

THE TEXAS STATE CHAMBER

# TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS 86<sup>th</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION RESULTS 2019



# FIGHTING FOR JOB & PAYCHECKS

## THE RESULTS-THE TEXAS 86<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TAB is pleased this session that Lieutenant Governor Patrick and Speaker Bonnen joined forces with Governor Abbott to focus on a pro-business agenda. While the 86<sup>th</sup> legislative session was very good to Texas businesses, there are still pressing issues we will continue to fight for during the interim, as we begin planning for the next session.

Now more than ever, Texas must fight for a competitive workforce by strengthening our public schools to make sure our students graduate on track for careers. The passage of public school finance reform will dramatically increase school funding in two critical areas - teacher pay and funding full-day Pre-K programs. This legislation is a powerful response to preparing our 5 million Texas public school students to enter the workforce. It is crucial we work together to make this reform a success for Texas' future.

Property tax reform was another win this session. This legislative reform will provide five billion dollars to reduce property taxes while capping the amount property taxes can be increased without voter approval.

Texas lawmakers also passed several wide-reaching policies that will encourage economic growth and support for Texas businesses.

Ultimately, these are huge wins for growing jobs and building our tax base-critical to a state with a massive and increasing demand for services and infrastructure. The reauthorization of Chapter 312 and the Texas Enterprise Fund are significant economic development wins. These incentive tools will help our communities remain competitive against other states and countries by securing capital intensive projects with well-paying jobs for our state.

The rest of this session's story is more about what did not pass. TAB joined in efforts to kill bills that would have:

- increased the costs of employers' health insurance,
- created new causes of action in employment matters, and
- increased regulatory costs with respect to environmental quality issues.

Some of the key losses of the session include the failure to pass transportation bills that provide several financing options for road infrastructure and a valiant effort to protect small businesses from city ordinances that would mandate employment benefits for their employees.

You will see more detailed information about many wins and losses in the following pages. The bottom line is this: TAB protected our members interests during the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, but our work continues as we fight to protect Texas businesses and build a stronger economy.

Stay tuned for TAB's next publication, [The Scorecard](#), which grades whether Texas legislators voted for or against Texas businesses this session. Thank you again for supporting TAB and our mission to make Texas the most influential business climate in the nation.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## WINS

### Appropriations Bill (HB 1 by Zerwas) **PASSED**

The Appropriations bill contains \$250 billion in all funds. TAB is pleased with the economic development incentives that are in the bill. Specifically, it includes funding for:

- Texas Enterprise Fund - \$74 million added to \$76 million balance for \$150 million for grants.
- Moving Image Industry Program - \$50 million.
- Tourism - \$110 million for tourism promotion.
- Texas Commission for the Arts - Just under \$28 million – largest budget increase in history.

### Chapter 312 Tax Abatements (HB 3143 by Murphy) **PASSED**

Extends the Chapter 312 tax abatement program, which allows cities and counties to grant temporary property tax exemptions on new capital investment, by ten years to September 2029. It also adds more transparency by requiring a more detailed public notice and a 30-day minimum notice before scheduling a public meeting to approve the agreement.

### Regulation of Hemp (HB 1325 by King) **PASSED**

Establishes the Hemp Farming Act. It will allow Texas farmers to benefit from many applications of the agricultural crop.

### Religious Freedom Restoration Act (HB 1035 by Zedler) **KILLED**

Would have created the "Free to Believe" Act allowing business owners and license holders to decline to do business with anyone based on a religious belief. This broadly worded bill would have negatively impacted Texas' economy.

## LOSSES

### Statewide PACE Program (SB 1281 by Birdwell) **DIED**

Would have extended the Property Assessed Clean Energy (TX-PACE) program to all parts of Texas by creating a uniform Texas-wide program overseen by the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) in the Comptroller's Office (at no cost to the state or local governments) and administered by the best qualified third party organization selected through a request for proposal process.

### TX Rural & Opportunity Zone Jobs Act (HB 1000 by Paddie) **DIED**

The Texas Rural and Opportunity Zone Jobs Act would have provided \$35 million in tax credits to help promote small business growth, job creation and local economic development in some of Texas' hardest-hit rural and opportunity zone communities.



# EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

## WINS

### Free Pre-Kindergarten Programs (SB 1679 by West) **PASSED**

Mandates that a child who is eligible for enrollment in a pre-kindergarten class at the age of three to remain eligible for enrollment at the age of four.

