

Interim Committee Charges
Texas House of Representatives

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House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock

3. Study the safety and efficiency of the existing agriculture-related transportation infrastructure. Consider the air, ground, and rail transportation needs of rural Texas and analyze the effect on economic development. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Transportation*
4. Survey rural economic development programs. Analyze the economic relationship between rural communities and the agriculture industry and their combined impact on the state's economy. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on County Affairs*

House Committee on Appropriations

2. Monitor the use of funds, adherence to state and federal reporting requirements, and ongoing development of federal rules and regulations provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Evaluate the impact of those funds on the state's economy. *Joint Interim Charge with House Select Committee on Federal Economic Stabilization Funding*
5. Monitor the Department of Information Resources' ongoing implementation of data center services consolidation and the Texas Online program.
6. Study the cost and caseload trends in the Texas Medicaid Program, including a review of cost drivers, factors affecting caseload increases, and regional variations. Evaluate the effectiveness of current Medicaid cost containment procedures and make recommendations for legislative changes to contain and control state costs and maximize federal funding without impacting services.
11. Examine implementation of the diversion pilot programs, juvenile case management system, and other policy and funding initiatives to determine whether the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission and the Texas Youth Commission have adhered to legislative directive in implementing these programs, and the impact of these programs on commitments at the Texas Youth Commission. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Corrections*
12. Evaluate the method of distributing federal hurricane relief funds and recommend improvements. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Urban Affairs*
14. Monitor and review the disbursement and use of border and homeland security funds. Evaluate the effectiveness in meeting the state's border and homeland security program goals and objectives. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs*
15. Identify factors influencing health care cost trends in Texas, including practices or policies that may contribute to regional variations. Investigate medical imaging utilization and its impact on the cost and quality of health care. Recommend policy changes to promote best practices, reduce costs, and improve quality within the state Medicaid program, Employees Retirement System, and Teacher Retirement System. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Public Health*

House Committee on Border and Intergovernmental Affairs

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of state operations at controlling drug-related crimes and other violence along the Texas-Mexico border. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Public Safety*
3. Examine current state laws and regulations aimed at improving economic development in the state and determine their impact on communities along the Texas-Mexico border. Identify any changes that would improve economic development results along the Texas-Mexico border.
4. Analyze state laws and regulations and the efforts of the multiple state entities responsible for addressing the needs of Texas residents in colonias. Determine the effectiveness of such programs and suggest improvements.

House Committee on Corrections

1. Examine implementation of the diversion pilot programs, juvenile case management system, and other policy and funding initiatives to determine whether the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission and the Texas Youth Commission have adhered to legislative directive in implementing these programs, and the impact of these programs on commitments at the Texas Youth Commission. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Appropriations*
2. Study and evaluate the availability and efficiency of community-based corrections supervision and treatment programs and their impact on prison capacity and recidivism rates. Determine whether the supervision and treatment programs have been designed in accordance with evidence-based practices and whether adequate evaluation methods have been incorporated.
3. Study current re-entry programs and procedures across the juvenile and adult criminal justice continuum. Make recommendations to ensure that offenders who are released or discharged have the necessary supervision and access to employment, housing, treatment, and other support programs to allow successful entry and integration into the community. Evaluate the working relationship between state agencies facilitating re-entry and make recommendations on how to achieve greater efficiency and cost savings.
4. Examine policies and programs designed to identify, divert, and enhance the supervision and treatment of special needs offenders within local jails and state correctional facilities. Recommend changes to address appropriate alternatives to incarceration or institutionalization.
5. Review the range of services provided to females in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems and recommend changes to ensure responsiveness to gender-specific issues. Review should include institutional and community supervision programs and utilization of correctional facilities that house non-adjudicated populations.

