



In Brief

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LEGISLATIVE LEXICON

The legislature, like most organizations, has a specialized vocabulary which may prove to be confusing to those unfamiliar with the legislative process. The ability to understand and clearly communicate within the halls of the Capitol, its chambers, and its committee rooms can be crucial in determining a participant's success in the legislative realm. The Senate Research Center offers this Legislative Lexicon to provide users with clear definitions of many of the words, terms, and phrases used in the legislature.

—David Mauzy, SRC



act — Once legislation (a **bill**) is approved by both houses of the legislature and the governor, it takes effect as an **act** of the legislature. It is a permanent measure, having the force of law until repealed.

action — A step that a **bill** undergoes as it moves through the legislative process.

actuarial impact statement — A document prepared by the **Legislative Budget Board** that states the **actuarial impact** of any **bill** or **joint resolution** that proposes to change benefits or participation in benefits of a public retirement system.

adjournment — The termination of a meeting or **session**. *Adjournment* occurs at the close of each **legislative day**, with the day and hour of the next meeting set before *adjournment*.

adjournment sine die — See **sine die**.

adoption — Approval or acceptance of a resolution or of an **amendment** to a **bill**.

advise and consent — Process by which the **senate** gives approval to (confirms) the appointments made by the **governor** to state offices, boards, and commissions. The **house of representatives** plays no role in the confirmation of gubernatorial appointments.

agency — A statutorily or constitutionally established entity which is authorized to act on behalf of and as an agent of the state and which is usually funded by the **General Appropriations Act**.

agency goals — The general ends toward which an **agency** directs its efforts. A goal addresses issues by stating policy intention. Goals are both qualitative and quantifiable, but specific goals are

not quantified.

agency mission — The reason for an **agency's** existence. An **agency mission** succinctly identifies what the **agency** does, why it does it, and for whom it does it.

agenda, senate — An official daily publication prepared during a legislative session that contains: (1) the **intent calendar**; (2) a list of senate bills returned from the house with amendments; (3) the status of bills in **conference committee**; (4) the **local and uncontested calendar**; (5) gubernatorial appointments reported favorably from the Senate Committee on Nominations; (6) committee hearings scheduled, with a list of measures to be considered by the committees; (7) the regular order of business, listing bills that have been reported favorably from committee; (8) senate **floor action** from the previous day; and (9) senate committee action from the previous day.

amendment — Any alteration made or proposed to be made to a **bill** or section thereof, by adding, deleting, substituting, or omitting.

apportionment — The proportionate distribution of elected representatives.

appropriated — Refers to the dollars or associated **full-time equivalent positions** authorized for specific fiscal years, and to the provisions for spending authority.

appropriated receipts — Fees and other revenue usually collected for services performed by a state **agency**, and reappropriated to the **agency** to help recover the agency's costs for performing the services.

appropriations act — A **bill** which allocates funds for various departments of the government. See also **General Appropriations Act**.

Appropriations Committee, House — The house committee with jurisdiction over all appropria-

tions, allocations, and diversions of money from the state treasury.

article — A major division of a **bill** or **statute**. Used in the general appropriations bill to group agencies with similar functions.

as filed — The original version of a **bill**, *as filed* in the originating **chamber**.

assessment of agency performance — Semi-annual and annual evaluations derived from analysis and interpretation of data submitted by agencies and institutions. *Assessments* are intended to aid in monitoring the extent to which specific performance objectives are being achieved and in denoting significant trends, patterns, and emerging conditions.

author — The legislator who carries a **bill** in the **chamber** in which the **bill** originates is designated as the *author*; if the **bill** passes that **chamber** and goes to the other **chamber**, it is carried in the second **chamber** by a **sponsor**.

Available School Fund — A constitutionally created fund consisting of the distributions made to it from the total return on all investment assets of the **Permanent School Fund**, the taxes authorized by the Texas constitution or general law to be part of the *Available School Fund* (ASF), and appropriations made to the ASF by the legislature. A portion of the ASF is transferred to the State Textbook Fund to provide textbooks for children attending the public schools and the balance of the ASF is allocated to school districts. See also **Permanent School Fund**.



base of reference budget — A budgetary forecast sometimes produced by the **Legislative Budget Board (LBB)** which projects the budgetary needs

of Texas state government for succeeding fiscal years based on current law.

base period — The **fiscal year**, **biennium**, or other period which is the basis for budget or performance projections.

biannual — Occurring twice a year. (Sometimes confused with **biennial**.)

bicameral — A legislature consisting of two houses, such as a house of representatives and a senate. In the United States, Nebraska is the only state without a **bicameral** legislature. See also **unicameral**.

biennial — Occurring once every two years; Texas has a *biennial* legislature.

biennial revenue estimate — Article III, Section 49a of the Texas Constitution requires the **comptroller** of public accounts to submit to the governor and the legislature upon its convening a statement showing the financial condition of the state treasury at the close of the fiscal period and an estimate of the probable receipts and disbursements for the current year, as well as an itemized estimate of the anticipated revenue to be credited during the succeeding **biennium**.

biennium — A two-year period; in Texas the state *biennium* runs from September 1 of an odd-numbered year until August 31 of the next odd-numbered year.

bill — A document set forth by a legislator that proposes to add to, delete, or change existing law, or create entirely new law. Any *bill* may originate in either house of the legislature, with the exception of revenue (i.e., tax) bills, which must originate in the house of representatives.

bill analysis — A document prepared by the Senate Research Center which accompanies each **bill** filed in the **senate** and any house bill considered in the **senate**, presenting in nonlegal language the bill's

background, purpose, and rulemaking authority, and a synopsis of the legislation.

bill book — A binder placed on the senate **chamber** desk of each **senator** which holds copies of senate **committee reports**.

bill number — A unique number assigned to each **bill** filed with the **secretary of the senate** or the **chief clerk of the house**. Bills are numbered chronologically and a **bill** retains its number throughout the legislative process. For example, the twelfth **bill** filed in the **senate** would be numbered as S.B. 12 and retain that designation when moving through the **house**.

bipartisan — A term used to refer to an effort endorsed by both major political parties or a group composed of members of both major political parties.

bracketing — (1) Language in a bill that is being deleted from existing law is **bracketed** and **stricken through**. (2) Language in a bill that restricts the applicability of the legislation to one entity or unit of government.

briefing document — A document occasionally produced prior to the beginning of a legislative session which provides legislators with an overview of functional areas and the major agencies within each function. Included are current funding and performance data, the impact of major legislative changes, significant appropriations request items, interstate comparisons, and selected issues by function.

budget document (legislative budget estimates) — A **biennial** document prepared by the **Legislative Budget Board (LBB)** staff that contains funding and performance data for previous years, budgeted data for the current year, agency requested data for the next biennium, and LBB appropriation recommendations for state agencies and institutions. The document is introduced into the legislature at the start of each **regular session**.

budget execution — Authority granted to the **governor** and the **Legislative Budget Board** to make transfers of appropriations between agencies and items within the adopted budget.

budgeted — Refers to the planned level of expenditures, performance, or number of positions for a particular **fiscal year**.



calendar — A printed list of proposed legislation that may be considered by the full **house** or **senate**.

calendar clerk — A non-legislator officer elected by the members of the **senate**. All **senate bills** and **resolutions** are filed with the **calendar clerk**, who is the custodian of all legislative documents awaiting action in the **senate**.

