

## TEXAS

### Texas calendar:

- May 16 was the last day for the House to consider House bills & resolutions.
- May 23; the House has to report all Senate bills & resolutions out of committee.
- May 28 is the last day for the House to vote on Senate bills & resolutions.
- June 2. This is the last day of the legislative session.

### What has been accomplished so far in the TX 89<sup>th</sup> legislature?

In general, not much in my opinion. We definitely need to figure out how to get a conservative speaker for the House. All that has happened so far is the House is running out the clock.

### ***Border/internal security***

- SB17, filed by Lois, has passed both chambers. Prohibits certain foreign individuals and entities from purchasing real property in TX when the entities are connected to nations that the US DNI identified as national security threats. The House is still working on reconciliation between the Senate and House versions, and on 5/14 the Senate refuses to concur. However the Senate's request for a conference committee was granted and the House appointed the members of the conference committee.
- SB36 seeks to establish a Homeland Security Division within Texas Department of Public Safety. This passed the Senate and is currently in the Calendars Committee in the House. I doubt if this gets out of the House successfully. Securing the border is probably too conservative a notion for our House.
- SB8 mandates sheriffs in counties with > 100K residents enter into agreements with ICE to enforce immigration laws. This passed the Senate and was sent to Calendars Committee in the House. Again, I don't have a lot of hope for this bill.
- SB9, a bail reform bill, would add strict limits on personal bonds, add accountability on magistrates, regulate charitable bail organizations (like the one that Kamala started for bailing out violent BLM & Antifa activists, and increases the authority for prosecutors to appeal overly-lenient bail decisions. This made it out of the House Criminal Justice Committee, but has not yet been put to vote on the House floor. However, based on the most recent vote (5/19/25) on a favorable amendment, I do have hope for this bill.
- Bills that died in the House include one to end in-state tuition for illegal aliens, and one to mandate the use of E-verify by employers to make sure potential employers are not illegal aliens.
- SJR1 (Jocelyn's law, named after Jocelyn Nungaray) would prohibit bail for illegal aliens charged with a wide array of violent or serious felonies. The initial House vote was 88-50 but a 2/3 vote is required for a constitutional amendment. The House is voting on this again today. Since it makes too much sense, I suspect the House won't pass this bill.
  - However, SJR5 is a constitutional amendment requiring denial of bail under certain circumstances, so it seems to be even broader than SJR1. This has passed both chambers but has not yet been sent to the Secretary of State (SOS). Then the SOS will get the proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot for voters to consider in November.

### ***Property tax reform***

- SB4 would raise tax exemptions on homesteads to \$140K (currently \$100K) and to \$150K for homeowners over 65. This passed the Senate but the House sat on it for 37 days before referring it to committee. As of 5/19/25 the bill had been considered in Calendars Committee in the House and placed on Major State Calendar for 5/20/25. So there's perhaps a chance for this one.
- SB23 would increase the homestead exemption for seniors to \$200K. Like SB4, this passed the Senate but is on the House Major State Calendar for 5/20/25. Again, maybe this one has a chance. The last House Committee (Ways & Means) report was favorable.
- SB32 would provide major property tax cuts for small businesses. ONCE AGAIN, the bill passed the Senate but has been languishing in the House Ways & Means Committee since 4/22/25.
- SB29. This bill increases the business personal property tax exemption from \$2500 to \$25,000. It provides a 20% inventory tax credit to reduce a business's franchise tax liability. This bill passed both chambers and was signed by the governor 5/14/25 and is effective immediately.

### ***High Speed Rail***

- HB2003 requires transparency from any high-speed rail developers. This has passed the House and the Senate and is on its way to the Governor's desk.
- HB1402 would prohibit the use of public money to pay for the alteration of a roadway related to HSR construction. This never even made it out of the Transportation Committee, which of course has a Democratic vice-chair. Thank you Dustin Burroughs.

### ***Education***

- SB2 creates Education Savings Accounts (ESAs). This has already been signed by the Governor and becomes law on 9/1/25. Eligible parents can get \$8K in public funding for educational expenses, including tuition to private schools. The total amount of ESAs that TX will provide is capped at \$1B. This bill is intended to help underprivileged students.
- SB24 requires that Texas students be educated on the horrors of communism. The Senate passed it and sent it to the House but it has been in Calendars since 5/9/25. Apparently there are too many pro-communism people in our GOP-majority House to get this passed.