House Committee on County Affairs

1. Study the current practices and tools available to counties to manage growth and development. Consider incompatible land uses and county rulemaking authority, including rulemaking authority bracketed to counties of a certain population.
2. Study county-level health care delivery models for indigent health care that emphasize community-based care to improve the continuity and quality of care. Compare urban and rural health care delivery models and make necessary legislative recommendations.
3. Study county oversight related to pretrial release on bond in criminal cases.
4. Examine how local governments can better inform the public about local government debts.
5. Survey rural economic development programs. Analyze the economic relationship between rural communities and the agriculture industry and their combined impact on the state's economy. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock*
6. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence

1. Examine the deferred adjudication system in Texas and recommend legislative changes.
2. Study how the state presently supports the establishment and maintenance of public defender offices.
3. Study the human and sex trafficking problem in Texas. Make recommendations on best practices in the areas of investigation, prosecution, and tracking of the victims of these crimes. Study whether victims of these crimes are allowed to adequately recover from their attackers in a civil cause of action. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence*
4. Monitor the implementation of SB 1940 (81R), which established veterans court programs in Texas, and examine the link between combat stress disorders of war veterans, including post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury, and the onset of criminal behavior. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs*

House Committee on Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

1. Explore ways to promote and improve economic development through heritage, cultural, recreational, and historical programs. Consider the long-term economic impact of state parks in promoting tourism and recreation.

House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs

1. Investigate strategies to address incompatible land use surrounding Texas military installations. Study approaches that minimize conflict with neighboring landowners.
3. Monitor and review the disbursement and use of border and homeland security funds. Evaluate the effectiveness in meeting the state's border and homeland security program goals and objectives. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Appropriations*
4. Study ways the state can enhance military and overseas voters' ability to obtain and return balloting materials and reduce burdens on those voters' exercise of their right to vote. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Elections*
5. Monitor the implementation of SB 1940 (81R), which established veterans court programs in Texas, and examine the link between combat stress disorders of war veterans, including post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury, and the onset of criminal behavior. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence*

House Committee on Elections

1. Study ways the state can enhance military and overseas voters' ability to obtain and return balloting materials and reduce burdens on those voters' exercise of their right to vote. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs*
2. Examine the use of central polling places and compare voter turnout and the number of rejected provisional ballots in counties that use central polling places with similar counties that do not.
3. Examine the prevalence of fraud in Texas elections. Study new laws in other states regarding voter identification and recommend statutory changes necessary to ensure that only eligible voters can vote in Texas elections.
4. Review the Texas campaign finance law in judicial races in light of the recent United States Supreme Court decision *Caperton v. Massey*. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence*

House Committee on Energy Resources

1. Survey current local ordinances governing surface use of property in oil and gas development. Recommend changes, if any, to the authority of the Railroad Commission to regulate the operation of oil and gas industries in urban areas of the state, particularly the Barnett Shale.
3. Examine the state's portfolio of electric generation resources, including traditional sources, emerging renewable technologies, and energy efficiency. Determine whether the existing state regulatory programs and incentives are adequate to meet the energy needs of the future. Consider factors relating to reliability, requirements for additional transmission, or auxiliary services.
Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on State Affairs

House Committee on Environmental Regulation

1. Examine the regulation of air quality in the areas of permitting new and modified sources, public participation, and enforcement. Consider data and proposed federal standards and rules as they relate to the State Implementation Plan.
2. Survey existing recycling programs and suggest needed improvements.
3. Monitor federal legislative and regulatory initiatives as they pertain to climate change. Consider Texas' responses to proposals and make recommendations as to any further preparations.
4. Study the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's use of supplemental environmental projects in its enforcement process.

House Committee on General Investigating and Ethics

1. Review state law in light of the effects of Texas Ethics Commission Advisory Opinion No. 484 relating to acceptance of benefits provided to officeholders. Recommend any necessary legislative changes.
2. Review the definition of "political advertising" and determine whether the definition should be expanded to include content contained in blogs and other types of Internet communications.

