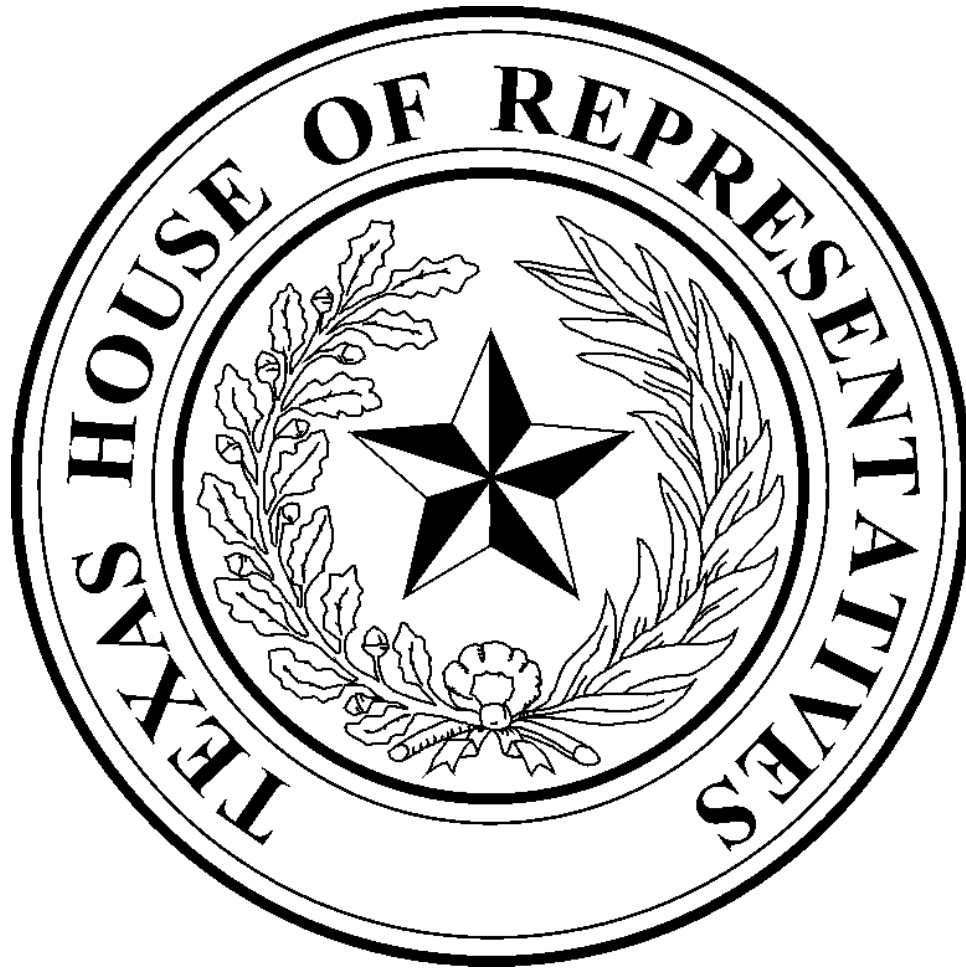


Interim Committee Charges
Texas House of Representatives
83rd Legislature



Speaker Joe Straus

January 2014



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
JOE STRAUS
SPEAKER

January 31, 2014

Dear Members:

In the pages that follow, you will find interim charges for the 83rd Legislature. These charges will help every standing committee in the Texas House begin the important work of preparing for the 2015 legislative session.

The charges reflect many of the ideas and issues that you have suggested the House study over the next year. I want to thank you for those suggestions and encourage you to work on these charges with focus and diligence. I also hope you will approach these issues with an open mind. Don't be afraid to consider new and different ways to make state government more effective, efficient and accountable to taxpayers.

In the coming months, I will release additional charges and highlight some of my own priorities for the upcoming session. Combined with the interim charges that I am releasing today, the initiatives that I will soon propose will help all of us begin the 84th Legislature ready and equipped to tackle our state's most serious challenges. Just as we did in last year's session, I am confident that we can address these issues in a responsible, bipartisan way.