Calendar Committee — See **Committee on Calendars**.

calendar day — A day of the year on which the legislature is in session. See also **legislative day**.

call of the senate; call of the house — A procedure used to compel the attendance of legislators who are absent from the **chamber** and to compel those members already in attendance to remain in the **chamber**.

called session — See **special session**.

capital budget — That portion of an agency's appropriation that is restricted to expenditures for designated capital construction projects or capital acquisitions.

capital improvements — Building or infrastructure projects that will be owned by the state and

built with direct appropriations or with the proceeds of state-issued bonds.

caption — A statement that gives the legislature and public reasonable notice of the subject of a **bill** or **resolution**. On a **bill** it is the first sentence of text.

caucus — A closed meeting of members within a legislative body.

certification estimate — A document certifying that the amount appropriated in the **General Appropriations Act** is less than or equal to the amount estimated to be available. This document is produced by the **comptroller of public accounts** to help fulfill the requirement in the Texas Constitution that the state not spend more money than it has.

chair — A legislator appointed to preside over a legislative committee. The lieutenant governor appoints the chairs of **senate** committees; the **speaker of the house** appoints the chairs of **house** committees.

chamber — (1) An official hall for the meeting of a legislative body. (2) A legislative body. There are two **chambers** in the Texas Legislature: the senate and the house of representatives.

chief clerk — The chief clerical officer of the Texas house of representatives, custodian of all bills and resolutions in the house and responsible for keeping a complete record of their introduction and all subsequent actions taken on them.

classification plan — Schedule of position titles, job descriptions, and pay levels that all state agencies, with the exception of higher education and legislative agencies, must use in establishing and filling non-exempt positions.

classified positions — Those positions identified in the General Provisions of the **General Appropriations Act**, that are established in accordance

with the State Classification Act of 1961.

coauthor — A legislator authorized by the primary author to join in the authorship of a **bill** or **resolution**. A **coauthor** must be a member of the **chamber** in which the **bill** or **resolution** was filed.

code — A compilation of laws and their revisions according to subject matter, arranged by title, chapter, and section; the official publication of the **statutes**.

committee — A body of members appointed by the presiding officer (**lieutenant governor** or **speaker**) to consider, take testimony on, and make recommendations for the disposal of bills and resolutions. See also **conference committee** and **interim committee**.

committee charges — Topics or items which the **lieutenant governor** or **speaker** assigns to a legislative **committee** for study and recommendations.

committee clerk — A legislative employee appointed to handle parliamentary and administrative functions of a legislative committee.

committee coordinator — A legislative employee within the office of the **secretary of the senate** responsible for scheduling and posting committee hearings during **sessions** and **interims**.

committee of the whole — Either house of the legislature sitting in its entirety as a **committee**.

Committee on Calendars, House — A **committee** in the **house of representatives** which schedules or declines to schedule bills for hearing by the full **house**. There is no equivalent **committee** in the **senate**. The **lieutenant governor** has sole discretion to determine which bills are considered by the **senate**.

committee report — Official release of a **bill** or **resolution** with a specific recommendation

that the measure pass, pass as amended, pass as substituted, or not pass. In addition to the recommendation, the report contains a copy of the **bill**, a **bill analysis**, a **fiscal note**, and other **impact statements**, as appropriate, and a record of the vote by which the **bill** was passed from the **committee**.

committee substitute — A **bill** reported by a **committee** in lieu of another **bill** that was originally referred to the **committee** for consideration.

companion bill — A **bill** filed in one **chamber** that is identical to a **bill** filed in the other **chamber**. *Companion bills* are used to expedite passage of legislation as they allow simultaneous **committee** consideration; a *companion bill* that has passed one house can then be substituted for the *companion bill* in the second **chamber**.

comptroller — The comptroller of public accounts, or *comptroller*, is the chief fiscal officer of the state, elected in a statewide election to a four-year term. The *comptroller* provides the legislature with **revenue estimates** and certifies that the budget adopted by the legislature will balance.

concurrence — Agreement by the originating **chamber** with changes made to a **bill** or **resolution** by the other **chamber**.

concurrent resolution — A **measure** that requires passage by both legislative chambers and is used to convey legislative sentiment, or to offer a commendation, memorial, welcome, or request for action by another governmental body.

conference committee — A **committee** composed of members from both legislative houses specifically appointed to reconcile the differences between the **house** and **senate** versions of a **bill** or bills.

conference report — A report to both houses of the legislature by the members of a **conference committee** appointed to resolve the differences

between the **house** and **senate** versions of a bill. Each **chamber** then votes to accept or reject the *conference report* without further **amendment**.

confirmation — **Senate** approval of gubernatorial appointments to state agencies, commissions, and boards.

congratulatory and memorial calendar — A list of congratulatory and memorial resolutions scheduled by the House Committee on Rules and Resolutions for consideration by the **house**. The calendar is required to be printed and distributed to representatives 24 hours before the **house** convenes.

consent calendar — See **local and uncontested calendar** and **local, consent, and resolutions calendar**.

constituent — A citizen residing in the district of an elected official.

constitutional amendment — A change to the state constitution. A constitutional amendment is proposed in a **joint resolution** and requires a favorable vote from two-thirds of the voting members of each house and a majority vote of the voters in a constitutional election to be adopted. The governor may not veto a proposed *constitutional amendment*.

constitutional limit — Any of three constitutional provisions that restrict amounts which the legislature may appropriate for expenditure. Article III, Section 49a, of the Constitution limits appropriations to those revenue amounts estimated by the **comptroller** to be available for the appropriations period. Article VIII, Section 22, limits the rate of growth of appropriations from non-dedicated state taxes. Article II, Section 51a, limits the state's expenditures to needy disabled children and their caretakers, elderly people, and people with visual impairments.

contingency appropriations — Appropriations

contingent upon passage of legislation or upon certain conditions being met. For example: Contingent upon its moving from its current location, the Department of Health is appropriated an additional \$400,000 for relocation expenses.

contingency clause — A provision in a **bill** that makes the validity of the legislation contingent upon passage of accompanying legislation.

convene — To assemble or call to order the members of a legislative body.

cosponsor — A legislator who joins the primary sponsor to guide a **bill** or **resolution** through the opposite **chamber** after it has passed the originating **chamber**. A *cosponsor* must be a member of the opposite **chamber** from the one in which the measure originated.

council document number — The unique number assigned to each **bill** or **resolution** prepared by the **Texas Legislative Council**; it appears in the lower left-hand corner of the page.

criminal justice policy impact statement — A statement prepared by the **Legislative Budget Board** that estimates the *policy impact* of a **bill** or **joint resolution** that authorizes or requires a change in the sanctions applicable to felony or certain misdemeanor crimes.

current services — An estimate of the anticipated costs and funding necessary to continue programs at their present service levels without changes of policy or legal requirements.



