

INTERIM STUDY CHARGES

Texas House of Representatives

79th Legislature

Issued by

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK**

1. Explore the need for both the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG) program and the Program for Assessment of Veterinary Medical Education (PAVE) for certification of students who graduate from foreign veterinary colleges.
2. Assess the need for new rules and regulations to govern non-veterinary practitioners of animal care, specifically equine dentistry, as well as the potential need for veterinary supervision of certain practices.
3. Research and determine the potential contributions of Texas agriculture to energy supply, including examination of the role of ethanol, biodiesel, and biomass.
4. Determine if a new comprehensive water conservation program is needed within the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board focusing on water conservation and water supply enhancement. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Natural Resources)
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
APPROPRIATIONS**

1. Monitor the performance of state agencies and institutions, including operating budgets and plans to carry out legislative initiatives, caseload projections, performance measure attainment and other matters affecting the fiscal condition of the agencies and the state.
2. Examine and report on the implementation of House Bill 1516, 79th Legislature, to accommodate consolidation and future budgeting of shared services and commodity information technology procurements. This review should consider revisions to the automated information systems to streamline the state's planning, budgeting and purchase of information technology.
3. Review the compensation structure for state employees, including benefits.
4. Examine the state budget process from start to finish, including but not limited to the establishment of spending limits, budget structures, performance measures and other relevant issues to control growth in state spending.
5. Study the implementation of the Driver Responsibility Program (DRP) by the Department of Public Safety and its efforts to reach certain revenue goals. Examine discrepancies in estimated revenue for the Designated Trauma Facility and Emergency Medical Services Account. Evaluate the need to reimburse physicians and other providers directly from this account for their costs in the provision of trauma care."
6. Analyze and compare service coordination and other administrative functions across waiver programs as a continuation of the health and human services system consolidation and optimization. This analysis should include evaluation processes, procedures, outcomes and costs with the intent of ensuring quality, defining best practices and reducing costs.
7. Review the implementation status and impact on prison populations as a result of increased funding for Prison Diversion Programs and Substance Abuse Treatment Programs.
8. Research and report on the state's use of bonds and other instruments of debt financing to determine if such use could be modified to increase cost-effectiveness.
9. Review proportionality as it relates to health and retirement appropriations for higher education institutions. This review should analyze the determination of contribution levels for public community colleges' health and retirement benefits, as well as the role of proportionality in the formula allocations of General Revenue Funds to General Academic and Health-related Institutions.

10. Examine the contract between Texas Online and the State. This examination should also include an evaluation of the usefulness and cost effectiveness of Texas Online.
11. Review Regulatory agency testing procedures to determine the mode and accessibility of each test.
12. Analyze and compare Medicaid cost containment strategies in other states. This study should consider how effective these strategies are at reducing costs in the Medicaid program while taking into account how these strategies effect quality of care, ongoing services, and the availability of federal funding sources.
13. Review and analyze all higher education funding formulas. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Higher Education)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
BORDER AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

1. Review the domestic and international use of economic development and tourism resources to increase commerce in the border region, including the two border Regional Centers of Innovation and Commercialization that will be funded through the Emerging Technology Fund.
2. Study the impact of increased international trade on the state's markets, state contracts and the security of data transferred overseas.
3. Examine the most efficient ways to coordinate the many border-related governmental entities and border-specific programs of state agencies, specifically the operations of the Borderlands Information Center and the Border Activity Tracker and the possibility of combining and transforming them into a comprehensive border information clearinghouse.
4. Study the economic infrastructure of the state's main trade corridors with special emphasis on the ability to enhance trade and transportation through increased use of technology. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Transportation)
5. Study the current border and coastal transportation infrastructure and any enhancements needed to meet growing international trade and economic development. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Transportation)
6. Review the process by which identification documents held by foreign nationals are accepted by state agencies. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Defense Affairs and State-Federal Relations)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY**

