY

GENERAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Floor</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Tours</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capitol Gift Shop</td>
<td>Extension</td>
<td>E1.006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capitol Grill Cafeteria</td>
<td>Extension</td>
<td>E1.002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legislative Reference Library</td>
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GOVERNOR

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<td>Public Reception Room</td>
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<td>Press Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Office</td>
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<td>Legislative Division</td>
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SECRETARY OF STATE

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<tr>
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SENATE

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<td>Senate Gallery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lieutenant Governor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of the Senate</td>
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SENATORS OFFICES

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<td>Sen. Alvarado, Carol</td>
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<td>Sen. Bettencourt, Paul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sen. Birdwell, Brian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sen. Blanco, César</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sen. Buckingham, Dawn</td>
<td>Extension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sen. Campbell, Donna</td>
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<td>Sen. Creighton, Brandon</td>
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<td>Sen. Eckhardt, Sarah</td>
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<td>Sen. Gutierrez, Roland</td>
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<td>Sen. Hancock, Kelly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sen. Hinojosa, Juan &quot;Chuy&quot;</td>
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<td>Sen. Huffman, Joan</td>
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<td>Sen. Hughes, Bryan</td>
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<td>Sen. Kolkhorst, Lois W.</td>
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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<tr>
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<td>House Gallery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaker of the House</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chief of Staff</td>
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SHARED MEETING ROOMS

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<td>Legislative Conference Center</td>
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<td>Supreme Court Room</td>
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<td>Appellate Court Room</td>
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SECURITY / EMERGENCY

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<td>Capitol Health Services</td>
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TEXAS CAPITOL BUILDING DIRECTORY

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<th>REPRESENTATIVES OFFICES</th>
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### REPRESENTATIVES (CONT.)

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<td>Rep. Ordaz, Claudia</td>
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<td>Rep. Ortega, Lina</td>
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<td>Rep. Patterson, Jared</td>
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<td>Rep. Phelan, Dade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. Thompson, Senfronia</td>
<td>Capitol 35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Tindertoll, Tony</td>
<td>Extension E2.508</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. Toth, Steve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. Turner, Chris</td>
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<td>Rep. Turner, John</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. VanDeaver, Gary</td>
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<td>Rep. Vasut, Cody</td>
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<td>Rep. Vo, Hubert</td>
<td>Capitol 4N.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. Walle, Armando</td>
<td>Capitol GW.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. White, James</td>
<td>Capitol 4N.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. Wilson, Terry</td>
<td>Extension E2.714</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep. Wu, Gene</td>
<td>Capitol GW.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>House District 9</td>
<td>Extension E2.502</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### HOUSE COMMITTEE STAFF

| Committee Coordinator        | Extension E2.174 |
| Agriculture & Livestock       | Extension E2.114 |
| Appropriations                | Extension E1.032 |
| Business & Industry           | Extension E2.128 |
| Calendars                     | Extension E2.148 |
| Corrections                   | Extension E2.110 |
| County Affairs                | Extension E2.130 |
| Criminal Jurisprudence        | Extension E2.112 |
| Culture, Recreation & Tourism | Extension E2.134 |
| Defense & Veterans' Affairs   | Extension E2.160 |
| Elections                     | Extension E2.144 |
| Energy Resources              | Extension E2.162 |
| Environmental Regulation      | Extension E2.154 |
| General Investigating         | Extension E2.170 |
| Higher Education              | Extension E2.106 |
| Homeland Security & Public Safety | Extension E2.146 |
| House Administration          | Extension E2.140 |
| Human Services                | Extension E2.152 |
| Insurance                     | Extension E2.150 |
| International Relations & Economic Development | Extension E2.118 |
| Jurisdiction & Civil Jurisprudence | Extension E2.120 |
| Juvenile Justice & Family Issues | Extension E2.202 |
| Land & Resource Management    | Extension E2.136 |
| Licensing & Administrative Procedures | Extension E2.156 |
| Local & Consent Calendars     | Extension E2.166 |
| Natural Resources             | Extension E2.104 |
| Pensions, Investments & Financial Services | Extension E2.164 |
| Public Education              | Extension E2.124 |
| Public Health                 | Extension E2.172 |
| Redistricting                 | Extension E2.158 |
| Resolutions Calendars         | Extension E2.138 |
| State Affairs                 | Extension E2.108 |
| Transportation                | Extension E2.122 |
| Urban Affairs                 | Extension E2.126 |
| Ways & Means                  | Extension E2.116 |
| Select - Constitutional Rights & Remedies | Extension E2.806 |

For concerns and information on accommodations for people with disabilities, please contact:

- Senate ADA Coordinator: Delicia Sams 512.463.0400
- House ADA Coordinator: Steven Adrian 512.463.0865

= Historical Marker
FIRST FLOOR
(Street Level)

North Wing Elevators access all office floors of the Capitol and Capitol Extension.

GROUND FLOOR
(Basement)

North Wing Elevators access all office floors of the Capitol and Capitol Extension.

INFORMATION & TOURS
Monday - Friday: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Saturday: 9:30 am - 3:30 pm
Sunday: Noon - 3:30 pm
Call 512.463.0063 or email webmaster@tspb.texas.gov for more information.

ACCESSIBILITY
All facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. For assistance call 512.463.0063 or email webmaster@tspb.texas.gov.

TEXAS CAPITOL VISITOR’S GUIDE
Floors 1 & Ground

TEXAS CAPITOL VISITOR’S GUIDE
Floors 1 & Ground
SECOND FLOOR

- 2W House Chamber 2W.5
- North Wing Elevators access all office floors of the Capitol and Capitol Extension.
- Governor’s Public Reception Room

THIRD FLOOR

- 3N.5 3N.6
- North Wing Elevators access all office floors of the Capitol and Capitol Extension.
- Baby Changing Tables located in 2nd Floor Restrooms
- Lift

FOURTH FLOOR

INFORMATION & TOURS
- Monday - Friday: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
- Saturday: 9:30 am - 3:30 pm
- Sunday: Noon - 3:30 pm
- Call 512.463.0063 for more information.

ACCESSIBILITY
- All facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities.
- For assistance call 512.463.0063.

Capitol Extension Access: Take the North Wing elevators to Floor E1 or E2 of the underground Capitol Extension. Please visit the Capitol Gift Shop on Floor E1 for Texas and Capitol mementos and books, as well as mints, medicines and other sundries. Also located on level E1 are a public cafeteria, an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) and vending machines.

TEXAS CAPITOL VISITOR’S GUIDE
Floors 2, 3 & 4
EXTENSION  
FIRST FLOOR (E1)
EXTENSION
SECOND FLOOR (E2)

State Representatives Offices E2.200 through E2.900’s

ACCESSIBILITY
All facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. For assistance call 512.463.0063.

TEXAS CAPITOL VISITOR’S GUIDE
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- Rural Health  
- Corporate Practice of Medicine  
- Professional Liability  
- TMB/Licensure  
- Pharmaceuticals/Prescribing  
- Telemedicine & Broadband

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- Long Term Care  
- Child protection  
- Health Information Technology  
- Medical Records & Privacy  
- Taxes

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