### Linking Admission Applications to Employment Data (HB 277 by Oliverson) **PASSED**

Requires online admission applications to include a link to comparative gainful employment data compiled by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and TWC.

### **Occupational and Life Skills Associate Degree (HB 3165 by Oliverson) PASSED**

Authorizes the governing board of the Lone Star College System District to establish an occupational and life skills associate degree program at each junior college in the district.

### **Repeal In-State Tuition for Undocumented Immigrants (HB 413 by Biederman) KILLED**

Would have ended in-state tuition for undocumented college students.

### **School Finance (HB 3 by Huberty) PASSED**

The \$11.6 billion school finance measure contains \$6.5 billion in new public education funding and \$5.1 billion for property tax reductions. It also includes TAB priorities of new money for teacher pay raises and full-day Pre-K funding for eligible four-year-olds.

### **Shortages in Health Professions (HB 80 by Ortega) PASSED**

Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to conduct a study and make recommendations on shortages in the relevant health professions.

### **Skills Development Fund (HB 700 by Guillen) PASSED**

Expands the use of the Skills Development Fund to local workforce development boards and allows existing eligible entities to continue to provide customized skills training solutions to Texas employers across the state. HB 1 increases funding to the program.

### **Veterans Repository (HB 2530 by Flynn) PASSED**

Requires the Texas Veterans Commission to create and maintain an online repository of information of use to active duty military relocating to this state.

### **Veterans Workforce (HB 696 by Blanco) PASSED**

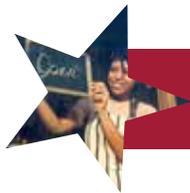
Provides veteran servicemen and women with greater access to services and programs aimed at assisting in the transition from military to civilian life. Specifically, it codifies into statute two programs currently operated by Texas Workforce Commission (TWC): The Operation Welcome Home program and the Texas Veterans Leadership Program. It also authorizes TWC to award grants to state, local, or private entities that aim to help veterans assimilate into civilian life by preparing for a job or getting an education.

### **Workforce Diploma Pilot Program (SB 1055 by Zaffirini) PASSED**

Creates a true pay for performance pilot program with an open network of providers to help address the 3.7 million Texans over the age of 25 without a high school diploma. It requires that as part of the diploma program they also receive skills development and workforce readiness training.

### **Workforce Grant Program (HB 2784 by Phelan) PASSED**

Creates the Texas Industrial Workforce Apprenticeship Grant Program to encourage the private sector to develop apprenticeship programs in conjunction with TWC.



## GENERAL BUSINESS

### WINS

#### **Auto Insurance – (HB 1348 by Clardy) KILLED**

Would have compromised an auto insurers' ability to offer services to its customers in the aftermath of a collision and prohibit preferred lists to guide consumers to shops that supply high quality parts and labor. Texans should have a variety of options in a competitive market when seeking repairs covered by auto insurance, including service programs provided by insurance companies that help get consumers back on the road.

#### **Auto Insurance – (HB 1739 by Geren) KILLED**

Would have prohibited an insurer from requiring a judgment or other legal determination establishing the liability of a motorist under uninsured or underinsured motorist (UIM) coverage. It would have had the unintended effect of actually encouraging

more litigation by making overbroad references to the Insurance Code and reversing the Brainard decision on attorney's fees.

#### **Insurance - TWIA – (SB 615 by Buckingham) PASSED**

This was the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA) Sunset bill. This bill made changes to improve the operations and functions of TWIA such as establishing an automatic renewal process, allowing policyholders to pay premiums in installments and for TWIA to accept credit card payments, formally authorizing TWIA to provide supplemental payments, and other changes consistent with across-the-board Sunset recommendations.

## Protection of Critical Infrastructure (HB 3557 by Paddie) **PASSED**

Creates the Critical Infrastructure Protection Act and establishes criminal offenses for intentional acts of vandalism against critical infrastructure.

## Roofing Contractors (HB 2103 by Capriglione) **PASSED**

Clarifies that roofing contractors cannot act as public insurance adjusters. This will mitigate fraud opportunities where contractors sometimes act as public insurance adjusters on property for which they are providing services.



# TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

## WINS

### Anti-High-Speed Rail (HB 709/HB 1055/ HB 1234/HB 1235/HB 1242/HB 1368/HB 1369/ HB 1986/HB 1988/HB 1989/HB 2605/HB 2716) **KILLED**

Several legislators filed bills aimed at regulating and derailing the high-speed rail project planned between Dallas and Houston. TAB worked with a coalition of interested parties to successfully defeat these bills.