1. Monitor the implementation of House Bill 1823, 79th Legislature, to determine if there is a need to further legislate the protection of homebuyers who purchase dwellings under the "rent-to-own" or "contract-for-deed" procedures. There should be particular attention paid to assure that no unintended consequences materialize.
2. Study the problem of identity theft, and recommend any legislative changes needed to combat the problem. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on State Affairs)
3. Monitor the Texas workers' compensation system reforms and implementation of House Bill 7, 79th Legislature, by the Texas Department of Insurance and other state agencies. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Insurance)
4. Study the powers and practices of homeowner associations in Texas and the possible need for legislation, such as the proposed Texas Uniform Planning Community Act, to address the rules, enforcement, restrictions and other matters within the authority of a homeowner association. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Land and Resource Management)
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
CIVIL PRACTICES**

1. Review the scope and extent of governmental immunity in contract disputes under the Texas Tort Claims Act and other laws, and consider whether there is a need for statutory changes to the process by which contract claims against governmental entities are considered.
2. Evaluate the staffing needs for multidistrict litigation courts, and recommend any changes needed to ensure the judicial access and efficiency intended by recent legislation.
3. Study Insurance Code Article 21.55, and determine whether any statutory changes are needed to clarify whether this provision applies to the reimbursement of defense costs.
4. Examine the prevalence of multiple plaintiff trials in tort cases other than those concerning asbestos and silica, and recommend any statutory changes needed to increase judicial efficiency and ensure access to the courts for all plaintiffs.
5. Evaluate the liability risk associated with privatization of child welfare services and assess the benefit of limiting civil liability for noneconomic damages against a non-profit organization involved in substitute care or case management services.
6. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
CORRECTIONS**

1. Study the organizational structure of the department to determine if the current system is effectively and efficiently addressing the needs of all components of the criminal justice system in conjunction with the Sunset review of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) in 2007.
2. Examine the probation system and reforms debated during the 79th Legislature, including using strategies such as graduated sanctions and specialized courts for reducing revocations and recidivism. Study the organization and cost of our probation system and make recommendations about how to prioritize and strengthen general supervision.
3. Evaluate the correctional health care systems in other states as they compare to the Texas health care system, with a focus on greater accountability and competition among providers.
4. Assess the programming needs for special populations in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).
5. Review the operation and organization of the Windham School District.
6. Study the adequacy of the state accountability system in measuring the effectiveness of Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) based on academic performance, behavior modification and percentage of students referred to the juvenile justice system. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Public Education)
7. Study the effectiveness of prevention programs, such as after school programs, in reducing the actual indices of crime and the rate of young offenders entering the criminal justice system. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Juvenile Justice and Family Issues)
8. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's oversight and monitor the Governor's Criminal Justice Advisory Council.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
COUNTY AFFAIRS**

1. Examine the advisability and probable impacts of creating a system of graduated ordinance-making authorities for counties with populations over one million based on population densities and unique geographic and environmental needs.
2. Consider whether clarification or revision is needed to state statutes related to dormancy of office provisions and the abolition of local Constitutional offices.
3. Review the penalties and enforcement challenges related to public safety and the sale of fireworks.
4. Study cost drivers of county government functions.
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
CRIMINAL JURISPRUDENCE**

1. Review the applicable laws governing the payment of restitution to victims of crime and the methods in which restitution is collected and disbursed to victims of crime and the Compensation to Victims of Crime Fund.
2. Examine the issue of reciprocal discovery in criminal cases.
3. Study the current legal protection against criminal prosecution and civil liability for a person who uses force, including deadly force, against a person who unlawfully and with force seeks to enter a residence, dwelling or vehicle.
4. Monitor the use of nuisance abatement authority by the city of Dallas and investigate unresolved issues pertaining to allegations of possible civil rights violations that may have been committed under color of law by local government. (Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on General Investigating and Ethics)
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
CULTURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM**

1. Review the status of the Texas Cultural Endowment Fund.
2. Examine the penalties and enforcement relating to the desecration of archeological sites and cemeteries.
3. Consider how the Texas State Library and Archives Commission could better support and enhance public school libraries.
4. Research and explore new ways to promote economic development through increased tourism in the state.
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
DEFENSE AFFAIRS AND STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS**