One of the reasons that the 83rd Legislature was so successful was that we identified key priorities early and made important progress on those priorities before the opening gavel fell. I hope you will take a similar approach to our work over the next 12 months. Thank you in advance for your attention to these charges and for your commitment to Texas. I look forward to working with you as we prepare for another successful session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Straus". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joe Straus
Speaker

House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock

1. Evaluate actions by state agencies under the committee's jurisdiction to increase transparency, accountability, and efficiency. Consider cost-saving technologies such as the route optimization system used by the Texas Department of Agriculture to save funds in inspection activities. Identify and make recommendations to address gaps and to improve efficiency and access to user-friendly information while protecting appropriate data security.
2. Study the feasibility of the creation of a border agricultural inspection training program and the authority of Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) employees to augment federal inspectors at Texas border land ports of entry. The study should include similar subject matter to HB 3761 (83R). Measure and estimate the increase in state revenue and secondary economic benefits that could be created from implementing the efficiency measures in HB 3761 (83R) as a way to offset costs for additional state inspectors.
3. Evaluate the Texas Right to Farm Act and determine if certain recommendations and updates to the law should be made in efforts to protect agricultural operations.
4. Examine current statutes and rules to determine any necessary enhancements that can assist in the eradication of feral hogs by using practical solutions and effective eradication techniques. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Culture, Recreation and Tourism)*
5. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Appropriations

1. Monitor the performance of state agencies and institutions, including operating budgets, plans to carry out legislative initiatives and planned budget reductions, caseload projections, performance measure attainment, implementation of all rider provisions, and any other matter affecting the fiscal condition of the agencies and the state.
2. Examine progress made during the 83rd legislative session on reducing the reliance on dedicated accounts for budget certification. Recommend additional methods to further reduce the reliance on dedicated accounts for budget certification purposes, and further examine ways to maximize the use of such accounts.
3. Monitor the administration of the Correctional Managed Health Care system and examine forecasts for short and long-term criminal justice populations and health care cost trends. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Corrections)*
4. Examine exempt compensation salary levels for senior and executive management personnel, as well as the use of non-state funds to provide salary supplements.
5. Examine short and long-term deferred maintenance costs for state facilities and approaches to deal with these costs in light of limited remaining General Obligation bond authority.
6. Examine the status of the state's information technology (IT) infrastructure, the effectiveness of data center consolidation in reducing IT costs, and the effectiveness of the Department of Information Resources's Cooperative Contracts Program in delivering best value for the state in IT purchases.
7. Monitor the implementation of cost-containment initiatives in health and human services programs directed by Health and Human Services Commission Rider 51. Recommend additional opportunities for cost containment, including but not limited to, improvements in the procurement of durable medical equipment and increased medication adherence among Medicaid clients.
8. Monitor the administration of new state funding to expand behavioral health services in Texas. Make recommendations to improve coordination and prevent duplication of effort, including the behavioral health projects funded through the Medicaid 1115 waiver. Evaluate the methodology utilized by the state to fund the public mental health system in order to assess improvements in how mental health funds and associated performance targets are allocated throughout the state. Develop funding recommendations that emphasize equity in funding and performance expectations, improving outcomes, the attainment of performance targets, population needs,

availability of local resources, and geographic diversity.