Daily Floor Report — A collection of bill analyses for bills scheduled on the house daily calendar for floor debate on a particular legislative day, prepared by the House Research Organization,

consisting of a digest of each bill's provisions, background, arguments for and against, and additional pertinent information.

daily house calendar — A list of new bills and resolutions scheduled by the House **Committee on Calendars** for consideration by the **house**; it must be printed and distributed to the representatives 36 hours before the **house** convenes in a **regular session** and 24 hours before the house convenes during a **special session**.

declared an emergency — A designation by the **governor** that allows legislation on the subject so declared to be considered within the first 30 days of a regular legislative session or to be filed after the sixtieth day of the **regular session**.

dedicated funds — Funds in the **General Revenue Fund** that hold revenue dedicated for a particular purpose. Funds can be dedicated either constitutionally or statutorily.

died in committee — The defeat of a **bill** by not returning it from the **committee** to which it was referred for consideration by the full **house** or **senate**.

digest and purpose — The first section of a **bill analysis**, which sets forth background information on the **bill** and the purpose of the **bill**.

discretionary revenue — Revenue not dedicated for specific purposes. Revenue falling into this category is generally deposited to the **General Revenue Fund**.

district — The geographic region represented by a member of the legislature. Each *district* contains a substantially equal population.

division of a question — When the main question is composed of more than one distinct proposition, it may be divided so as to enable legislators to vote on each proposition separately. Each proposition into which it is proposed to separate the question

must be distinct and capable of standing by itself as a substantive proposition, so that either can be adopted alone without the other or others and still be an intelligible expression of the opinion of the chamber.

doorkeeper — A non-legislator officer of the **senate** or **house** whose duties include controlling access to the floor of the **chamber**.

duplicate bill — A **bill** that is identical to another **bill** filed in the same **chamber**.



Economic Stabilization Fund — A special fund within the state treasury to which certain excess oil and gas production taxes are transferred. Money in the fund may be used by the **comptroller** to prevent or eliminate a temporary cash deficiency in **general revenue**, and may be appropriated by the legislature in certain circumstances.

effective date — A law generally becomes effective, or binding, either upon a date specified in the legislation itself or, in the absence of a specified date, a fixed number of days after the final adjournment of the session during which it was enacted or after signature by the **governor**.

efficiency — A criterion used to measure a program’s inputs relative to its outputs. An efficient program is one which uses the least possible resources while achieving its intended outcomes.

efficiency measure — One of four types of performance measures used in strategic planning. An *efficiency measure* gauges resource cost in dollars, employee time, or equipment used per unit of product or service output. An *efficiency measure* relates agency efforts to agency outputs.

election — The method of choosing government

officials through a vote of the citizens.

elements of cost — Categories of appropriation and expenditure used for certain institutions of higher education.

emergency clause — A provision in legislation that allows a suspension of certain constitutional rules regarding consideration of the **bill** or that allows the **bill** to take immediate effect. As a result of constitutional revisions made in the 1990s, *emergency clauses* are no longer used in Texas.

emergency order — See **declared an emergency**.

enact — To pass a **bill** into law.

enacting clause — A section of a **bill** required by the Texas Constitution to precede the body of each **bill**, reading as follows: “Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:”.

engrossed — A **bill** or **resolution** which has passed the **chamber** in which it originated is deemed to have been *engrossed*.

engrossing and enrolling clerk (senate) — A non-legislator officer elected by the members of the **senate** to oversee the Engrossing and Enrolling (E&E) Department. E&E produces the **engrossed** and **enrolled** versions of legislation that passes out of the **senate**, drafts and produces **senate bills** and **resolutions**, and undertakes special research projects, such as compiling the history of the Texas **senate**.

enrolled — A **bill** or **resolution** which has passed both houses of the legislature is deemed to have been *enrolled*.

equalized education funding impact statement — A statement prepared by the **Legislative Budget Board** that estimates the *funding impact* of a **bill** or **joint resolution** that authorizes or requires a change in the public school finance system.

estimated — In an agency’s **Legislative Appropriation Request**, *estimated* refers to the estimated expenditures or number of **full-time equivalent positions** for the first **fiscal year** in the current **biennium**. Because these numbers are developed later in the **fiscal year**, they are considered to be more accurate than are “budgeted” numbers.

estimated to be — Used in conjunctions with appropriations made in the **General Appropriations Act**, the spending limitation established by the appropriation amount, is only an estimate and actual expenditures may exceed that amount.

ethics — The rules and standards governing the conduct of public officials.

Ethics Commission — See **Texas Ethics Commission**.

executive order — A gubernatorial directive which carries the force of law.

executive session — A session excluding from the **chamber** or committee room all persons other than members and essential personnel.

exempt position — A position which is exempted from the position classification plan. Generally listed in the **General Appropriations Act** (see **schedule of exempt positions**), exempt positions are designated by the **governor**, under authority of the State Classification Act of 1961. Article IX of the **General Appropriations Act** establishes conditions for exempt positions.

ex officio — A member of a governmental body who holds his or her position as a result of holding another government position.

expended — Refers to the actual dollars or positions utilized by an **agency** or institution during a completed **fiscal year** and may refer to the total for an **agency**, a goal or strategy; an object of

expense; or an amount from a particular method of finance.

explanatory/input measures — One of four types of performance measures used in strategic planning. An explanatory/input measure provides information to help users assess the significance of performance reported in other types of measures. An **agency** may have limited or no control over factors addressed by *explanatory/input measures*, including environmental or demographic characteristics related to agency target populations. However, *explanatory/input measures* may also focus on variables over which an **agency** has significant control, such as staffing patterns for specific functions.



filed — The stage in a bill’s legislative process when it is given a **bill number** and introduced in the **legislature**. House bills are *filed* with the **chief clerk of the house**; senate bills are *filed* with the **secretary of the senate**. See also **as filed**.

filibuster — The prolonged discussion of a **bill** to delay legislative action; *filibusters* are permitted in the **senate** but not in the **house**.

filing deadline — The last date on which the original version of a **bill** may be filed; set in the legislative rules as the 60th calendar day of a regular session, with exceptions.

first reading — The first presentation of a **bill** for consideration, at which time it is **referred** to a **committee**. See also **second reading** and **third reading**.

fiscal note — A document prepared by the **Legislative Budget Board** staff which estimates the fiscal implication and probable revenue gain or loss from a **bill** or **joint resolution** for each year of

the first five years of its implementation and states whether there will be an additional cost involved thereafter. A *fiscal note* is required to be attached to each **bill** or **joint resolution** considered by the legislature.

