

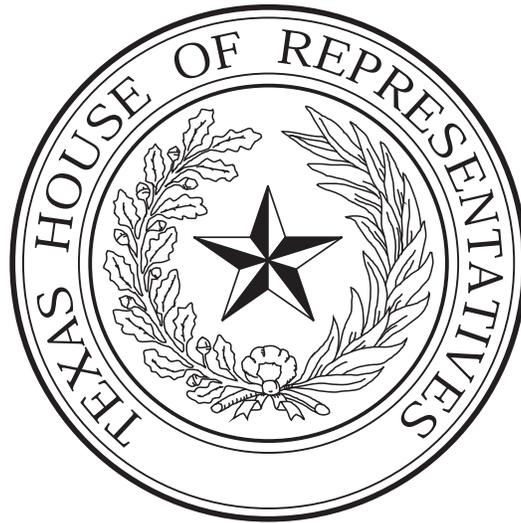
*(Edited to focus on charges  
pertaining to public education)*

# INTERIM COMMITTEE CHARGES

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TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

87<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE



**SPEAKER DADE PHELAN**

**MARCH 2022**

## Committee on Appropriations

1. Monitor and oversee the implementation of appropriations bills and other relevant legislation passed by the 87th Legislature, including the following:
  - SB 1 (87R), General Appropriations Act;
  - HB 5 (87S2) and SB8 (87S3), relating to making supplemental appropriations and giving direction regarding appropriations; and
  - SB 52 (87S3), relating to the issuance of revenue bonds to fund capital projects at public institutions of higher education.
2. Complete study of assigned charges related to the Texas-Mexico border issued in June 2021.
3. Evaluate the history of appropriations from General Revenue-Dedicated Accounts 5010 (Sexual Assault Fund) and 0469 (Crime Victims Compensation Fund). Consider whether revenue sources for these accounts are sufficient to maintain historical commitments to victims services grants.
4. Monitor efforts by the Department of Family and Protective Services to implement Section 11, HB 5 (87S2), relating to foster care capacity improvement.
5. Review the information technology (IT) supporting the Texas Medicaid Program. Evaluate the IT systems' capability to meet the needs of Texas Medicaid to ensure the Health and Human Services Commission's acquisition and procurement processes comply with the requirements of SB 1, Rider 6 (Health and Human Services Commission), relating to Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership); Section 9.01 (Purchases of Information Resources Technologies); and Section 9.02 (Quality Assurance Review of Major Information Resources Projects). Identify ways to:
  - Modernize systems and improve interoperability between systems;
  - Ensure IT functionality is aligned with the needs of the Medicaid Program, including conformity to the managed care model;
  - Reduce administrative burdens;
  - Provide cost savings;
  - Improve future procurements; and
  - Create better transparency and oversight of Medicaid IT contracts.
6. Review the utilization by the Texas Education Agency and local school districts of federal dollars appropriated from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds made available by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law No. 116-260) and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law. 117-2) to address students' instructional loss and mental health challenges.
7. Make funding recommendations for the phased installation of climate control equipment in state correctional facilities, prioritizing facilities that serve vulnerable populations.
8. Examine the long-term capital needs of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, including deferred maintenance and planned land acquisitions for new state park land.
9. Monitor the use of appropriated funds by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) from the Flood Infrastructure Fund. Examine the criteria used by TWDB in making loan and grant

## Committee on Elections

1. Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 87th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure the intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:
  - HB 1382, relating to the availability of certain information regarding early voting;
  - HB 1622, relating to reporting of early voting rosters; and
  - HB 3107, relating to election practices and procedures.
2. Study the laws related to local ballot initiatives and propositions to assess whether reforms are needed to ensure that ballot language is clear and unambiguous and that the process is fair and consistent.
3. Study the effectiveness of new poll watcher training required by SB 1 (87S2).
4. Examine the reporting of election results following an election to determine the reasons for any delays and inaccuracies in the initial reporting of elections results. Make recommendations to ensure that election results are reported in a timely and accurate manner following the closing of the polls.

## Committee on Higher Education

1. Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 87th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure the intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:
  - SB 1102, relating to the establishment of the Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE) Program to support workforce education; and
  - SB 1295, relating to financial support and incentives for comprehensive regional universities.
2. Review progress toward the goals of the *60x30TX* plan, including institutional strategies for responding to changing workforce needs and demands, including workforce education, industry certification, and degree programs to address healthcare shortages.
3. Examine factors that have contributed to the rising costs of higher education, including the effect of statutory tuition and fee waivers and exemptions, the cost of compliance with state and federal mandates, and the increase in the number of non-faculty staff. Make recommendations for controlling these costs and ensuring a sound fiscal approach to managing college affordability for the future.
4. Evaluate the impact of the pandemic on the state's teacher workforce and current practices to improve the recruitment, preparation, and retention of high-quality educators. Explore the impact of the educator preparation program regulatory environment. Make recommendations to improve educator recruitment, retention, and preparation throughout the state. (*Joint Charge with Committee on Public Education*)
5. Review the impact of investments of endowment and other trust funds, including the Permanent University Fund, by university systems and institutions of higher education in businesses and funds owned or controlled by the Russian government or Russian nationals, and determine the need for investment restrictions. Consider the impact of any proposed investment restrictions on fund performance.