1. Evaluate the progress of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 decisions and the redevelopment efforts of the affected communities. Determine ways the state is able to assist these communities in redeveloping their infrastructure to accommodate closures or an influx of military missions into their community.
2. Monitor implementation of House Bill 3112, 79th Legislature, and ensure that state computer networks and internal information are secure from potential attacks and that personal data is properly secured.
3. Assess the state of veterans' benefits, including federally-funded nursing care facilities across the state, job training programs, educational benefits and return-to-work issues.
4. Review the process by which identification documents held by foreign nationals are accepted by state agencies. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Border and International Affairs)
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

1. Review the application of the Development Corporation Act of 1979 (Article 5109.6, VTCS) to determine the appropriateness of including limited funding ability for higher education projects supporting the development or expansion of specialized educational facilities at institutions of higher education.
2. Study the use of the Skills Development Fund and the adequacy of the alternative funding mechanism created in House Bill 2421, 79th Legislature.
3. Study the effectiveness of the Texas Enterprise Zone program and its contributions in creating economic development in this state.
4. Study the utilization of the Unemployed Insurance Fund.
5. Study the use of the Texas Economic Development Act since its enactment as House Bill 1200, 77th Legislature. Examine how successful the program has been in the promotion of economic development in this state, and its use by local government entities. Make recommendations for any statutory changes needed to the program, and consider whether the December 31, 2007, Sunset date should be extended.
6. Study the use of the Texas Enterprise Fund and other economic development tools created by Senate Bill 275, 78th Legislature. Examine how successful the new programs have been in the promotion of economic development in this state, and recommend any statutory enhancements that could be made.
7. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
ELECTIONS**

1. Monitor the continued implementation of the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) by the Office of the Secretary of State, as major HAVA deadlines occur throughout 2006.
2. Examine the prevalence of fraud in Texas elections, considering prosecution rates and measures for prevention.
3. Examine the growing use of technology in campaigns and the administration of elections, and the need to recodify sections of the Texas Elections Code to reflect our current practices.
4. Examine ways to improve the uniformity and efficiency of elections held by political subdivisions, particularly by exploring market practices for leasing voting equipment.
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
ENERGY RESOURCES**

1. Review the effects of universal bonding on the oil and gas industry with respect to the population of oil and gas operators, economic consequences of bonding and whether bonding has had an effect on the number of abandoned wells being placed into the Oil Field Cleanup Fund.
2. Examine the feasibility of offering economic incentives to promote the plugging of inactive wells by operators.
3. Study alternatives to increased appropriation to the Railroad Commission, including exploration of potential efficiencies, for administrative functions currently funded by the Oil Field Cleanup Fund.
4. Examine technological advancements in the energy industry. Discuss whether creating legislative incentives for use of these technologies is appropriate.
5. Study the efficacy of private litigation and government agency investigation to accomplish remediation of natural resources impacted by historical, and current oil and gas operations.
6. Examine the feasibility of additional nuclear generated power in Texas, focusing on supply and demand issues, current state nuclear projects, and possible federal government assistance. (Joint Interim Charge with Regulated Industries)
7. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION**

1. Examine the State Implementation Plan (SIP) to determine if data is being collected adequately; if recent changes to the SIP are moving the state closer to EPA requirements; and if not, evaluate if any midcourse corrections necessary.
2. Consider ways to streamline the permitting process, including but not limited to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of public notice provisions and expanding the use of the Internet for permit applications and renewals.
3. Evaluate environmental enforcement to determine if a streamlined permitting process would provide more resources for enforcement; whether more enforcement leads to more compliance; if stronger incentives for high performers would be effective; and if improvement can be made to the compliance history program.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