Fiscal Size-Up — A **biennial** document prepared by the **Legislative Budget Board** staff that describes state **agency** operations and summarizes the appropriations made during the preceding legislative session.

fiscal year (FY) — A 12-month period at the end of which accounts are reconciled. In Texas, the *fiscal year* runs from September 1 of one year until August 31 of the next year.

floor — That portion of the legislative chamber reserved for members and officers of the legislative chamber and their guests granted privileged access.

floor action — Action taken by the full **house** or full **senate** on a **bill** or **resolution** reported by a **committee**. *Floor action* may include debate, amendment, and a vote or votes on final passage (**adoption**).

formal meeting — A meeting of a **house committee** or **subcommittee** during which formal action may be taken on any measure before the committee or subcommittee. Public testimony may not be heard during a *formal meeting*.

Foundation School Fund — A fund administered by the Texas Education Agency to pay for teacher salaries, administration, and educational resource costs.

full-time equivalents (FTEs) — Units of measure that represent the monthly average number of state personnel working 40 hours a week.

function — A grouping of state agencies which provide related services; a *function* forms the basis of articles in the **General Appropriations**

Act, e.g., General Government, Health and Human Services, and Education.

functional goals — The general ends toward which the state directs its efforts. *Functional goals* address the primary issues facing the state within broad groupings of interrelated state concerns. *Functional goals* are founded on the state-wide vision and may involve coordination among several agencies with similar functions.

fund — A constitutionally or statutorily authorized repository of revenue which is used for financing appropriations and which consists of either: (1) an independent fiscal entity with a self-balancing set of accounts, e.g., the State Highway Fund; or (2) a category of revenues of receipts, e.g., federal funds.



gallery — The balcony of the legislative **chamber** from which visitors may view the proceedings of the legislature.

General Appropriations Act — The law that appropriates biennial funding to state agencies for specific fiscal years and sets provisions for spending authority.

general appropriations bill — The appropriations legislation as it moves through the legislative process and before it is approved and signed into law.

General Revenue (GR) Fund — The fund (No. 001) which receives state tax revenues and fees considered as available for general spending purposes and certified as such by the **comptroller of public accounts**.

general revenue—consolidated — Accounts which have lost their dedication of revenue and

whose unexpended balances can be lapsed to the **General Revenue Fund**. Essentially these accounts have been completely merged with the **General Revenue Fund**.

general revenue–dedicated — Accounts that can be counted as general revenue but must be used for the purposes identified in general law to the extent such monies are appropriated in the **General Appropriations Act**.

general revenue related funds — The **General Revenue Fund**, the **Available School Fund**, the **Foundation School Fund**, and the **State Textbook Fund**. Also referred to as “funds affecting certification.”

germane — The technical term for “relevant.” **Amendments** are said to be *germane* or non-germane to a **bill**.

gerrymander — To divide a political subdivision into election districts in such a manner as to give an unnatural advantage to a person, political party, or ethnic group over its opponents. The word was coined in the early 19th century by combining the name of Elbridge Gerry, a Massachusetts practitioner of the art, with the salamander one of his districts was said to resemble.

governor — The chief executive of the state; elected statewide to a four-year term with no limits on the number of terms.



higher education impact statement — A statement prepared by the **Legislative Budget Board**, after consultation with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, that estimates the *impact* of a **bill** or **joint resolution** that authorizes or requires a change in the classification, mission, or governing structure of an institution of higher education or that would establish such an institution.

historically underutilized business (HUB) — A business in which at least 51 percent of ownership is by one or more persons who: (1) are socially disadvantaged because of their identification as African Americans, Hispanic Americans, women, Asian Pacific Americans, and Native Americans, and have suffered the effects of discriminatory practices; and (2) have a proportionate interest and participation in the control, operation, and management of the business.

house of representatives — One of two bodies, or **chambers**, in the Texas Legislature. The *house of representatives* is composed of 150 members elected to two-year terms; each member of the *house* represents approximately 150,000 Texans.



impact statement — See **actuarial impact statement**, **criminal justice policy impact statement**, **equalized education funding impact statement**, and **higher education impact statement**.

inputs — The resources that an **agency** uses to produce services, including human, financial, facility, or material resources.

intent calendar — A printed list of **measures** which may be taken up by a legislative body in a particular session. In the Texas **senate**, a **bill** normally may not be brought up for consideration unless it is listed on the *intent calendar*.

interim — The interval between **regular sessions** of the legislature.

interim committee — A **committee** established to study or investigate certain matters between **regular sessions** of the legislature and report to the next legislature on its findings and recommenda-

tions for legislative action.

introduced — The version of a bill or resolution as it was originally filed in the house or senate.

issue docket — A document prepared for the **conference committee** on appropriations identifying the differences of **line item** amounts and **rider** language between the **house** and **senate** versions of the **general appropriations bill**.



joint committee — A **committee** composed of members appointed from both houses of the legislature.

joint resolution — A resolution which proposes to amend the Texas Constitution, ratify a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution, or request the creation of a constitutional convention to proposed amendments to the United States Constitution.

joint session — A combined meeting of the **senate** and the **house** in the house chamber or elsewhere.

journal — The official chronological record of the actions taken in a **session** of the legislature; there is both a *House Journal* and a *Senate Journal*.

journal clerk — A non-legislator officer elected by the **house** or the **senate** to prepare, produce, and maintain the *journal* for that legislative body.



key performance measure — A measure that indicates the extent to which an agency is achieving its goals or objectives and which is identified in the **General Appropriations Act** along with targeted performance objectives for each year of the **bien-nium**. These can be outcome, output, efficiency, or **input/explanatory measures**.



lame duck — An elected official who has been defeated for re-election or who has chosen not to run for re-election but whose current term of office has not yet expired.

last action — The most recent step a **bill** has gone through in the legislative process.

legislative appropriation request (LAR) — A formal request for funding made by each state **agency** and institution.