House Committee on Human Services

3. Monitor the implementation of provisions in SB 2080 (81R) relating to the creation of a permanency assistance program. Evaluate and make recommendations about the foster care licensing process for relatives, the payment structure for a relative who becomes a child's permanent managing conservator, and any factors that should be considered in evaluating program performance and sustainability in the future.
4. Determine the feasibility of instituting a comprehensive, single point of entry system to simplify and expedite the process of accessing long-term care services for the elderly and individuals with physical disabilities.
5. Analyze the practice of using informal or voluntary caregivers ("parental child safety placements") during a Child Protective Services investigation. Study and make recommendations regarding:
 - a. efforts to track data related to parental child safety placements;
 - b. incorporation of the power of attorney process authorized by SB 1598 (81R);
 - c. appropriateness of voluntary placement;
 - d. review of caregiver qualifications; and
 - e. potential improvements to the voluntary placement process.

House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence

2. Study and make recommendations regarding the use of arbitration in Texas and the effect such practices have on state jurisprudence.
5. Study the human and sex trafficking problem in Texas. Make recommendations on best practices in the areas of investigation, prosecution, and tracking of the victims of these crimes. Study whether victims of these crimes are allowed to adequately recover from their attackers in a civil cause of action. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence*
6. Review the Texas campaign finance law in judicial races in light of the recent United States Supreme Court decision *Caperton v. Massey*. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Elections*

House Committee on Land and Resource Management

1. Evaluate the appropriateness of creating pedestrian-only areas on the public beaches of the state.
2. Examine unresolved issues relating to eminent domain legislation introduced during the 81st Legislative Session. Monitor any pending litigation.
4. Study the causes of coastal erosion along the Texas coast. Evaluate current and alternate funding sources. Review federal programs and their relationship to the state program.

House Committee on Licensing and Administrative Procedures

1. Review the current training standards used for emergency telecommunications personnel, particularly evaluating their effectiveness in adequately training 911 operators.

House Committee on Natural Resources

1. Evaluate groundwater regulations and permitting processes throughout the state, including the role of state agencies in groundwater management, the development of desired future conditions, and the adoption of groundwater management plans in relation to regional and state water planning.
2. Monitor the effects of current and proposed federal initiatives that could impact the implementation of the State Water Plan. Evaluate the policies and investments developed by other states dealing with water issues similar to the State of Texas.
3. Monitor ongoing drought conditions and initiatives to promote water conservation through the review of the following: state requirements for the submittal of water conservation plans and annual reporting; the "trigger" for use of drought contingency plans; recommendations by state agencies and the Water Conservation Advisory Council; and progress toward the development of recycled water resources and desalination projects.

House Committee on Pensions, Investments, and Financial Services

4. Examine the performance and accountability of the Texas public pension funds and make recommendations as needed.

House Committee on Public Health

1. Monitor implementation of legislation intended to curb rising obesity rates in Texas. Study and make recommendations regarding better coordination of prevention efforts and evidence-based strategies to reduce the impact of obesity on health care costs. Include recommendations related to the use of federal stimulus funds targeted toward obesity prevention.
2. Study the state's ability to respond to the H1N1 virus. Examine issues related to vaccine and antiviral distribution and capacity, disease surveillance, communication with providers and the public, intergovernmental cooperation, and medical surge capability.
3. Determine how the state can best coordinate efforts to streamline health care delivery with health information technology (HIT). Identify areas in state law that affect the adoption and use of HIT. Recommend statutory changes as necessary.
4. Identify factors influencing health care cost trends in Texas, including practices or policies that may contribute to regional variations. Investigate medical imaging utilization and its impact on the cost and quality of health care. Recommend policy changes to promote best practices, reduce costs, and improve quality within the state Medicaid program, Employees Retirement System, and Teacher Retirement System. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Appropriations*
5. Examine the need for and barriers to implementing routine HIV screenings as recommended in 2006 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Assess the impact of implementation on HIV transmission, health outcomes, clinical progression, and mortality.
6. Pursuant to HB 1672 (81R), Section 4, study the policies and procedures related to the disclosure required by Chapter 33, Health and Safety Code, to the parent, managing conservator, or guardian of a newborn child.