### Design-Build Contracts (HB 2830 by Canales) **PASSED**

TAB supports the use of design-build procedures wherever they can be shown to reduce total costs and improve efficiency. This bill allows Texas to enter six design-build contracts in a biennium.

### Salvage Dealers License (HB 1667 by Goldman) **PASSED**

Allows independent motor vehicle dealers to purchase more than five salvage vehicles a year without holding a separate salvage vehicle dealers license.

## LOSSES

### Comprehensive Development Agreements/Toll Road Bills (HB 1951 by Krause/HB 1644 by Martinez) **DIED**

These bills contained comprehensive development agreements for I 35 and several road projects in Texas. HB 1951 also contained provisions relating to toll road transparency. It passed the House and died in the Senate.



# TAXES & SPENDING

## WINS

### Aerospace Franchise Tax Deduction (HB 1607 by Goldman) **PASSED**

Currently, Texas is losing market share in the defense-related aerospace industry due, in part, to a misalignment of Texas' franchise tax policy and the Federal Acquisition Regulation. This bill addresses the problem by better aligning the Texas franchise tax rules with federal contracting requirements.

### Double Right-of-Way Tax (SB 1152 by Hancock) **PASSED**

Currently, telecommunications providers send telephone calls and cable television or video signals over the same line in a municipality's right of-way resulting in the providers paying

twice for the same line in the same right-of-way. This bill removes the "double taxation" by requiring a telecommunications provider to pay the municipality only the greater of the two charges for right-of-way.

### Prepayment Tax Discounts (HB 1729 by Murphy) **KILLED**

TAB worked with allies to defeat this bill which would have increased Texas retailers' costs by reducing the prepayment discount for payment of sales and use taxes. This would have cost retailers over \$100 million in the first three years.

## Wayfair – Online Tax Collections (HB 1525 by Burrows) **PASSED**

In *South Dakota v. Wayfair, Inc.*, the U.S. Supreme Court decided a state may require certain sellers that are not physically located in that state to collect sales and use tax for that state. As a result, the Comptroller may now require remote sellers to collect state and local taxes. This bill requires a marketplace provider to collect taxes statutorily imposed on the sale of taxable items made through the online marketplace. It is expected to generate \$550M through fiscal 2020-21. This was one of the most important bills of the session.

## DRAWS

### Property Tax Reform (SB 2 by Bettencourt) **PASSED**

This property tax reform bill contains three major components: 1) restrictions on tax increases for cities, counties and special districts beginning in 2020 (automatic rollback election if tax increase is greater than 3.5%); 2) improved, “real time” tax notices; and 3) improvements to the process of disputing property values. It will not result in property tax cuts, but rather it reduces the rate of tax increases.



## ENERGY

### WINS

#### Electric Transmission Grid (SB 1938 by Hancock) **PASSED**

Codifies the proven model of the Public Utility Commission (PUC) that ensures regulatory certainty and stability in transmission planning by preventing inefficient segmentation of transmission lines. In doing so, it provides a reliable transmission grid to support economic development by clarifying who builds new transmission projects and holding all owners accountable to the PUC.

#### Eminent Domain (SB 421 by Kolkhorst) **KILLED**

TAB participated in negotiations with legislators, landowners, and industry on new eminent domain rules that would have fundamentally and negatively changed the eminent domain process in Texas. Ultimately, no resolution was reached on this bill, or the many other bills pertaining to eminent domain reform.

#### Severance Tax Exemption for Oil and Gas (SB 533 by Birdwell) **PASSED**

This legislation makes permanent the two-year inactive well exemptions for oil and natural gas production taxes by removing the deadlines for the application submission and the designation of the wells by the Railroad Commission (RRC). It also clarifies that a well that is not part of an enhanced oil recovery project or that is drilled but not completed and has no record of hydrocarbon production does not qualify for the two-year inactive well exemption from the oil production tax. The bill provides an incentive to return marginal inactive wells to production.



## WATER/INFRASTRUCTURE

### WINS

#### Aquifer Storage (HB 720 by Larson) **PASSED**

Provides authorization to Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to issue expedited permits to an entity that seeks to capture and store flood flows in aquifers for later use.

#### Brackish Groundwater Development (HB 722 by Larson) **PASSED**

Encourages the development of brackish groundwater by simplifying permitting procedures from groundwater conservation districts and avoiding permitting delays, thus lessening costs for applicants.