Legislative Budget Board (LBB) — A permanent **joint committee** of the Texas Legislature that develops recommendations for legislative appropriations for all agencies of state government. The LBB is composed of two co-chairs (the lieutenant governor and house speaker), three automatic members (the chairs of the House Appropriations Committee, House Ways and Means Committee, and Senate Finance Committee), and five appointed members (three senators appointed by the lieutenant governor and two representatives appointed by the speaker).

Legislative Council — see **Texas Legislative Council**.

legislative day — The period from convening after an **adjournment** until the next **adjournment**. One **calendar day** may contain one or more *legislative days*; one *legislative day* may also span more than one **calendar day**.

legislative intent — The purpose for which a **measure** is passed.

Legislative Reference Library (LRL) — A legislative agency established to satisfy the reference and research needs of the legislature, its staff, and its committees. The LRL maintains a specialized collection of materials designed to support legislators in their work, including legislative bill files from the 63rd Legislature (1973) forward; books and reports on issues of interest to the legislature; documents published by Texas state agencies and universities; legislative interim reports and minutes from state agency meetings; and a state and federal legal collection which includes Texas reference books such as Gammel's Laws, Texas Statutes, General and Special Laws of Texas, House and Senate Journals, West's Texas Digest, Texas cases from the Southwestern Reporter, Texas Register, and the Texas Administrative Code. Federal holdings include: statutes from all 50 states, United States Code Annotated, Federal Register, and Code of Federal Regulation. The LRL is located on the second floor of the Capitol Building, in the north wing.

legislator — An elected member of a legislative body.

legislature — The lawmaking body of the State of Texas, consisting of a **senate** and a **house of representatives**. See **senate** and **house of representatives**.

line item — An element of spending authority granted to an **agency** or institution in an appropriations bill. Literally, a line in the **General Appropriations Act** specifying an agency's appropriations for a specific designated use. In Texas, the **governor** may veto a *line item*.

line item veto — The **governor's** authority to **veto** spending on a **line item** basis. Allows the **governor** to **veto** spending for a particular item without eliminating total **agency** funding.

lieutenant governor — The presiding officer of the Texas Senate. A member of the executive branch, the *lieutenant governor* is elected statewide to a four-year term; the governor and *lieutenant governor* do not run on a ticket together and may be from opposing parties. When presiding over the **senate**, the *lieutenant governor* is the **president of the senate** and is addressed as Mr. or Madam President; when not presiding, is commonly addressed as "governor."

list of items eligible for consideration — Prepared by the **chief clerk of the house**, upon request of the **speaker**, when the volume of legislation warrants (normally during the last few weeks of a **regular session**). The list must be distributed six hours before it may be considered and contains: (1) house bills with senate amendments eligible to be considered; (2) senate bills for which the senate has requested the appointment of a **conference committee**; and (3) **conference committee reports** eligible to be considered.

lobby — The act of a person or group of persons seeking to influence members of the legislature for or against proposed legislation. See also **third house**.

lobbyist — A person who lobbies.

local and uncontested calendar — A list of bills which are noncontroversial or which apply only to a local area scheduled by the Senate Committee on Administration for consideration by the senate. The local and uncontested calendar is generally heard early on Thursday mornings during a regular session, and the calendar must be distributed to senators by noon the previous day.

local bill — Legislation which applies only to a discrete community or area rather than to the entire state.

local, consent, and resolutions calendar — A list of noncontroversial **bills** and **local bills** scheduled by the House Committee on Local and Consent Calendars for consideration by the **house**. The calendar is required to be distributed to representatives 48 hours before the **house** convenes to consider **bills** on the calendar.



major fund revenue — State revenue within the funds affecting revenue (i.e., **general revenue related funds**). Also known as “**available revenue**.”

majority — A number of members that is greater than half of the total membership of a group and that has the power to make decisions binding on the whole. There are two types of majorities that may be required for legislative approval of bills and other actions – a simple majority and an absolute majority. A simple majority consists of more than half of those members present and voting. An absolute majority consists of more than half of those members entitled to vote, whether present or absent.

markup — The period of time during which the Senate Finance Committee or the House Appropriations Committee makes changes to the **general appropriations bill**.

master list of classifications: A detailed listing of all authorized classified position titles which appears in the general provisions of the **General Appropriations Act**, including job class numbers, titles, and salary groups.

measure — A general term for a **bill** or **resolution**.

method of finance — The term usually appears as a heading for a table which lists the sources

and amounts authorized for financing certain expenditures or appropriations made in the **General Appropriations Act**. A source is either a “fund,” an “account,” established by the **comptroller**, or a category of revenues or receipts (e.g., federal funds).

minority report — A **committee report** issued by one or more members which disagrees with the report adopted by the majority of the committee.

minutes — A document prepared after each committee hearing which contains the order of committee business and lists the committee members present at the hearing, the votes taken on legislation, and witnesses testifying for, against, and on legislation. The **minutes** are not a transcript and do not summarized testimony.

mission — An element of an agency’s strategic plan which describes the reason for the agency’s existence.

motion — A formal suggestion presented to a legislative body for action by one of its members while the body is meeting.



non-budgetary elements — Strategic planning goals, objectives, or strategies created to convey an agency activity or service which is not separately and directly costed or funded. **Non-budgetary elements** are not included as a distinct and separate item in the agency’s appropriations request and may have measures which remain internal to the agency and are not reported on a routine basis to oversight entities.

nonpartisan — Free from party domination.

number of positions (FTEs) — The total **number of positions** shown for a strategy, goal, or agency includes full-time exempt positions, full-time clas-

sified positions, and full-time hourly and seasonal positions. In addition, it includes those positions which are not full-time regular positions, but are converted to **full-time equivalents**.



object of expense — An expense category used in an agency’s **Legislative Appropriation Request** covering payments for a time or class of items. For example, “personnel” covers payments for the services of agency employees, i.e., salaries and benefits.

objectives — Clear targets for specific actions. These mark interim steps toward achieving an agency’s long-range mission and goals. Linked directly to **agency** goals, **objectives** are measurable, time-based statements of intent.

omnibus bill — A bill regarding a single subject that combines many different aspects of that subject.

open meetings law — A law requiring government meetings and proceedings to be open to and accessible by the public, with limited exceptions.

open records law — A law requiring that all books, papers, maps, photographs, cards, tapes, discs, diskettes, software, recordings or other documentation, regardless of physical form or characteristics, that are prepared, owned, used, in the possession of or retained by a public agency, be available to the public, with limited exceptions.

order of business — The defined routine of procedure in the legislative body each day.

other funds — Any funds not included in the other methods of finance (**General Revenue funds**, **General Revenue-dedicated funds**, and federal funds). **Other funds** include the State Highway