1. Examine the feasibility and impact of consolidating the state financial regulatory agencies which include the Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner, Texas Department of Banking, Department of Savings and Mortgage Lending (formerly Texas Savings and Loan Department) and the Texas Credit Union Department.
2. Evaluate predatory lending practices involved with subprime mortgage lending within the state, primarily in the border counties including:
 - Study the patterns of mortgage fraud and develop statutory changes to reduce incidences of mortgage fraud and punish violators.
 - Study the relationship between mortgage brokers and residential borrowers including: whether or not the mortgage broker is the agent of the residential borrower; the types of disclosures which should be required; and, the sources and nature of compensation.
3. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
GENERAL INVESTIGATING AND ETHICS**

1. Analyze the various education agency actions regarding the use of Anabolic Steroids by public school students.
2. Research, review and investigate the expenditures of taxpayer money by local government and school boards to lobby the Legislature. Research, review and investigate attempts by school district officials to skirt competitive bidding requirements with respect to facility renovation and construction contracts, and other relevant contracts, through the use of improper procurement contracts with associations or other school districts. (Joint Charge with House Public Education)
3. Monitor the use of nuisance abatement authority by the city of Dallas and investigate unresolved issues pertaining to allegations of possible civil rights violations that may have been committed under color of law by local government. (Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM**

1. Research the current use of performance and public accountability measures in state agencies; explore possible improvements and innovations.
2. Study synergies between state agencies and private non-profit organizations that perform state functions; explore opportunities for assisting non-profits with improvements in operations, procurement, and information technology and management.
3. Review the feasibility and benefits of consolidating existing health professions licensing boards.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
HIGHER EDUCATION**

1. Evaluate state supported financial aid programs, and whether they are structured and administered in a manner that will most effectively allow the state to meet the goals set forth in *Closing the Gaps*.
2. Consider formula funding models for institutions of higher education, and evaluate whether current formulas most effectively promote excellence and support the goals set forth in *Closing the Gaps*.
3. Evaluate accessibility to higher education, and identify whether certain areas of the state are underserved with respect to bachelor's and associate's degree programs.
4. Examine existing methods of facilities funding for institutions of higher education, and identify the most efficient means by which to allocate state resources.
5. Study community college service areas, and determine whether - and to what extent - existing boundaries should be modified to reflect population shifts or other demographic changes.
6. Review and analyze all higher education funding formulas. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Appropriations)
7. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
HUMAN SERVICES**

1. Examine ways foster care provides, or does not provide, preparation for adult living to foster children. Review programs other states have adopted to enhance the likelihood that foster care alumni will complete a secondary education or maintain trade skills learned while in foster care. Examine the correlation between the school drop-out pattern, job maintenance and poverty, and foster care preparation programs for adult living.
2. Study the effectiveness, efficiency and funding mechanisms of mental health and mental retardation services. Identify and study best practices in crisis intervention, residential treatment and aftercare. Identify and study successful mental health services delivery models established by other states.
3. Monitor how changes in the Food Stamp Program at the federal level affect participation in Texas, including proposed changes in the 2006 Federal Farm Bill.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
INSURANCE**

1. Study the availability and affordability of insurance for Texans suffering from eating disorders, including but not limited to anorexia and bulimia.
2. Monitor the Texas workers' compensation system reforms and implementation of House Bill 7, 79th Legislature, by the Texas Department of Insurance and other state agencies. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Business and Industry)
3. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
JUDICIARY**

1. Examine the compensation of county court-at-law judges and recommend any needed statutory changes to address the issue of compensation uniformity following the enactment of House Bill 11, 79th Legislature, Second Called Session.
2. Study the potential benefits and dangers of enacting a "journalist shield law" in Texas.
3. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
JUVENILE JUSTICE AND FAMILY ISSUES**

1. Review the Texas Youth Commission's capacity and policies on abuse and neglect.
2. Study current law relating to who is authorized to conduct marriages, and make recommendations of any possible changes.
3. Evaluate child support guidelines and formulas, considering whether the current methods provide adequate support to a child. Also study child support for the costs of college.
4. Research and report on how the courts handle truancy cases.
5. Consider the law governing presumption of parentage, and examine the adequacy of relief available to presumed parents who are child support obligors and who assert a claim of paternity fraud.
6. Study the effectiveness of prevention programs, such as after school programs, in reducing the actual indices of crime, and the rate of young offenders entering the criminal justice system. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Corrections)
7. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