## Committee on Pensions, Investments & Financial Services

1. Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 87th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure the intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:
  - HB 1258, relating to data matching with financial institutions to facilitate the collection of certain delinquent taxes;
  - HB 1585, relating to the operations and functions of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas;
  - HJR 99, proposing a constitutional amendment authorizing a county to finance the development or redevelopment of transportation or infrastructure in unproductive, underdeveloped, or blighted areas in the county; authorizing the issuance of bonds and notes; and
  - SB 1444, relating to participation in the uniform group coverage program for active school employees and to a study concerning health coverage for school district employees.
2. Review and evaluate the actuarial soundness of the Employees Retirement System (ERS) and Teacher Retirement System (TRS) pension funds.
3. Review the Texas Local Fire Fighters Retirement Act to ensure proper governance and financial oversight. Examine whether the Pension Review Board has proper oversight and authority to implement necessary corrective measures.
4. Evaluate the actuarial soundness of the Law Enforcement and Custodial Officer Supplemental Retirement Fund and Judicial Retirement System of Texas Plan 2. Identify strategies to reduce and eliminate existing unfunded liabilities and recommend structural enhancements that improve the financial health and viability of the funds moving forward.
5. Review the impact of investments by public retirement systems of their endowment and other trust funds in businesses and funds owned or controlled by the Russian government or Russian nationals, and determine the need for investment restrictions. Consider the impact of any proposed investment restrictions on fund performance.

## Committee on Public Education

1. Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 87th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure the intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:
  - HB1525 and HB 3 (86R), relating to public school finance and public education;
  - HB 4545, relating to assessment of public school students and providing accelerated instruction;
  - SB 1365, relating to public school organization, accountability, and fiscal management;
  - SB 1716, relating to supplemental special education services and instructional materials for certain public school students; and
  - HB 3906 (86R), relating to the assessment of public school students, including the development and administration of assessment instruments, and technology permitted for use by students.
2. Complete study of assigned charges related to the Texas-Mexico border issued in June 2021.
3. Identify and examine efforts to ensure that parents have a meaningful role in their children's education. Recommend necessary changes in both independent school district board and open-enrollment charter governing board governance to protect the right of parents to participate in their child's education.
4. Examine partnerships between K-12, higher education institutions, and employers that promote postsecondary and career readiness and identify current obstacles that public schools, higher education institutions, and employers face. Make recommendations to ensure career and technical education programs, internships, apprenticeships, and other opportunities are more accessible.
5. Evaluate the impact of the pandemic on the state's teacher workforce, and current practices to improve the recruitment, preparation, and retention of high-quality educators. Explore the impact of the educator preparation program regulatory environment. Make recommendations to improve educator recruitment, retention, and preparation throughout the state. (*Joint charge with Committee on Higher Education*)
6. Study the effects of COVID-19 on K-12 learning loss and best practices that exist to address learning loss. Monitor the implementation of state and local plans to address students' achievement gaps. Make recommendations for supporting the state and local efforts to increase academic development.
7. Examine the impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health, including the availability and workload of mental health professionals across the state and their role in the public school system. Make recommendations to reduce or eliminate existing barriers to providing mental health services in a traditional classroom setting or through teletherapy.
8. Study the unfulfilled recommendations from the 2016 Commission on Next Generation Assessments and Accountability. Evaluate the state's progress on assessments and accountability and consider possible legislation to support the recommendations from the report. Study and recommend measures needed at the state level to prevent unintended

consequences to students, campuses, and districts, including changes that could improve the system for students or help public schools serving a disproportionate number of educationally disadvantaged students impacted by the pandemic.

9. Monitor and analyze the state policy on curriculum and instructional materials used in public schools.
10. Examine the causes and contributors for chronic absenteeism in public schools and its impact on student outcomes. Consider techniques and approaches that have been utilized by public schools to identify students who are chronically absent and return these students to classrooms.
11. Review the impact of investments of the Permanent School Fund by the State Board of Education in businesses and funds owned or controlled by the Russian government or Russian nationals, and determine the need for investment restrictions. Consider the impact of any proposed investment restrictions on fund performance.

## Committee on Ways & Means

1. Monitor agencies and programs in the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of legislation passed by the 87th Legislature. Actively oversee associated rulemaking and agency actions to ensure the intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:
  - HB 2080 and SB 903, relating to taxpayers' suits;
  - HB 2404, relating to creating and maintaining a database of information regarding certain local economic development agreements;
  - SB 248, relating to the sale of cigarettes, tobacco products, and e-cigarettes;
  - SB 2 (86R - the Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act of 2019) and related property tax reform legislation passed by the 87th Legislature, including HB 1869, HB 2429, HB 2723, and SB 1438; and
  - Legislation relating to reform of the property tax appraisal system, including HB 988, HB 2941, HB 3971, SB 63, SB 916, and SB 1919.
2. Study and consider methods of providing additional property tax relief, including the use of \$3 billion in available American Rescue Plan Act funds that were held for future tax relief by the 87th Legislature, and other sources of revenue. Explore options to reduce business property tax burdens and options for limiting the growth of property tax bills.
3. Study Texas' property tax appraisal system and make appropriate recommendations to improve the appraisal system. The study should include:
  - Assessing the accuracy of appraised values and operational effectiveness of appraisal districts;
  - Evaluating methods of selecting chief appraisers, appraisal review boards, and appraisal district directors; and
  - Evaluating existing appraisal protections for taxpayers and ease of taxpayer participation in the appraisal process.
4. Conduct a comprehensive review of the impact of not renewing Chapter 313, Tax Code. Evaluate tax incentives offered by other states and make recommendations for incentivizing manufacturers and other capital-intensive businesses to locate to Texas.
5. Evaluate the impact of shifting to destination sourcing for local sales and use tax purposes, including the benefits of reduced taxpayer confusion. Monitor the implementation of the Comptroller's amendments to 34 Tx. Admin. Code §3.334, relating to local sales and use taxes, and the Comptroller's Sales Tax Rate Locator. Make recommendations for legislation to improve Texas' local sales and use tax sourcing.