House Committee on Public Safety

1. Study the recruitment and retention practices that the Department of Public Safety currently employs and make recommendations on how to make improvements. Specifically, examine the current officer shortage in Texas and the effect it is having on the state's public safety.
3. Monitor the Driver Responsibility Program and consider methods for overall improvement of the program.
4. Study the statutory definition, duties, and authority of a Texas peace officer.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of state operations at controlling drug-related crimes and other violence along the Texas-Mexico border. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Border and Intergovernmental Affairs*

House Committee on Redistricting

1. Conduct public hearings in appropriate locations to obtain public input on all issues relating to the redistricting of legislative, congressional, and State Board of Education districts following the release of the federal census in 2011.
2. Gather information regarding the existence and location of communities of interest to be considered in the creation of legislative, congressional, and State Board of Education districts.
3. Monitor related federal developments, including those affecting the conduct of the 2010 federal census.
4. Monitor the Texas Legislative Council and other state agencies to ensure that software applications and other support services relating to redistricting are available to the 82nd Legislature.

House Select Committee on Federal Economic Stabilization Funding

1. Monitor the use of funds, adherence to state and federal reporting requirements, and ongoing development of federal rules and regulations provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Evaluate the impact of those funds on the state's economy. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Appropriations*

2. Review the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs' Weatherization Assistance Program and increased funding from ARRA. Examine the methodology used to distribute funds and the program's effectiveness at reducing residential energy costs. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Urban Affairs*

House Committee on State Affairs

1. Review state compliance with federal law regarding undocumented immigrants. Evaluate the costs of services and benefits provided to undocumented immigrants by state agencies and local governments.
3. Monitor federal legislation and regulatory initiatives pertaining to climate change and its effects on utilities and consumers. Consider Texas' response to proposals and make recommendations as to any further preparations.
4. Examine the state's portfolio of electric generation resources, including traditional sources, emerging renewable technologies, and energy efficiency. Determine whether the existing state regulatory programs and incentives are adequate to meet the energy needs of the future. Consider factors relating to reliability, requirements for additional transmission, or auxiliary services.

Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Energy Resources

House Committee on Technology, Economic Development, and Workforce

2. Examine ways to keep Texas' workforce and economy competitive.
Determine how Texas can enhance its competitiveness in a strategic manner,
including bringing new jobs to Texas.

4. Study opportunities to expand broadband access in underserved
communities through innovative new technologies and identify whether
federal funding sources may be utilized.

House Committee on Transportation

1. Monitor the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to ensure the agency is implementing recommended legislative, sunset, and Grant Thornton management audit changes.
2. Review the organization and operation of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Consider the relationship between MPOs and TxDOT regarding transportation planning and programming.
3. Study the practices and procedures used in the development of toll roads and make recommendations as necessary.
4. Review federal, state, and local programs to promote traffic light signalization, improve traffic flow, and reduce congestion.
5. Study methods for improving safety on Texas roadways. Study the funding levels of crash prevention programs directed toward pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, and other vulnerable road users. Explore ways to improve safety for roadside workers.
6. Study the safety and efficiency of the existing agriculture-related transportation infrastructure. Consider the air, ground, and rail transportation needs of rural Texas and analyze the effect on economic development. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock.*

House Committee on Urban Affairs

1. Examine the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs' (TDHCA) regional allocation formula policies and determine methodologies that could enhance equitable distribution.
2. Review the TDCHA's Weatherization Assistance Program and increased funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Examine the methodology used to distribute funds and the program's effectiveness at reducing residential energy costs. *Joint Interim Charge with House Select Committee on Federal Economic Stabilization Funding*
3. Evaluate the method of distributing federal hurricane relief funds and recommend improvements. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Appropriations*

House Committee on Ways and Means

2. Examine the state's major tax exemptions to determine how the current costs and benefits compare with the original legislative objectives. Make recommendations for adjustments as needed.
3. Study methods for improving the quality and uniformity of, and communications to taxpayers about, property tax appraisals.
4. Evaluate the impact of the transfer of administrative law judges from the Comptroller's Office to the State Office of Administrative Hearings on the dispute resolution process.
6. Monitor the implementation of property tax appraisal and alternative valuation appeal reforms enacted by the 81st Legislature.