1. Determine the appropriateness of non-elected governmental bodies exercising the power of eminent domain to condemn property.
2. Consider the potential establishment of a single and uniform approach to dealing with situations involving overlapping, extraterritorial jurisdictions.
3. Study the powers and practices of homeowner associations in Texas and the possible need for legislation, such as the proposed Texas Uniform Planning Community Act, to address the rules, enforcement, restrictions and other matters within the authority of a homeowner association. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Business and Industry)
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LAW ENFORCEMENT**

1. Study the adequacy and effectiveness of Department of Public Safety trooper training.
2. Oversee the implementation and enforcement of the provisions of House Bill 164, 79th Legislature, as it relates to the manufacture of methamphetamines, and the distribution and sale of prescription and non-prescription drugs.
3. Research options for stable funding sources for the University of North Texas Missing Persons DNA database.
4. Monitor the implementation of Senate Bill 568, 79th Legislature, as it relates to law enforcement response to private home alarms.
5. Evaluate the efficacy of designing a law enforcement training program specifically applicable to small or rural police agencies.
6. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LICENSING AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

1. Examine the current practice of certain occupations, and determine whether these occupations pose any significant threat to the health, safety and welfare of the general public to the extent that increased regulation is needed.
2. Review ways to make Texas' racetracks more attractive to Texans and tourists in order to keep them viable and producing tax revenue for the state.
3. Research ways to improve the enforcement of existing laws against underage drinking. Recommend any statutory changes needed to combat this problem.
4. Evaluate the possibility of increased revenues, and unintended problems that might result from selling lottery tickets at new alternative locations, and recommend any needed statutory changes.
5. Monitor the implementation of Senate Bill 1850, 79th Legislature, related to the proliferation of bars and "cantinas" in residential neighborhoods, around schools, churches, and daycare centers in counties with a population of 1.4 million or more. Recommend whether this statute should be broadened to apply to other counties in Texas.
6. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LOCAL GOVERNMENT WAYS AND MEANS**

1. Review the current system of appraising property located in more than one appraisal district as created in House Bill 703, 78th Legislature. Determine if one fair and equal value per property for ad valorem taxes is preferable to the current system, and whether it is more efficient to appraise property on a county line basis or on a jurisdictional line basis.
2. Research and make recommendations regarding the Central Appraisal Districts in Texas; evaluate the makeup of the board of directors; examine whether consolidation of certain appraisal districts would save money; review appraisal districts' methodology in arriving at appraisal values; determine the impact of the Comptroller's Office audit on the operation of the appraisal district and its derivation of appraisal values.
3. Compare and evaluate how counties and school districts impose (levy) property taxes, including a study and evaluation on the effective tax rate, the rollback tax rate, and rollback elections.
4. Study the impact of unfunded mandates by state and federal governments on cities.
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
NATURAL RESOURCES**

1. Explore the benefits and concerns associated with Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs), including an assessment of the appropriateness of granting districts the additional powers of other special districts. Evaluate the impact of MUDs on economic growth and development, as well as the overall tax implications, including an evaluation of the provision of municipal and county services on residents living in MUDs. Review public disclosure and notification requirements associated with MUDs, as well as bonding authority of some districts.
2. Consider the potential for increased outdoor water savings through landscape water conservation, including irrigation audit requirements, turf replacement programs and the provision of certain landscape options for prospective home buyers.
3. Examine state wastewater re-use policies, including an assessment of potential changes or clarifications to the Texas Water Code.
4. Continue the study of the Commission on Water for Environmental Flows, and further evaluate options for providing adequate environmental flows.
5. Determine if a new comprehensive water conservation program is needed within the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, focusing on water conservation and water supply enhancement. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock)
6. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
PENSIONS AND INVESTMENTS**