Fund, trust funds, bond proceeds, interagency contracts, certain revenue held in higher education “local” accounts and constitutional funds (except the **Available School Fund**).

outcome measures — One of four types of performance measures used in strategic planning. An **outcome measure** indicates the actual effect upon a stated condition or problem. These measures are tools to assess the effectiveness of an **agency’s** performance and the public benefit derived.

outcomes — Quantified results or impacts of government actions.

output measures — One of four types of performance measures used in strategic planning. An **output measure** is a tool or indicator used to count the services and accomplishments produced by an agency. The number of people receiving a service or the number of services delivered are often used as measures of output.

override — See **veto override**.



pairing — A procedure for voting whereby, under a formal agreement between two members, a member who will be present for a vote agrees with a member who will be absent for a vote that the member who is present will not vote but will be “present, not voting.” When two members are paired, the **journal** reflects how each member would have voted. Two members may be paired only if one would have voted “aye” and one would have voted “nay” on a particular measure or motion.

parliamentarian — An officer of the **house** or **senate** appointed by the presiding officer to provide the presiding officer with guidance on the rules of the **house** or **senate**.

parliamentary inquiry — A question posed by a legislator to the presiding officer for clarification of the procedure or business before the legislative body.

passage — Approval of a measure by the full body of the **senate** or **house**.

per diem — Literally, per day; daily expense money paid to legislators in an amount set by the **Texas Ethics Commission**.

Performance Report — A **biennial** document prepared by the **Legislative Budget Board** that compiles selected performance evaluations. The document is submitted to the legislature at the start of each **regular session**.

performance target — Quantitative performance standards set by the legislature in the **General Appropriations Act**.

Permanent School Fund (PSF) — The PSF was created in 1854 expressly for the benefit of the public schools of Texas. The Constitution of 1876 stipulated that certain lands and all proceeds from the sale of these lands should also constitute the PSF. Additional Acts later gave more public domain land and rights to the PSF. All of the proceeds from the sale or rental of these lands, including lease rentals, bonuses, and royalty payments, become the corpus of the PSF. Currently, most of the principle assets of the PSF are in securities. See also Permanent School Fund.

personal privilege speech — A statement by a legislator that is not relevant to pending legislative business.

pocket veto — An indirect **veto** of legislation achieved by waiting until after the legislature adjourns to **veto** it, which prevents the legislature from voting to override the **veto**.

point of order — A question by a legislator to the

presiding officer calling attention to a breach of order or breach of the legislative rules.

prefiling — Filing of proposed legislation by returning (i.e., incumbent) members of the legislature prior to the convening of a session of the legislature.

president of the senate — The lieutenant governor of Texas is the **president of the senate** and is addressed as Mr. or Madam President. Any person presiding in the absence of the lieutenant governor during a legislative session is said to be “occupying the chair” or to be “in the chair” and is addressed as Mr. or Madam President.

president pro tempore (pro tem) — A member of the **senate** designated to act in the absence of the **lieutenant governor**; the *president pro tem* is that member of the **senate** who has served the longest without having previously been *president pro tem*.

printing — **Senate** rules require that every **committee report** be *printed*. After *printing*, the **senate committee report** is placed in the **bill book** on each senator’s desk in the **senate chamber**.

privilege of the floor — Permission to view legislative proceedings from the **floor** of the **chamber** rather than from the public **gallery**.

prospective clause — A provision that defers enforcement of a **bill** or of a provision of a **bill** to a future date.

public hearing — A meeting of a **house** or **senate committee** or **subcommittee** during which public testimony may be heard and formal action taken on any **measure** or matter before the **committee** or **subcommittee**.



quarterly/annual report on performance (performance measures report) — Quarterly and annual reports submitted by state agencies and institutions showing planned and actual performance in terms of outcome and explanatory measures (reported annually) and output and efficiency measures (reported quarterly).

quorum — The number of members required to conduct business. Two-thirds of the elected members constitute a *quorum* in each house. A majority of the appointed members of a **committee** forms a *quorum* for the purpose of conducting committee business.



Rainy Day Fund — See **Economic Stabilization Fund**.

reading — The presentation of a **bill** before either **chamber** by reading the **bill**, its title, or its number. A formal procedure required by the Texas Constitution and legislative rules, the **bill** must receive three readings on three separate days in each legislative body.

reallocation — A change in the salary group pertaining to a particular **classified position**.

recapitulation — A concise summary appearing at the end of **General Appropriations Act** articles and the Legislative Budget Estimates, and the beginning of the **General Appropriations Act**, which summarizes the appropriations for all agencies for the **biennium** by **general revenue funds**, **general revenue–consolidated funds**,

federal funds, **other funds**, and all funds.

recommended — Refers to the dollar amounts of state agency/institution appropriates or number of positions recommended by **Legislative Budget Board** staff for the subsequent **biennium**.

recess — A temporary termination of a meeting. Recesses are called for short breaks (e.g., for a meal) or occasionally at the close of a daily session to allow the legislative day to continue into the next calendar day.

reclassification — A change in the salary group pertaining to a particular **classified position**.

reconsideration — A procedure by which the **house**, **senate**, or one of its **committees** may, after approval by a majority vote, repeat the vote on an action previously taken to either annul or reaffirm the action.

record vote — A listing of the individual vote of each member of a **committee** or of the full **house** or **senate** on a particular motion or **measure**.

redesignation — Sections or subsections of existing law are *redesignated* (i.e., renumbered or re-lettered) if additional sections or subsections are inserted into the law.

redistricting — A geographical division of the state into congressional, state representative, senatorial, or other legislative districts on the basis of the relative distribution of the state’s total population. District boundaries are redrawn every 10 years following the publication of the U.S. census to ensure an appropriate number of districts of approximately equal population. Also called reapportionment.

refer/referral/referred — To send an **as filed bill** to the appropriate **committee** for consideration. The Texas Constitution prohibits any **bill** from being considered on the **floor** unless it has first been *referred* to and considered by a **committee**.

regular order — The daily order of business in a legislative session.

regular session — The constitutionally mandated period during which the legislature meets to consider legislation. The Texas Legislature convenes in regular session on the second Tuesday in January of odd-numbered years and for 139 calendar days after that date.

repealer — A clause in a **bill** revoking previously enacted legislation.

requested — Refers to the dollars or positions sought by an **agency** for appropriation by the legislature for use during the subsequent **biennium**.

revenue estimate — An official forecast by the **comptroller** of the amount of money that will be available for expenditure by the legislature. Because Texas law requires a balanced budget, the legislature may appropriate only that amount the **comptroller** estimates will be available in the coming budget period.

resolution — An legislative document which proposes a constitutional amendment; sets forth a set of instructions to a state agency; expresses legislative intent; or contains a message of congratulations or memorial. See also, **concurrent resolution** and **joint resolution**.