9. Study the implementation of provisions in SB 7 (83R) and Article II Special Provisions Section 48 regarding the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). Make recommendations for expansion of, and improvement in, the delivery of those services if cost-effective.
10. Conduct a basic review of current public education and higher education funding formulas. Specifically, focus on whether items funded outside base formulas (Foundation School Program (FSP) and higher education formulas) should be included inside the formulas. After the review, the committee may recommend the addition or deletion of funding items or changes in levels of current funding.
11. Review existing research funds; evaluate the purpose for their creation and the progress made toward the goal of each fund. Recommend any changes necessary to improve the effectiveness or outcomes of each program's stated purpose. Determine to what extent eligibility overlap exists among the funds. Make recommendations on eligibility and funding levels for each fund.
12. Review current capital needs in higher education. The committees shall examine past methods of financing higher education's capital needs, as well as approaches used in other states. The committees shall jointly make recommendations to address these costs in the future. In adopting recommendations, the committees should focus on methodologies that identify priority capital projects, treat institutions of higher education equitably, and uniformly share costs between the state and institutions. The committees should also examine the viability of alternatives to traditional models for funding capital projects. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Higher Education)*
13. Monitor the use of funds provided or made available to Texas in relation to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill and make recommendations on the appropriate use of these funds in the future. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Natural Resources)*
14. Examine the immediate and long-term fiscal impact of the Employees Retirement System (ERS) employee health care plan. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Pensions)*
15. Study the affordability of health care for active public school employees. Examine how premiums and out-of-pocket costs have increased over time and how these increases have affected employees and school districts, and make appropriate recommendations. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Pensions)*
16. Examine the immediate and long-term fiscal impact of the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) health care plan (TRS-Care). *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Pensions)*

House Committee on Business and Industry

1. Study the voluntary nature of workers' compensation in Texas and how it meets the needs of employers and employees.
2. Review existing lien laws in Texas. Specifically:
 - a. Examine laws concerning the enforcement of contract liens affecting real property. Identify improvements, if any, that will enhance the certainty of title following sale, enhance ability to ensure that sales are conducted by qualified trustees, prevent unnecessary litigation, facilitate loss mitigation between borrowers and sellers, and protect the interests of homeowners, lenders and trustees.
 - b. Study the imposition of mechanics' liens on automobiles and its impact on mechanics, car owners and purchasers, and lenders.
 - c. Review ad valorem tax lien lending after the implementation of SB 247 (83R) and the impact on homeowners, taxing authorities, mortgage lenders, and tax lien lenders. Review the procedures and powers of the Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner to ensure compliance with SB 247.
3. Study the impact of SB 1024 (82R) on wage theft and law enforcement's and regulatory agencies' responses to wage theft claims. Recommend changes if necessary.
4. Examine the issue of misclassifying employees as independent contractors on workers, employers, income tax withholding, and the unemployment insurance system. Review current statutory deterrents, including those required by HB 2015 (83R), and make recommendations for changes if necessary.
5. Study the impact of credit card data theft and other credit or privacy information theft on Texas consumers and businesses.
6. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Corrections

1. Study and review the correctional facilities and processes within Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles, and Texas Juvenile Justice Department with emphasis on efficiencies, effectiveness, and recidivism. Examine the existing programmatic approach per facility in the areas of the vocation, education, visitation, rehabilitation, health and mental health services, parole supervision, and reentry initiatives. Evaluate opportunities for partnerships between facilities and private industries to offer education, job training, and potential employment for offenders during incarceration, parole, and final release.
2. Examine the association between co-occurring serious mental illness and substance use disorders and parole revocation among inmates from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Review current policies and procedures for incarcerating individuals with a dual mental health diagnosis in both state and county correctional facilities and examine potential remedies within the State's criminal justice system to ensure that the public is protected and that individuals with a mental health diagnosis receive a continuum of mental health services. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence)*
3. In the area of Juvenile Justice, analyze and make recommendations on outcome-based financing models that allow the state to partner with private investors and innovative service providers willing to cover the upfront costs and assume performance risk to divert youths into cost-effective programs and interventions, while assuring that taxpayers will not pay for the programs unless the programs demonstrate success in achieving the desired outcomes.
4. Study the impact of SB 393 (83R) and SB 1114 (83R). Assess the impact of school discipline and school-based policing on referrals to the municipal, justice, and juvenile courts, and identify judicial policies or initiatives designed to reduce referrals without having a negative impact on school safety. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Public Education)*
5. Monitor the administration of the Correctional Managed Health Care system and examine forecasts for short and long-term criminal justice populations and health care cost trends. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Appropriations)*
6. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;

- c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
- d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on County Affairs