1. Study the role of actuaries in monitoring the financial health of public pension plans, and evaluate the need for regulation in regard to their qualifications, the setting of actuarial assumptions and oversight.
2. Evaluate the criteria which would be provided to the Pension Review Board that would signal a major change in the financial condition of a public pension system, including the necessary data, frequency of reports, costs to the system and its source of funding.
3. Examine the feasibility of facilitating the creation of a large, consolidated risk pool and other strategies to give governmental entities statewide relief from high premiums for health care benefits for employees and retirees.
4. Review the eligibility criteria for the Law Enforcement and Custodial Officers Supplemental (LECOS) retirement program and the impact of these guidelines on funding needed for the pension fund.
5. Analyze the impact of targeted investment strategies on state retirement funds.
6. Review the Proportionate Retirement Programs and their effects on state pension funds.
7. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC EDUCATION**

1. Study the impact of successful school choice programs on students, parents and teachers.
2. Review central administration and superintendent compensation, and investigate the extent to which administrator compensation corresponds to student performance.
3. Examine school district resource allocation, including ways that different types of high-performing districts allocate funds among instruction, instructional support, operations and district administration.
4. Consider whether Chapter 21 of the Education Code is structured and administered in a manner that effectively promotes the state's educational goals.
5. Evaluate school district budgeting practices. Investigate ways to enhance the role of elected trustees in the design of district budgets and identify ways to make district budgets more accessible and transparent to the public.
6. Explore the structure and implementation strategies of successful performance-based pay systems for educational professionals in Texas and other states.
7. Identify ways to improve high school performance in terms of post-secondary readiness.
8. Research, review and investigate the expenditures of taxpayer money by local government and school boards to lobby the Legislature. Also research, review and investigate attempts by school district officials to skirt competitive bidding requirements with respect to facility renovation and construction contracts, and other relevant contracts, through the use of improper procurement contracts with associations or other school districts. (Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on General Investigating and Ethics)
9. Study the adequacy of the state accountability system in measuring the effectiveness of Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) based on academic performance, behavior modification and percentage of students referred to the juvenile justice system. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Corrections)
10. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC HEALTH**

1. Examine the selected scope of practice issues related to health professions which maintain the safety of patients through demonstrated competency and education, and balance improved cost efficiency within the health care system.
2. Consider the state's role and approach to Medicare Part D and evaluate the impact to Texas Medicaid clients.
3. Study emerging practices for the prevention of hospital-acquired infections, and develop effective policies for incorporating these best practices into the delivery of health care in Texas.
4. Review issues relating to Chapter 166.046 of the Texas Health & Safety Code, and assess if patients and/or their loved ones have a sufficient opportunity to obtain transfer to an alternate facility and subsequent care in end-of-life situations.
5. Evaluate the need for regulation of laser hair removal facilities in Texas and the need for certification of individuals performing laser hair removal procedures.
6. Examine the compliance of cigarette manufacturing companies with the 1998 Tobacco Settlement with reference to sales to minors and progress toward meeting the state's tobacco use goals, and the cost of tobacco use to the state. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on State Affairs)
7. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
REDISTRICTING**

1. Consider modifications to the districts of state district courts.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
REGULATED INDUSTRIES**

