



CAPITOL Action

LWVTexas.org

*Empowering all Texans to engage in a
more responsible and responsive democracy!*



News from The Capitol

Highlights from the Capitol by Grace Chimene, Vice President

The action at the Capitol this past week was all about Governor Abbott's four emergency items: *Child Protective Services, Sanctuary Cities, Ethics, and a Convention of States.*

Bad news:

SB4 passed the Senate and is on the way to the House. Immigration issue chair, Gloria Suarez Sasser, provided excellent **testimony in opposition to the anti-Sanctuary City** bills.

The League opposes anti-Sanctuary City laws because *they do not ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons, they tear apart families, and immigrants will hesitate to contact the police when a crime is committed for fear of deportation, increasing crime in these cities.*

Concerning news:

Texas Public Education is in peril with voucher bills such as those proposed by Lieutenant Governor Patrick in his **10 Priority Issues**.

Good news:

The Senate took a first step in curbing corruption at the Capitol with passage of SB 14, 31-0.

Money news:

Laura Blackburn, our League budget wizard, wrote testimony on **SB1 article ii Health and Human Services budget**. Laura noted that the House is much more generous than the Senate, which drastically underfunded higher education and health and human services.

CAPITOL ACTIONS TO TAKE THIS WEEK!

1. Easy actions -- just a few minutes to do!

- Email or call to [take ACTION opposing Anti Sanctuary City bills today!](#)
- If you are a constituent of one of the [Election Committee legislators](#), please email or call them.

2. Good Texas citizens action!

- Keep up with news at the capitol with the [Texas Tribune](#) or the [Texas Standard](#).

3. Texas Star Action for the week!

- Don't miss out! Sign up for the [Texas Legislature Online \(MyTLO\)](#) to follow bills and get alerts. Learn how on the [League Advocacy YouTube Playlist](#).

LEAGUE PRIORITY ISSUES:

Click on the links below to learn more about issues you are interested in.

Voter Rights and Election Laws in Texas: *We support EVERY citizen's right to vote! We do so by advocating for modern voter registration, uniform enforcement of election procedures, and clearly stated election laws. Be sure to let your representatives know that the league supports online voter registration!*

Women's Health and Reproductive Choice: *We support the expansion of women's access to comprehensive reproductive health services and products, including measures that protect the constitutional right to choose an abortion. We also support the promotion of comprehensive, medically accurate sexuality education.*

Public Education: *We support a school finance system that ensures ALL Texas school children a high-quality education! To that end, we oppose a voucher system. We support academic standards and a state curriculum that prepare students for success, achievement tests for diagnostic purposes, and a fair, non-punitive accountability system.*

OTHER TEXAS ISSUES:

Behavioral Health Sciences: *Because the Interim House Select Committee on Mental Health recently issued a 109-page report, LWV Texas expects a slew of bills this session!*

Child Abuse and Neglect: *Thankfully, the proposed budget maintains the emergency CPS workforce investment, but the LWV remains concerned that Texas will be relying heavily on federal funding. Stay tuned!*

Child Health: *We aim to restore vital Early Childhood Intervention therapies were defunded last session. Be sure to check out the other ways in which we are advocating for children's health this session!*

Drug Laws and Policies: *SB 269, a bill allowing the medical use of marijuana, hangs in the balance this session.*

Early Childhood: *Keep up with the 9 early childhood bills that LWV Texas supports! They deal with issues ranging from student/teacher ratios in Pre-K to items purchasable through the SNAP program.*

Equal Opportunity/Income Assistance: *The League of Women Voters continues our long history of fighting against discriminatory legislation by opposing this session's "bathroom bills" and other bills that threaten equality.*

Financing State Government; The Budget and Taxes: *LWV Texas offered testimony*

in front of the Senate Finance Committee in an effort to ensure that key services will be adequately covered.

Human Trafficking: Check out the six proposed bills that LWV supports in our effort to aid the over 300,000 Texans currently subjected to human trafficking.

Immigration: Of the over 400 people who testified at the SB4 hearing this past week, the LWV was one of the vast majority who spoke out against this bill. SB4 was advanced, so we will be tracking it closely in the coming weeks!

Juvenile Justice: Texas automatically sends 17-year-olds to the adult criminal justice system when they get in trouble, no matter how minor their offense

Land Use: The LWV will be watching the bills in order to safeguard the orderly development of the state.

Natural Resources: Balmorra State Park vs Apache Oil; Are 15 billion barrels of oil and gas worth the environmental impact of 3,000 wells all of which go through the water table?

Open Government: The full Senate is leading the way by voting on Tuesday to approve a package of the "Ethics Reform and Anti-Corruption Act of 2017" authored by Sen. Van Taylor, R-Plano.

Payday & Auto Title Loans in Texas: Check out the four proposed bills that the LWV Texas will address in accordance with our new position adopted just last year!

Transportation: With a large and increasingly complex transportation network to manage, the Texas Department of Transportation has had mixed success in meeting its legislative mandate.

Water: Wow! Now the water bills are flowing in!

Coming soon! Updates on

- **Gun Safety**
- **Hazardous Waste**
- **Capital Punishment**
- **Redistricting**

Capitol Calendar

HealthCoverage for All Texans Advocacy Day: March 6, 2017

EqualityTexas Lobby Day: March 20, 2017

DONATE NOW!

League of Women Voters of Texas | 1212 Guadalupe Street, Suite 107, Austin, TX 78701

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