rider — A legislative directive, inserted in the **General Appropriations Act** following appropriation **line-items** for an **agency**, which provides either direction, expansion, restriction, legislative intent, or an appropriation. The term also applies to special provisions at the end of each article and general provisions in the **General Appropriations Act**.

rider appropriation — An appropriation in the **General Appropriations Act** which is in either the addenda following the **line item** appropriations for an agency, in the special provisions of the act, or in the general provisions of the act. Such ap-

propriation is to be distinguished from a regular appropriation (i.e., **line items** in the **General Appropriations Act**), and a special appropriation (i.e., legislation other than the **General Appropriations Act**).

rulemaking authority — The authority of a state officer, institution, or agency to devise the details of implementation and enforcement of a statute. **Rulemaking authority** is granted by the legislature within a bill and is noted in the bill analysis.



salary group — Each classified position has a relate salary level. Salary groups range from Group 02 through Group 21. Each grouping designates a salary range from Step 1 through Step 8.

schedule of classified positions — Schedule of personnel employed on a regular basis who are included in the position class of the **General Appropriations Act**.

schedule of exempt positions — Schedule of personnel employed on a regular basis who are exempted from the position classification plan by the **General Appropriations Act** or by the **governor**.

second reading — The first point in the legislative process when the entire membership of a chamber has the opportunity to debate a bill and amend it by majority vote. **Second reading** comes after the bill has been approved by the committee to which it was referred. See also **first reading** and **third reading**.

secretary of the senate — A non-legislator officer elected by the members of the senate to serve both parliamentary and administrative functions. The chief administrative officer of the Texas senate;

since June, 2001, the position has been filled by Patsy Spaw.

senate — One of two bodies, or chambers, in the Texas Legislature; also known as the upper chamber. The *senate* is composed of 31 members, elected to four-year terms, with one-half of the membership elected every two years. Each **senator** represents approximately 710,000 Texans.

senator — A member of the Texas **senate**. A **senator** is elected to a four-year term and represents approximately 710,000 Texans.

sergeant-at-arms — A non-legislator officer of the **senate** or **house** elected by the members of the **senate** or the **house** who is charged with maintaining order and carrying out the directives of the presiding officer and the members.

session — (1) The period during which the legislature meets. (2) The daily meeting of the senate or house.

session law — A collection of laws passed in a particular legislative session.

severability clause — A provision in legislation that allows one portion of a **bill** to become law even if another portion of the same **bill** is found to be unconstitutional or invalid.

side-by-side analysis — A document that compares two or more versions of the same **bill** or two or more bills on the same subject. See also **issue docket**.

simple resolution — A type of legislative measure that is considered only within the **chamber** in which it is filed. It can offer a commendation, a memorial, a statement of congratulations, a welcome, or another statement of legislative sentiment.

sine die — A Latin phrase meaning literally *without a day*, *sine die* is the last day of a legisla-

tive session and is a reference to the fact that the legislature is adjourning *without a day* set for a future session. [Texas colloquial pronunciation: *sign-ee dye*]

speaker — The *speaker* of the house of representatives is the presiding officer of the house. Unlike the **lieutenant governor**, who is elected statewide in a general election in November, the *speaker* is elected on the first day of a regular legislative session in a vote of the 150-member house of representatives. Addressed as Mr. or Madam Speaker.

special funds: Non-general revenue funds which have retained their revenue dedication and are exempt from funds consolidation.

special session — A meeting of the legislature other than at the constitutionally mandated time; called by the **governor**. During a special session, which may last a maximum of 30 days, the legislature may consider only those subjects designated by the **governor**.

sponsor — The legislator who carries a **bill** in the second **chamber** after the **bill** has been approved in the originating chamber is denoted as the *sponsor*; in the **chamber** in which a **bill** is introduced, it is carried by its **author**.

standing committee — A **committee** created in the rules of either house that meets during the legislative session or an **interim** to consider and report on **measures** referred or tasks assigned to it by the respective presiding officers.

statutes — The laws of the state as formally enacted by the legislature.

strategic plan — A formal document that communicates an **agency**'s mission, goals, objectives, strategies, and performance measures. Other elements of a strategic plan include an internal/external assessment and agency philosophy.

strategic planning — A long-term, future-oriented process of assessment, goal-setting, and decision-making that maps an explicit path between the present and a vision of the future, that relies on careful consideration of an organization’s capabilities and environment, and leads to priority-based resource allocation.

strategic planning and budgeting system — The budgeting system for the State of Texas. Under this system, agencies request and receive appropriations related to elements of their strategic plans. Typically, legislative **line item appropriations** are made to agencies for specific strategies.

strategy — Formulated from goals and objectives, a **strategy** is the means for transforming inputs into outputs, and ultimately outcomes, with the best use of resources. A **strategy** describes a method to achieve goals and objectives. The legislature typically appropriates money to **strategy line items**.

strike through — Text within an existing law which is being deleted is **bracketed** and **stricken through** in a bill.

subcommittee — A group of **committee** members, appointed by the chair of a **committee** of the **house** or the **senate**, to which proposed legislation is referred or a specific task is assigned.

sunset — A process by which state agencies, boards, and commissions are reviewed and reauthorized.

Sunset Advisory Commission — A 12-member body of legislators and public members appointed by the lieutenant governor and the speaker of the house to review each state agency and make fundamental changes to an agency’s mission or operations if needed. Agencies are typically reviewed every 12 years, with about 20 to 30 agencies undergoing the **sunset** process each legislative session.

supplemental house calendar — The primary

agenda followed by the house during its deliberations. It is prepared by the House Committee on Calendars and is required to be distributed two hours before the house convenes. The Supplemental House Calendar contains: (1) measures passed to third reading on the previous day; (2) measures on the Daily House Calendar for a previous day that were not reached for consideration; (3) measures on the Daily House Calendar for the current day; and (4) postponed business from a previous day.

suspension of the rules — A parliamentary procedure whereby actions can be taken that would otherwise be out of order.



table — To stop a **bill** from further progress in a **committee** or on the **floor**. A **bill** is **tabled** by a vote, after a non-debatable motion from a member.

Texas Ethics Commission — The state **agency** responsible for administering and enforcing provisions of the Election Code concerning political contributions, political expenditures, and political advertising; provisions of the Government Code concerning the election of the **speaker of the house**, the governor for a day and speaker’s day reunion ceremonies, **lobbyist** registration, reports, and activities, personal financial disclosures by state officers, the conduct of state officers and employees, and representation before state agencies; and of the Local Government Code, concerning judges of statutory county courts or statutory probate courts who elect to file a financial statement with the commission.