1. Gather and review information on the generation capacity and fuel diversity of the Texas electric market. Recommend changes to Texas law that would encourage new investment and technological innovation in emerging energy fields, such as clean coal and next generation nuclear technologies.
2. Examine the effects of retail competition in the Texas electric market including provider of last resort options for residential customers. Recommend changes to Texas law, including incentives for market participants and residential customers.
3. Monitor the implementation of the state-issued cable and video franchise system. Recommend updates that would further encourage competition and economic investment in the Texas broadband cable and video market.
4. Research and report on the transition to competition of incumbent telecommunications providers in Texas, and examine the effects of deregulation on local level competition, pricing and service offerings. Recommend changes to Texas law that would support further deregulation of the Texas telecommunications market.
5. Study the current repayment mechanism to the county or municipality for utility relocations in the public rights-of-way. Report on the number of relocations statewide each year, total estimated costs for relocations, associated impacts with relocations, and possible alternative systems for funding utility relocations and associated impacts.
6. Review current industry mechanisms used to provide compensation to municipalities for use of the public rights-of-way, specifically whether all inter-modal communications providers receive equal treatment under the current system, and whether all providers of communications services pay for use of the public rights-of-way. Recommend possible alternative compensation systems.
7. Examine issues related to the creation and purchase of out-of-state renewable energy credits by non-ERCOT Texas utilities and determine possible alternatives for establishing a regional approach that does not allow the double-counting of renewable energy credits for non-ERCOT utilities to meet their renewable goals.
8. Examine the feasibility of additional nuclear generated power in Texas, focusing on supply and demand issues, current state nuclear projects, and possible federal government assistance. (Joint Interim Charge with Energy Resources)
9. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
STATE AFFAIRS**

1. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction, including identifying possible ways to merge or streamline agency functions to produce long-term financial benefits to the state and better efficiency of the agencies.
2. Examine scientific advances made on stem cell research.
3. Monitor rule making of parental consent for the performance of an abortion.
4. Review and consider all issues involved with a pharmacist refusal to dispense a drug.
5. Study the problem of identity theft, and recommend any legislative changes needed to combat the problem. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Business and Industry)
6. Examine the compliance of cigarette manufacturing companies with the 1998 Tobacco Settlement with reference to sales to minors, and the progress toward meeting the state's tobacco use goals and the cost of tobacco use to the state. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Public Health)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
TRANSPORTATION**

1. Review the regulation of utilities by the Texas Department of Transportation relating to utility access along the edge of the road right-of-way and placement of utility facilities along public road rights-of-way. Recommend strategies for the Public Utility Commission and the Department of Transportation to deliver assets of value to the state.
2. Study the relationship between Texas Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration and other federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security. Review the effectiveness and efficiency of the funding process for airports, and capacity needs for commercial and private demands. Examine further needs with regard to private and public airports.
3. Examine the transportation planning and coordination of land use, including planning for large transportation corridors.
4. Research and study the permissibility of rental car companies to sell used rental motor vehicles on credit union premises and other locations not continuously used for the conduct of used rental motor vehicle sales. Analyze comparative laws from other states permitting such sales by rental car companies on premises other than those owned by the rental car companies.
5. Consider the rail relocation needs of the major metropolitan areas in Texas. Identify possible funding sources.
6. Study the economic infrastructure of the state's main trade corridors with special emphasis on the ability to enhance trade and transportation through increased use of technology. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Border and International Affairs)
7. Study the current border and coastal transportation infrastructure and any enhancements needed to meet growing international trade and economic development. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Border and International Affairs)
8. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
URBAN AFFAIRS**

1. Evaluate the alternative approaches and implications of short-term restrictions on new construction in Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth and Austin for the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs 4 percent tax credit-private activity bond program as well as its 9 percent tax credit program.
2. Consider the implications of eliminating the lottery system for allocating 4 percent housing tax credit awards through the state's Private Activity Bond Program and replacing it with an alternative allocation system.
3. Examine the home ownership rate for low-income Texans, and recommend suggestions on how home ownership rates can be improved for underserved populations.
4. Compare and contrast Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs administration of the Housing Tax Credit program with best practices around the country.
5. Review the manner and procedures for the determination by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs of the annual Low Income Housing Tax Credits statewide including the 4 percent and 9 percent housing tax credit programs.
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of current underwriting methods of Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs for its programs.
7. Examine municipal regulation of mobile food vending vehicles.
8. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
WAYS AND MEANS**

1. Examine alternative business taxes and other methods of finance designed to reduce the state's reliance on local property taxes to fund public education. Examine the business taxes paid by the various industries.
2. Evaluate the process used by the Office of the Comptroller and the Legislative Budget Board to evaluate and provide information on the impact of tax legislation.
3. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.