### **Creation of Flood Infrastructure Fund (HJR 4 by Phelan) PASSED**

Proposes a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the FIF to assist in the financing of drainage, flood mitigation and flood control projects. Election date November 5, 2019.

### **Disaster Response Act (SB 6 by Kolkhorst) PASSED**

Provides protocols and standards to the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) and the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) for future storm preparedness measures including debris removal, federal funding, housing projects, and volunteer coordination.

### **Flood Infrastructure Fund (SB 7 by Creighton) PASSED**

Creates the Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF). The FIF is a statewide fund that will provide loans at or below market rates to help local governments meet matching fund needs and assist with basic flood project planning, grant applications, and the development of structural and nonstructural flood mitigation projects.

### **Groundwater Permits (HB 1066 by Ashby) PASSED**

Syncs production permits with transfer permits at a groundwater conservation district, thus providing operational uniformity for permit holders.

### **State Flood Plan (SB 8 by Perry) PASSED**

Creates the state's first-ever comprehensive state flood plan, modeled after the state water supply planning process. The bill

would require the TWDB to prepare and adopt a comprehensive state flood plan that incorporates regional flood plans by September 1, 2024, and before the end of each five-year period after that date.

### **State Participation Fund (HB 1052 by Larson) PASSED**

Promotes the development of interregional water projects, aquifer storage and recovery projects, and desalination projects through an existing program administered by the TWDB known as the State Participation Fund. This allows the state to facilitate the development of large-scale water projects not in the State Water Plan.

### **Study on Aquifer Storage (HB 721 by Larson) PASSED**

Requires the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to conduct studies of and submit reports on aquifer storage and recovery.

### **Water Availability Models (HB 723 by Larson) PASSED**

Requires TCEQ to develop and complete the Water Availability Models for the Brazos, Neches, Red, and Rio Grande river basins by December 1, 2022.

### **Water Rights Permits (HB 1964 by Ashby) PASSED**

Provides exemptions from contested case hearings for water rights amendment applications.



## EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

### WINS

#### **Employment Protection for Volunteer Emergency Responders (HB 2348 by King) VETOED**

Would have created a new cause of action that exposes business to additional liability. While TAB supports volunteer emergency responders and their value to local communities, employers should have the flexibility to create their own leave policies for volunteer emergency responders. Governor Abbott agreed with us and vetoed the bill on the same policy basis.

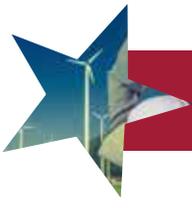
#### **Payment of Wages Through Payroll Card Account (HB 2240 by Murphy) PASSED**

Allows employers to pay wages through a reloadable prepaid payroll card. This will help employees who do not have traditional bank accounts to receive their wages electronically.

### LOSSES

#### **Preemption of Municipal Regulation of Employee Benefits (SBs 2485-2488 by Creighton) DIED**

Would have preempted municipal regulation of leave benefits, paid sick leave, scheduling practices, and “ban the box” for employment applications. Due to this failure, TAB expects more municipal benefit regulations to be enacted which may lead to more litigation by Texas businesses. Lead role in creating the policy working group ASSET.



## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

### WINS

#### **Aggregate Production Operations (HB 509/ HB 3789/HB 1310/HB 999) KILLED**

Would have negatively impacted the concrete production industry by duplicating the permitting process, infringing on private property rights by requiring reclamation efforts, and delaying the contested case hearing process.

#### **Air Quality Permit (HB 2726 by Kuempel) PASSED**

Allows a person who submits an application for an air quality permit to begin construction on the modification or change after the Executive Director has issued the draft permit.

#### **TERP (HB 3745 by Bell) PASSED**

Extends the sources of funding for the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP), which are set to expire on August 31, 2019 under current law. The bill amends the Tax Code to extend fee and surcharge collections for counties in non-attainment until all areas in Texas have been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as either in attainment or unclassifiable or the EPA has approved a re-designation substitute making a finding of attainment.



## HEALTH CARE

### WINS

#### **Cancer Prevention (HB 39/HJR 12 by Zerwas) PASSED**

HB 39 reauthorizes the Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas and HJR 12 authorizes a constitutional amendment allowing Texans to vote to authorize an additional \$3 billion bond to fund the Institute. Election date November 5, 2019.

