



# CAPITOL Action

LWVTexas.org

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



## *News from The Capitol*

*Grace Chimene, Vice President*

**Senate and House Committees** have been appointed. See which committees your reps were assigned to [here](#).

**FYI:** What the heck is a Joint Resolution (JR)? Look it up [here!](#)

**Texas Budget News!** The Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) has created an easy to understand [Legislative Budget Snapshot](#).

**Capitol Action Report:** See below for updates on League issues. The priority issues will always be listed. We'll have highlights of updated issues and links to all issues each week.

*"Oh no, you're NOT messing  
with our U.S. constitution!"*

### **Bad news:**

The senate heard several bills that would impose unnecessary restrictions & requirements on women seeking abortions and their medical providers.

**Julie Lowenberg** (Dallas), [Women's Health and Reproductive Choice](#) Issue Chair, provided testimony opposing SB 8, SB 258 and SB 415. Capitol Corps member **Amber Boudreault** presented testimony at a hearing in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. **View testimony here:** [Women's Health SB 258 2.15.17](#), [Women's Health SB 415 2.15.17](#), [Women's Health SB 8 2.15.17](#)

**ACTION:** Call senators on the Health and Human Services Committee. Tell them you do not support these bills, and ask them to vote NO on **SB 8, SB 258, SB 415**. Tell them that a woman must be able to make her own decisions with her doctor's advice. These bills do nothing to make women safer, and they make it more difficult for women to obtain safe, legal abortions.

**Charles Schwertner** – 512-463-0105; **Dawn Buckingham** – 512-463-0124;

### **Concerning News:**

**SJR 2** is too broad of a bill. The League's position is that a Constitutional Convention must be limited to a specific topic, in order to guard against a "runaway convention," which would consider multiple issues or topics not initiated by the states. Conventions not limited to one topic could diminish federal powers used to advance civil rights and to protect minorities, and labor and environmental regulations.

**SB 21** initiates a process for the Texas legislature to appoint delegates to a constitutional convention, should one be held. The League's position is that delegates should be elected by citizens, not appointed by the legislature.

Testimony can be viewed here: [Constitutional Convention SB 21 2.16.17](#) SJR 2 [2.16.17](#)

**ACTION:** Email or call your state senator and legislator and let them know you oppose constitutional convention bills such as SJR 2! Oppose bills calling for a Constitutional Convention.

### **Good Job!**

**Susybelle Goslee**, (Dallas) [Hazardous Waste](#) Issue Chair, provided testimony to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in opposition to a nuclear waste facility in Andrews County. View her testimony here: [Hazardous Waste Nuclear Regulatory Commission 2.15.17](#)

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## **TEXAS STAR ACTION FOR THE WEEK!**

US Congressional recess is coming up February 20-24. Recess is a great opportunity for folks to attend town halls, forums or community events with their Members of Congress. [A list of events has been put together by volunteers with The Town Hall Project 2018](#). Please consider sending this list around and encouraging your friends and members to attend an event. If you can't visit in person, write, call, email!

What to discuss?

1. [Repeal of the Affordable Care Act \(ACA\)](#),
2. Elimination of the [Election Assistance Commission \(EAC\)](#),
3. False claims of [voter fraud](#) around the country.
4. [Three questions](#) that the Senate should ask the new nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court.

**PS:** [League Action Alert opposing Anti Sanctuary City bills is still in active!](#)

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## **LEAGUE PRIORITY ISSUES:**

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

[Voter Rights and Election Laws in Texas](#): *If you've been reading the national and Texas news, you've seen that talk of voter fraud is rampant, but proof of it is scant.*

[Women's Health and Reproductive Choice](#): *See above for update.*

[Public Education](#): *Issue chair on vacation - check in next week for an update!*

## OTHER TEXAS ISSUES:

**Behavioral Health Sciences:** LWV Texas expects a slew of bills this session!

**Capital Punishment:** Representatives Farrar and Dutton and Senator Lucio have each filed their abolition of the death penalty bills.

**Child Health:** Working to restore the funding the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) therapies which were cut last session.

**Early Childhood:** Keep up with the 19 early childhood bills that LWV Texas is following!

**Financing State Government; The Budget and Taxes:** Check out the seven bills we are tracking regarding the state budget!

**Immigration:** SB4 was advanced by a vote of 20 to 11. **ACTION:** Oppose Sanctuary City bills from advancing further!

**Land Use:** City tree ordinances may be threatened! Two senate bills (SB 782) and (SB 898) would prohibit local government regulation of removal of trees from private property.

**Payday & Auto Title Loans in Texas:** Check out the nine bills that the LWV will be monitoring in this area!

**Redistricting:** A Joint Resolution (H.J.R. No. 32) proposes a constitutional amendment establishing the Texas Redistricting Commission to redistrict the Texas Legislature and US Congressional districts.

**Transportation:** A bill has been filed to establish a Vision Zero Task Force, with the goal of developing strategies to eliminate traffic deaths in the state of Texas by 2050.

### **Coming soon! Updates on:**

- **Child Abuse and Neglect**
- **Drug Laws and Policies**
- **Equal Opportunity/Income Assistance**
- **Gun Safety**
- **Hazardous Waste**
- **Human Trafficking**
- **Juvenile Justice**
- **Natural Resources**
- **Open Government**
- **Redistricting**
- **Water**

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## Capitol Calendar

**Health Coverage for All Texans Advocacy Day** March 6

**A Day Without Women General Strike** March 8

**Equality Texas Lobby Day** March 20

**Planned Parenthood Lobby Day** April 5

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