Texas Legislative Council — The legislative **agency** which drafts measures for consideration by the legislature. Also known colloquially as the

“lege council,” provides computer support and other services for the legislature and legislative agencies.

third house — A colloquial term referring to the lobbyists. See also **lobby** and **lobbyists**.

third reading — The final point in the legislative process when the entire membership of a **chamber** may debate a **bill** and the final opportunity the members of a chamber have to offer amendments to the **bill**. See also **first reading** and **second reading**.

transferability — The ability of an **agency** to transfer legislative appropriations from one **agency** to another, from one department to another, or from an agency’s **line item** to another **line item**, that is generally authorized by **rider** in the **General Appropriations Act**.



underlining — New text in a **bill**, i.e., text that is being proposed for addition to an existing law, is ***underlined*** within the **bill**.

unexpended balance (U.B.) — The term means the amount left in an item of **appropriation** at the end of an appropriation period and includes only that part of the **appropriation**, if any, which has not had an obligation or commitment made by the **agency** in charge of spending the appropriation. The term also refers to the amount of an **appropriation**, a fund, or a category of revenue which is brought forward (appropriated) in the succeeding **fiscal year**.

unicameral — A legislature consisting of a single **chamber**. Nebraska has the only unicameral legislature in the United States, which it calls a senate.

Unlimited (U.L.) — The abbreviation “U.L.” is used in **schedules of classified positions** and **schedules of exempt positions** to indicate that an unlimited number of positions is authorized. If used in the heading of the schedule, it means that all positions in the schedule are unlimited. If used beside a position name, it means that the particular position is unlimited.



verification — An action whereby a legislator requests that the results of a **record vote** be confirmed in a second vote.

Vernon’s — **Vernon’s Texas Civil Statutes, or V.T.C.S.** — The laws of the state of Texas as gathered and printed by West Group, a private publishing company.

veto — Action by the **governor** to disapprove a measure. See also **pocket veto**.

veto override — A vote by the legislature to pass a **bill** over the **governor’s veto**.

viva voce — Latin for “by voice,” a voice vote. See **voice vote**.

voice vote — The oral expression of the members when a question is submitted for their determination. When asked by the presiding officer, members respond “aye” or “nay.” The presiding officer then decides which side prevailed.

vote — A formal expression of a preference for a proposed resolution of an issue. (For a list of required senate vote margins, see table on page 23.)



withdraw — To recall or remove a question or motion from consideration.

witness — A person who testifies before a legislative **committee**.

work session — A meeting of a **house committee** or **subcommittee** during which the members may only discuss **measures** or matters before the **committee** or **subcommittee**. Public testimony cannot be heard and formal action cannot be taken during a **work session**. See also **formal meeting**.



yeas and nays — The recorded vote of members for and against a measure or action.

yield — To relinquish the **floor** to another member to speak or to ask a question.



zero-base budget system — The budgeting system used by the State of Texas prior to the 1994-1995 **biennium**. Appropriations were made for **agency** programs and activities.

LEGISLATIVE ACRONYMS

B – bill

BRE – budget revenue estimate

CR – concurrent resolution

CS – committee substitute

E&E – Senate Engrossing and Enrolling

ENG – engrossed

ENR – enrolled

GAA – General Appropriations Act

H – house

HB – house bill

HCP – house committee printing

HCR – house concurrent resolution

HJR – house joint resolution

HR – house resolution

HRO – House Research Organization

JR – joint resolution

LAR – legislative appropriation request

LBB – Legislative Budget Board

R – resolution

S – senate

SB – senate bill

SCP – senate committee printing

SCR – senate concurrent resolution

SJR – senate joint resolution

SR – senate resolution

SRC – Senate Research Center

TLC – Texas Legislative Council

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Matters requiring a favorable of vote from a majority of senators present when less than a quorum is present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> authorizing a call of the senate authorizing a call for absent members adjourning or recessing
Matters requiring a favorable of vote from a majority of senators present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adoption of a conference committee report adoption of a motion for immediate ruling, after ten seconds adoption of a motion for previous question, after five seconds adoption of a motion to reconsider a vote adoption of an amendment on second reading concurrence in house amendments to senate bills, except to give immediate effect debating a congratulatory, memorial, or courtesy resolution dispensing with reading of papers election of officers election of a member to preside passing a bill on second reading passing a bill on third reading, except to give immediate effect removing a member from the chair
Matters requiring a majority vote
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adoption, amendment, or revision of joint rules adoption or amendment of senate rules adoption of a resolution to suspend conference committee rules determining what officers are to be elected election of senate president pro tempore and senate officers filling a vacancy in the office of lieutenant governor holding an executive session immediate ruling on point of order reconsideration of any vote removal of sergeant-at-arms from office sustaining an objection to the reading of a paper
Matters requiring a favorable vote from two-thirds of members present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> amending a bill at third reading excusing absentees immediate consideration of petitions and certain resolutions postponing consideration of a special order remission of taxes in case of calamity re-referring bills or resolutions (two-thirds and both committee chairs) senate confirmation of gubernatorial appointments setting a special order
Matters requiring a favorable vote from two-thirds of members elected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> address to governor seeking removal of civil officer expulsion of a member overriding a gubernatorial veto passage of a proposed state constitutional amendment reducing the area of a county to less than 900 square miles
Matters requiring a favorable vote from four-fifths of members present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> resetting a special order to an earlier time suspending the limitation on voting on third reading after the 135th day of regular session suspending the requirement that a bill be read on three separate days suspending the rule prohibiting a vote on bills reported after the 17-day deadline
Matters requiring a favorable vote from four-fifths of members elected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consideration of bills during the first 60 days of a regular session introduction of bills after the first 60 days of a regular session
Matters requiring a unanimous vote
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lifting the injunction requiring secrecy of executive session

Officers of the Senate

Secretary of the Senate	Patsy Spaw
Calendar Clerk	Pat Rodgers
Engrossing and Enrolling Clerk	Mardi Alexander
Journal Clerk	Dianne Arrington
Parliamentarian	Karina Casari Davis
Sergeant-at-Arms	Carleton Turner

Officers of the House of Representatives

Chief Clerk of the House	Robert Haney
Journal Clerk	Julia Bass
Voting Clerk	Jennifer Teigen
Parliamentarian	Denise Davis
Sergeant-at-Arms	Rod Welsh

Helpful Numbers

Senate Committee Coordinator, Scott Caffey	512-463-0070
House Committee Services Coordinator, Mary Colletti	512-463-0850
Senate Research Center, Gina Martin, Director	512-463-0087
House Research Organization	512-463-0752
Legislative Budget Board	512-463-1200
Legislative Council	512-463-1151
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