#### **Freestanding Emergency Rooms (HB 1941 by Phelan) PASSED**

Prohibits freestanding emergency rooms from charging unconscionable pricing for care at 200 percent of the average charge for the same or substantially similar care provided to other individuals by a hospital emergency room according to data collection by Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

#### **Freestanding Emergency Rooms (HB 2041 by Oliverson) PASSED**

Requires freestanding emergency rooms to provide a written listing of the facility's observation and facility fees for a patient's visit, and a list of in-network providers or a statement the facility is an out-of-network provider for all health benefit plans.

#### **Freestanding Emergency Rooms – Signage (HB 1112 by S. Davis) PASSED**

Requires a freestanding emergency room that closes or loses its license to immediately remove their signs from public view.

#### **Health Benefits Mandates (HB 217/HB 501/ HB 670/HB 762/HB 937/HB 1511/HB 1635/ HB 1968/HB 2658/HB 2682/HB 3984/HB 4420) KILLED**

These bills would have imposed additional health benefit mandates on health insurance carriers at a cost to the purchasers of private insurance. Health benefit mandates are statutory requirements that force health plans to provide coverage for specific services and conditions. Many mandates are estimated to increase premiums by millions of dollars. In fact, each mandate increases the cost of health insurance premiums by approximately one to five percent, which may seem insignificant, but every one percent increase in premiums costs consumers and employers and estimated \$230 million a year in the fully insured market.

### **Opioids (HB 3285 by Sheffield) PASSED**

Amends the statewide behavioral health strategic plan, establishes opioid antagonist programs, requires Medicaid reimbursements for certain substance use disorder treatments, increases awareness of opioid risks, and requires continuing education in pain management for certain providers.

### **Surprise Medical Billing (SB 1264 by Hancock) PASSED**

Creates consumer protections against health care billing by prohibiting out-of-network providers balance billing when the consumer had no choice in who provides their care including out-of-network lab work and imaging. Patients are still responsible for co-pays, coinsurance, and deductible amounts.

### **Telemedicine – Medicaid Reimbursement (HB 1063 by Price) PASSED**

Expands the eligibility criteria for Medicaid reimbursement for home telemonitoring services to include pediatric patients diagnosed with end-stage organ disease, who have received an organ transplant, or require mechanical ventilation.

### **Telemedicine – Rural Health (HB 871 by Price) PASSED**

Allows a health care facility located in a county with a population of less than 30,000 to use telemedicine medical services to satisfy the requirements necessary to be designated as a level IV trauma facility.

### **Tobacco 21 (SB 21 by Huffman) PASSED**

Raises the minimum legal smoking age from 18 to 21 years old including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or tobacco products, and exempts a person at least 18 years of age on active duty in the U.S. military or state military forces.



## TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

### WINS

#### **Career and Technical Education Courses (HB 963 by Bell) PASSED**

Requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to review the essential knowledge and skills of the career and technology and technology applications curriculums. The board will have to amend its rules to consolidate the technology applications courses for grades 9 through 12 with the career and technical education courses while eliminating duplicative courses. The board will also ensure certifications are aligned with the rigor of each individual course.

### LOSSES

#### **1115 Medicaid Transformation Waiver (SB 2480 by Kolkhorst) DIED**

Would have established the Joint Medicaid Waiver Renewal Legislative Oversight Committee to provide legislative oversight and guidance over the current waiver agreement and negotiations of the new waiver in 2022.

#### **Health Benefit Mandates (HB 170 by Bernal/ HB 1584 by Thompson) PASSED**

Require coverage for a diagnostic mammography and stage-four advanced, metastatic cancer, respectively.

#### **Teledentistry (SB 792 by Perry) DIED**

Would have authorized dentists and dental professionals to communicate, collaborate, and share patient information, allowing rural residents additional access to health care professionals and would have amended the telehealth statute to include teledentistry, dentists, and dental hygienists.

#### **Telepharmacy (HB 1706 by Oliverson) DIED**

Would have expanded access for hospitals, clinics, FQHCs and other types of healthcare facilities to host Class A (community pharmacy) telepharmacy systems in medically underserved areas.

#### **Data Privacy (HB 4518 by Martinez-Fischer) KILLED**

Would have created a more onerous Texas version of the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA).

#### **Governor's Broadband Council (HB 1960 by Price) PASSED**

Authorizes the development of the Governor's Broadband Council. The Council will focus on the lack of broadband connectivity in rural areas.

## **Rural Broadband (SB 14 by Nichols) PASSED**

Will make high-speed Internet more available to rural Texans by authorizing Texas electrical cooperatives and their affiliates to deploy broadband to their members using the cooperatives' existing electricity easements.