### ***Election integrity***

- SB16 seeks to stop non-citizens from voting by requiring proof of citizenship when registering to vote. The Senate sent it to the House and it's been in Calendars Committee there since 5/12/25.
- SB2035 (coauthored by Lois) closes a loophole that allows foreign nationals to influence elections through campaign contributions. This was sent to the House, but it's stuck in the State Affairs Committee. Since it's a bill meant to strengthen election integrity, the speaker probably won't let this come to the floor.
- HB951 and SB2646 are both about having closed primaries, so that a voter must be affiliated with a political party to vote in that party's primary election. HB951 was referred to the House Elections Committee on 3/6/25 and hasn't come out. SB2646 was referred to the Senate State Affairs Committee on 4/3/25 and hasn't come out. It looks like closed primaries are not going to pass during this legislative session.

### ***Lawsuit reform***

- SB30 would protect individuals and businesses from huge damages in lawsuits. It passed the Senate but will likely die in committee in the House (it's been in the Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee in the House since 4/22/25).
- HB3441 would allow individuals to sue vaccine manufacturers if they were harmed by the vaccine. This was only sent to the Senate 5/19/25.

### ***Anti-woke bills***

- SB945 won't let publicly traded companies implement "ESG" (environmental, social, governance) shareholder proposals. Guess what? This died in a House Committee. Surprise, surprise, surprise, said Gomer Pyle.
- SB946 protects organizations applying for credit or a loan from being judged by stupid woke criteria like a "social credit score" or an "ESG score". Just like SB945, this died in a House Committee.

### ***Other bills***

- SB5 passed both chambers and was sent to the Governor on 5/13/25. This bill will create & fund (\$3B) the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, but is subject to voter approval of the enabling legislation for the required constitutional amendment.
- SB38, a bill to stop squatters from taking residence in properties they do not own, passed the Senate. It's been voted out of committee favorably in the House as of 5/14/25, but has not made it to the House floor for a vote.
- SB456 will increase the penalties for purchasing or selling human organs, which apparently sometimes happens when someone leaves their body to science. This passed the Senate and is scheduled for a public hearing in the House today, 5/20/25.
- HB142 DOGE bill for the Office of Inspector General (OIG). It will help the OIG combat fraud, waste, & abuse in Medicaid. It will also help the OIG recover improper Medicaid payments and is expected to generate \$77M by FY 2029. This bill has been enrolled, so it should be sent to the Governor any day.

### Federal legislation – what’s going on here?

- One big beautiful bill.
  - On Sunday night, 5/18/25, the House Budget Committee voted favorably on the big beautiful bill.
  - The bill will make Trump’s 2017 tax cuts permanent and reform Medicaid (but not till 2029 – make that 2026 after Chip Roy got pushy) to add work requirements for some able-bodied recipients.
  - It also contains funds for border security, and some spending reforms.
  - Chip Roy (TX) and 3 other GOP reps voted “present” (instead of against) the bill because they believed it didn’t cut spending enough and didn’t repeal more of the Inflation Reduction Act.
  - Roy said that almost half the “green new scam” subsidies were not cut, and the Medicaid money laundering scam that provides 7X more federal funding for each \$1 of state spending for able-bodied recipients is left untouched. But the 4 GOP reps didn’t want to derail the reconciliation process again.
  - Thankfully, my heartthrob, Mike Lee from Utah, is working on a complete repeal of the Biden Inflation Reduction Act, which hilariously was never expected to decrease inflation but rather to increase it because of “inflated” green new scam subsidies. (See what I did there?)
  - Mike Lee wants the reconciliation process for the big, beautiful bill to commence as soon as possible. Whatever issues are needed to further President Trump’s agenda that don’t make it to the big, beautiful bill can be handled with separate legislation, according to big, beautiful, bald Mike.
- In the “you can’t make this stuff up” section of this summary, a Democrat rep from PA reintroduced Rep Cory Bush’s 2023 Reparations Now resolution. This bill calls for monetary compensation to black Americans, and the estimated cost is \$14T. The 2023 GDP was \$27T, and the 2023 federal budget, bloated as it was, totaled \$6.1T.

Ending pop question: Did Boca Chica TX (where SpaceX is headquartered) just vote to change the city’s name to Starbase, TX? YES! That is so cool.