1. Examine population growth in Texas counties and the impact the growth has had on housing, available land resources, businesses in Texas, as well as the impact of growth on the state's economy. Evaluate Texas's preparedness to respond to future growth and ensure economic stability.
2. Continue oversight of the Texas Commission on Jail Standards and issues jails currently face, including the mental health of those in jail, and make recommendations for refinement or improvement of processes and programs.
3. Monitor the health advisory panel stemming from HB 3793 (83R).
4. Determine which counties have implemented a cite-and-summons policy, whether the policy has been effective in lessening overcrowding in county jails, and whether those cited by peace officers comply with the policy.
5. Study the implementation of SB 462 (83R). Examine which counties currently have veterans courts, as well as veterans courts in other states, and determine how those programs are working and whether these courts provide additional services or resources for veterans. Make appropriate recommendations. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs)*
6. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
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House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence

1. Study the classification of 17-year-olds as adults in the criminal justice system of Texas.
2. Study the effectiveness of deferred adjudication and orders for non-disclosure in spite of the many exceptions to the statute. Study extending the use of expunction of criminal records history and non-disclosures to certain qualified individuals with low-level, non-violent convictions. Examine the statutorily allowed but underused non-disclosure and expunction of criminal records, and the use of deferred adjudication.
3. Study the impact of SB 1289 (83R). Examine the sale of criminal histories that may be erroneous as well as the lasting impact that arrest records have on individuals who are arrested but not charged or convicted. Assess the need for revision of existing statutes and consider designating an agency responsible for regulating entities involved in the industry.
4. Examine the association between co-occurring serious mental illness and substance use disorders and parole revocation among inmates from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Review current policies and procedures for incarcerating individuals with a dual mental health diagnosis in both state and county correctional facilities and examine potential remedies within the State's criminal justice system to ensure that the public is protected and that individuals with a mental health diagnosis receive a continuum of mental health services. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Corrections)*
5. Examine the current pecuniary loss thresholds associated with graffiti offenses. Study the costs of enhancing the penalties associated with the offense of graffiti, as well as a study of pretrial diversion programs that exist in other states and are specific to persons convicted of graffiti offenses. Study the existing Graffiti Abatement Programs in Texas.
6. Evaluate the approximately 1,500 non-traditional criminal offenses that can be found outside of the Penal Code. Study the feasibility of streamlining these offenses and examine ambiguities in the law. Study the existing use of the Rule of Lenity and Mens Rea requirements in Texas and the benefit of codifying both of these standards.
7. Examine the utilization of community supervision in state jail felonies and the effectiveness of the state jail in light of its original purpose.
8. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;

- c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
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House Committee on Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

1. Develop a long-term plan to incorporate land that has been donated or sold to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department into our state park system.
2. Evaluate the Texas Film Commission and the Texas Music Office to determine their effectiveness in economic development in Texas. Determine how the offices can better collaborate with local economic development entities and state agencies to further the economic development goals of the state.
3. Examine the viability of including the commercial oyster industry in the Commercial Fishing License Buyback Program at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
4. Examine current statutes and rules to determine any necessary enhancements that can assist in the eradication of feral hogs by using practical solutions and effective eradication techniques. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock)*
5. Monitor the implementation of HB 3279 (83R) regarding the protection of seagrass plants.
6. Examine the economic impact of cultural, recreational, or tourism grants provided by the state, including any economic development grants related to cultural, recreational, or tourism industries, heritage tourism, courthouse restoration, and historic district revitalization.
7. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
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 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs

1. Review the effectiveness and responsibilities of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission (TMPC). Examine the resources available to the TMPC to ensure the council has the organizational structure in place to protect base installations in Texas during future Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) rounds. Monitor the actions of the newly created BRAC task force, SB 1200 (83R), and review methodologies to enhance relationships between military installations and state and local government to positively impact decisions of BRAC, or similar proposals from the U.S. Department of Defense that could result in a reduced military presence in Texas. Seek opportunities to enhance or expand current military missions in Texas and identify, when possible, new missions that would complement or support existing ones.
2. Study methods to assure returning veterans have access to necessary transition assistance and access to job training, education, and sustainable employment, including monitoring federal actions and coordinating state and private programs. Specifically, explore options for alternative certification programs that give returning military service men and women credit for skills learned and time served while on active duty. Track related legislation passed during the 83rd Legislature.
3. Examine the recommendations contained in the report by the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (TCCVS), study whether these recommendations have been implemented, and examine new methods to help homeless Veterans using state, regional, and local resources. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Urban Affairs)*
4. Study the implementation of SB 462 (83R). Examine which counties currently have veterans courts, as well as veterans courts in other states, and determine how those programs are working and whether these courts provide additional services or resources for veterans. Make appropriate recommendations. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on County Affairs)*
5. Evaluate current resources at higher education institutions, state agencies, and community-based organizations that provide support for military veteran students. Review the current process for assessing and placing these students in appropriate course work so that they are successful. Determine if new funding sources are needed at community colleges to educate or train military veterans who might need Developmental Education or Adult Basic Education (ABE). Recommend strategies for effectively supporting military veteran students in their academic and workforce goals.
6. Monitor the implementation of HB 2392 (83R), Peer-to-Peer Mental Health Program, administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, particularly the interface with local mental health authorities and veterans' groups, with a focus on issues related to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

7. Study the implementation of all legislation from the 83rd Regular Session that seeks to develop a model to require state agencies regulating occupational licenses which require an apprenticeship to credit veterans' relevant military experience toward the apprenticeship requirements. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Licensing and Administrative Procedures)*
8. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Economic and Small Business Development

1. Review the statutes and state agency rules pertaining to public-private partnerships to ensure a fair, competitive, and transparent process that benefits all parties engaging in the partnership. Review how other states and countries utilize public-private partnerships and make recommendations on how to improve the process in Texas, specifically looking at whether there needs to be a single state entity responsible for administering the public private partnership program.
2. Examine and evaluate economic development incentives to determine if the incentives are achieving the desired outcomes for which the incentives were initially established. Review which economic development goals and incentives are most important and report on methods to further improve those goals and incentives while reducing ones not meeting their desired objectives.
3. Study venture capital investment in the state and determine how Texas compares to other states in attracting venture capital dollars. Make recommendations to improve Texas's ability in attract venture capital investment.
4. Review the current Texas Industry Cluster Initiative to determine if the state's targeted industry clusters need to be updated to reflect changes in industry sectors that have evolved in Texas since the clusters were initially identified.
5. Review the Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism and determine its effectiveness on economic development in Texas. Determine how the office could be more efficiently coordinated with local and regional economic development entities and other state agencies to help further the economic development goals of the state.
6. Monitor manufacturing and manufacturing workforce development initiatives passed by the 83rd Legislature.
7. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Elections

1. Examine the use of Help America Vote Act funds and methods to ensure the efforts required by the Help America Vote Act continue.
2. Study the Interstate Voter Crosscheck Program. Specifically, study the results of the program used in other states, how other states use the data, and make recommendations about whether the state of Texas should establish this program.
3. Evaluate the Move Act, specifically the implementation of HB 1129 (83R), relating to a program allowing certain military voters on active duty overseas to cast a ballot electronically.
4. Examine online voter registration systems in other states. Study costs and security concerns, weigh the pros and cons of online voter registration, and make recommendations.
5. Review the study by the Secretary of State required by HB 3103 (83R) regarding moving the date of the Texas presidential primary election, and make appropriate recommendations.
6. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
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House Committee on Energy Resources