## **LOSSES**

### **Instructional Materials For Schools (HB 663 by K. King) DIED**

Would have required the SBOE to conduct a review of the essential knowledge and skills for the public school foundation curriculum and to revise, as necessary, the essential knowledge and skills to narrow the number and scope of student expectations for each subject and grade level. It would have also allowed school districts to choose how to allocate their technology and instructional materials allotment in a manner best suited to their students and teachers.



## **TORT REFORM**

## **WINS**

### **Affidavit Process in Civil Suits (HB 1693 by Smithee) PASSED**

Currently, affidavits for medical bills are being abused by attorneys by serving them too early or late in a case. This bill reduces the unfairness arising from the timing in the use of affidavits to prove the reasonableness of medical bills in a lawsuit.

### **Attorney Advertising (SB 1189 by Buckingham) PASSED**

Attorney advertising is often misleading and inflammatory. This bill requires TV ads for attorneys to disclose that it is a paid ad, the sponsor of the ad, and whether the attorney will actually represent the client. It also prohibits certain phrases like “medical alert” or “public service announcement.”

### **Contingency Fee Contracts for Political Subdivisions (HB 2826 by G. Bonnen) PASSED**

Plaintiff’s lawyers in Texas are soliciting local governments (counties, cities, school districts, etc.) for “no-cost” contingent-fee representation in lawsuits, often against TAB members. This bill gives Texas taxpayers transparency, consistency, and accountability when local governments hire private attorneys on a contingency fee basis. The contingency fee contracts must be approved by the Attorney General. This legislation should curtail the practice of contingency-fee lawyers soliciting local governments into frivolous lawsuits.

## **DRAWS**

### **Data Privacy (HB 4390 by Capriglione) PASSED**

As introduced, this bill would have created the Texas version of the CCPA which is an onerous and burdensome California regulation of data privacy. We were successful in replacing the onerous provisions with the creation of the Texas Privacy Protection Advisory Council for a legislative study and light modifications of our data breach laws.

### **Hospital Liens (HB 2929 by Leach) PASSED**

Clarifies that hospitals can file liens to recover charges for emergency room services as well as inpatient care.

### **Landowner Immunity (SB 230 by Perry) PASSED**

Provides landowners immunity for recreational use of private property for rock climbing.



## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

### WINS

#### **Construction Workers (HB 750 by Walle) KILLED**

This was a mandatory worker's comp bill for construction workers.

#### **Cost of Living Adjustments for Death Benefits (HB 1305 by Meza) KILLED**

Attempted to provide costs of living adjustments for death benefits paid under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act.

#### **Lifetime Income Benefits for First Responders (HB 3676 by Capriglione) DIED**

Attempted to change the definition of injuries for which lifetime income benefits are paid to certain first responders under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act. However, TAB established a working group at the request of the committee and will continue to work on this issue through the interim.

#### **Reinstatement of Doctors (HB 733 by Zedler)**

#### **KILLED**

Would reinstate a group of previously removed doctors on the Division of Workers' Compensation's "Approved Doctors List." TAB opposed this legislation over concerns that quality of care could be diminished by allowing doctors to have carte blanche reinstatement, placing injured employees at risk.



## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

### WINS

#### **Jobs & Paychecks Packet (HB 918 by White) PASSED**

Instructs Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to provide identification documentation including a state issued ID, birth certificate, and social security card to individuals exiting the system as well as provide them with a resume and job interview training.

#### **Occupational Licensing – Criminal History (SB 1531 by Hancock) PASSED**

Removes inappropriate occupational licensing restrictions on people with felony convictions who work in licensed occupations.

#### **Occupational Licensing – False Arrests (SB 1217 by Alvarado) PASSED**

Prevents state licensing boards from considering false arrests when issuing licenses. A criminal conviction with the arrest is now needed for consideration by a state licensing board.

#### **Occupational Licensing for Previously Incarcerated Individuals (HB 1342 by Leach) PASSED**

Prevents Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) from revoking certain occupational licenses based on a criminal conviction which will help some people get back to work.

### DRAWS

#### **Driver Responsibility Program (HB 2048 by Zerwas) PASSED**

Discontinues the Driver Responsibility Program and fund trauma from General Revenue and new insurance fees. While we applaud ending the program, TAB respectfully opposed doing so by increasing the fee for the Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority. TAB stands to protect business by ensuring that specific industries are not used to collect fees to offset lost funding – even for a fund that TAB supports.



THE TEXAS STATE CHAMBER

# THE RESULTS

## 86<sup>th</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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