1. Study the impact of the expanding oil and gas exploration and production occurring across the state. Included in the study should be both the positive impacts of the exploration and production as well as the new challenges they are presenting. The study should encompass a review of the following issues:
 - The effect on the state budget and the Economic Stabilization Fund;
 - The overall impact on the state economy;
 - The impact on property values and local taxes;
 - The effect on roads;
 - The impact on local school districts;
 - The complex relationship between land owners, royalty owners, and operators;
 - The impact on the environment, including emissions and injection wells;
 - Projected water needs and how those fit with our state water plan; and
 - The housing issues created by the number of workers needed in areas of shale plays.
2. Study the P5 permitting process at the Railroad Commission to determine whether the process is efficient and effective and whether there are actions that can be taken to improve the process.
3. Study and review the appropriation of general revenue dollars allocated to the Railroad Commission for improvements in IT systems to ensure those funds are being utilized to streamline the permitting process and to allow access to information for all parties that conduct business at the Commission.
4. Review the application of Texas Business & Commerce Code, Section 9.343, to determine the legal rights of unperfected security interests of oil and gas producers with respect to subsequent purchasers, specifically in the context of a bankruptcy proceeding such as *Arrow Oil & Gas, Inc. v. SemCrude, L.P.* and subsequent cases.
5. Monitor the implementation of HB 2982 (83R) to ensure that the required rulemaking is completed efficiently and in a timely manner and SB 1747 (83R) to ensure effective implementation in keeping with legislative intent.
6. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and

d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Environmental Regulation

1. Study the environmental permitting processes at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), specifically the contested-case hearing process at the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) and the timelines associated with the process. Study the economic impact that the state's permitting processes have on Texas manufacturing sectors and how neighboring states' and the federal permitting processes and timelines compare to those in Texas.
2. Study the rules, laws, and regulations pertaining to the disposal of high-level radioactive waste in Texas and determine the potential economic impact of permitting a facility in Texas. Make specific recommendations on the state and federal actions necessary to permit a high-level radioactive waste disposal or interim storage facility in Texas.
3. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
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House Committee on Government Efficiency and Reform

1. Examine current restrictions on state and local governmental entities relating to the construction of critical infrastructure, including transportation and water projects, and make recommendations for expediting and creating more cost-effective and efficient methods for the construction of such projects.
2. Study the current laws, rules, and processes in place for the Department of Information Resources's Cooperative Contracts and recommend improvements to the 84th Legislature. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Technology)*
3. Review the application of the Public Information Act to requests for large amounts of electronic data. Examine whether the procedures and deadlines imposed by the Act give governmental bodies enough time to identify and protect confidential information in such requests.
4. Examine the public's accessibility to government services and agencies through the use of mobile applications and online services. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Technology)*
5. Study the benefits of utilizing a Chief Innovation Officer for Texas and its agencies.
6. Study the feasibility of having all state agencies use the Texas Workforce Commission's "Work in Texas" website for a more standardized applications process. Determine the interest of municipal, county, and other jurisdictions in boosting their utilization of the website.
7. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
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House Committee on Higher Education

1. Study the potential of recent technology-enabled innovations for dramatically increasing the number and diversity of students who may access, participate and succeed in quality higher education, including Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Synchronous Massive Online Courses (SMOCs), blended courses that combine online and classroom instruction, and other innovations with potential to personalize the learning experience, reduce costs, and transcend the physical limitations of traditional campuses. Consider challenges and opportunities for leveraging new technologies to increase the educational attainment of traditionally underserved populations including adult learners.
2. Study new strategies for funding General Academic institutions to accelerate educational innovation and increase focus on improving student learning and success rather than seat time. Consider approaches that encourage new and more productive business models that incorporate affordable, lower-cost academic delivery models and expand the state's capacity to deliver high-quality education.
3. Study how state resources might be better used to support the success of the rapidly growing numbers of state residents who need postsecondary degrees. Evaluate current programs and policies related to financial aid, tuition assistance, waivers, and work study, and evaluate their relative impact and return on investment with regard to student enrollment, persistence, and completion. Consider how state dollars might be better used in combination with federal financial aid to promote and accelerate student success. Explore strategies and best practices for reducing student loan default rates in Texas.
4. Former foster youth have the benefit of free tuition and fees if they enroll in higher education, yet very few take advantage of this opportunity. Consider new strategies to support these youth and make recommendations to enroll and retain more foster youth in higher education. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Human Services)*
5. Review current capital needs in higher education. The committees shall examine past methods of financing higher education's capital needs, as well as approaches used in other states. The committees shall jointly make recommendations to address these costs in the future. In adopting recommendations, the committees should focus on methodologies that identify priority capital projects, treat institutions of higher education equitably, and uniformly share costs between the state and institutions. The committees should also examine the viability of alternatives to traditional models for funding capital projects. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Appropriations)*

6. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
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House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety

1. Assess the level of preparedness among critical infrastructure entities, state and local emergency planning organizations, first response efforts, and overall coordination of jurisdictions across the state. Include a review of the state's role in preparing, resourcing, and coordinating with local emergency response, specifically in rural areas or areas that depend largely on volunteer response efforts.
2. Investigate the fatal explosion in West, Texas, in April 2013, for deficiencies in safety, risk management, and disaster planning by chemical facilities and state entities. Determine if any changes should be made to existing laws and rules relating to inspection, investigation, and enforcement, and make specific recommendations on how to reduce the likelihood for damage, injury, or death.
3. Evaluate state and local entities' effectiveness in meeting the state's border and homeland security program goals and objectives.
4. Review the Driver Responsibility Program and consider methods for overall improvement of the program.
5. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
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House Committee on Human Services

1. Examine crisis resources for individuals with co-occurring mental illness and intellectual/developmental disabilities. Identify strategies to serve individuals with complex behavioral and medical needs in the community.
2. Monitor the implementation of Foster Care Redesign. Evaluate its impact on the child welfare system in areas of the state where redesign is underway, including transition from the legacy system, foster family retention and recruitment, placement stability, permanency, and child safety.
3. Monitor and evaluate implementation of SB 7 (83R), including agency preparations for the statewide rollout of STAR+PLUS.
4. Former foster youth have the benefit of free tuition and fees if they enroll in higher education, yet very few take advantage of this opportunity. Consider new strategies to support these youth and make recommendations to enroll and retain more foster youth in higher education. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Higher Education)*
5. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction, including implementation of the Balancing Incentives Program and relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Insurance

1. Monitor the effects of the Affordable Care Act on the availability and affordability of private health insurance coverage in Texas and on the health insurance market.
2. Evaluate options to expand transparency in the health care marketplace and facilitate informed consumer choice. Monitor the implementation of prior legislation to encourage transparency and adequacy of health care provider networks. Review prior legislative attempts to achieve greater transparency and the effectiveness of regulatory efforts to minimize the negative impacts on consumers related to out-of-network service disputes.
3. Monitor the status of the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA). Consider options to enhance TWIA's ability to serve its statutory purpose and to fairly and equitably serve its policyholders. Include an evaluation of TWIA's operations, improved incentives for coverage by the private market, and effective use of reinsurance, bonds, and other financial devices.
4. Examine opportunities to improve the resiliency of the Texas coast to withstand tropical storms. Study strategies to incentivize and encourage hazard mitigation, and consider the current state of building codes and how they might more effectively protect property and reduce losses. Examine the proper role of insurance in protecting the Texas coast. Coordinate as necessary with the joint interim committee created by HB 3459 (83R). *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Land and Resource Management)*
5. Examine the following aspects of the Texas auto insurance market:
 - Methods to decrease the rate of uninsured drivers, including an evaluation of the success of current programs and possible improvements; and
 - The benefits and drawbacks of prohibiting or restricting the use of "named driver" auto insurance policies.
6. Make recommendations for any necessary reforms to address the long-term stability of the residual market for workers' compensation insurance in this state.
7. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and

d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on International Trade & Intergovernmental Affairs

1. Examine opportunities and innovations to increase international trade and investment in Texas. Review state and federal regulations to determine what can be done to ease tariff and non-tariff barriers in order to maximize trade flow.
2. Study options to improve the physical infrastructure that facilitates international trade, considering both state and local investment opportunities.
3. Quantify the impact of commercial ship traffic on smaller coastal waterways and find creative, pro-growth solutions that will allow all Texans access to the Gulf of Mexico.
4. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Investments and Financial Services

1. Review Texas home equity laws. Study and make recommendations for ensuring Texas consumers have appropriate access to the equity in their homes and adequate protections.
2. Review the state regulatory and administrative systems related to public school bond issuances. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Public Education)*
3. Analyze the costs and benefits of implementing an intrastate equity crowd funding system in Texas. Examine the programs other states have implemented and determine whether an equity crowd funding system is appropriate for Texas, and what statutory changes or regulations are necessary to implement equity crowd funding.
4. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence

1. Examine the constitutional qualifications and term lengths for appellate court judges, and consider whether changes would benefit the public and the judiciary.
2. Study the potential issues involving civil liability for interacting with ex-offenders. In particular, examine the implications of HB 1188 (83R) and the potential expansion of similar protections to landlords.
3. Review the methods used by state agencies and courts to prepare and publish electronic legal materials. Examine the processes used to ensure reliability and permanence of these materials and strategies used to harmonize those processes with national standards, including possible adoption of the Uniform Electronic Legal Materials Act.
4. Study issues that inhibit the use of wills and access to the probate process in Texas, particularly for low-income individuals.
5. Examine the public policy implications of litigation related to environmental contamination brought by local governments, in particular whether such litigation supports effective remediation.
6. Study the issue of whether Regional Presiding Judges should be appointed by the Chief Justice rather than the Governor.
7. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Land and Resource Management

1. Examine population growth in Texas cities and the impact the growth has had on housing, available land resources, city centers, businesses, and the state's economy. Evaluate Texas's preparedness to respond to future growth and ensure economic stability. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Urban Affairs)*
2. Study the effectiveness of the implementation of HB 3459 (83R) and examine the feasibility and desirability of creating and maintaining a coastal barrier system.
3. Study current regulatory authority available to municipalities in their extraterritorial jurisdiction. Examine how citizens are involved in the zoning process, and make necessary recommendations to ensure a proper balance between development activities, municipal regulations, and the effect zoning decisions have on Texas citizens.
4. Examine opportunities to improve the resiliency of the Texas coast to withstand tropical storms. Study strategies to incentivize and encourage hazard mitigation, and consider the current state of building codes and how they might more effectively protect property and reduce losses. Examine the proper role of insurance in protecting the Texas coast. Coordinate as necessary with the joint interim committee created by HB 3459 (83R). *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Insurance)*
5. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Licensing and Administrative Procedures

1. Evaluate and consider cost-saving technologies and programs used by the Department of Licensing and Regulation to increase efficiencies and access to those with licensing occupations. Identify and make recommendations to implement these goals.
2. Study appropriate methods to expand the right of individuals to challenge occupational licensing rules and regulations, and identify occupational licenses that may not be necessary for public safety or health.
3. Study the implementation of all legislation from the 83rd Regular Session that seeks to develop a model to require state agencies regulating occupational licenses which require an apprenticeship to credit veterans' relevant military experience toward the apprenticeship requirements. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs)*
4. Study the implementation and possible impacts of HB 3038 (83R), including the effect it would have on multi-state auction companies, as well as business-to-business auctions.
5. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Natural Resources

1. Monitor the implementation of HB 4 (83R) and SJR 1 (83R) and the progress of the Texas Water Development Board and other entities in implementing this legislation to provide a stable, long-term funding source for the State Water Plan.
2. Evaluate the availability, management, and development of groundwater in the state. Consider the economic, environmental, and social impacts of groundwater usage and production in the agricultural, municipal, and energy sectors. In particular, examine methods to facilitate further development of brackish groundwater resources and to improve the consistency and certainty of permitting by groundwater districts without undercutting reasonable regional and local regulation of groundwater.
3. Explore opportunities to encourage voluntary protection and stewardship of privately owned lands in support of the state's water supply and to protect environmental flow needs in Texas rivers. Examine methods in which state agencies, water rights holders, and non-governmental organizations can work together through programs like the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program and the Texas Water Trust.
4. Examine strategies to enhance the use of aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) projects, including a review of existing ASR facilities in Texas and elsewhere.
5. Monitor the use of funds provided or made available to Texas in relation to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and make recommendations on the appropriate use of these funds in the future. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Appropriations)*
6. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Pensions

1. Examine the immediate and long-term fiscal impact of the Employees Retirement System (ERS) employee health care plan. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Appropriations)*
2. Study the affordability of health care for active public school employees. Examine how premiums and out-of-pocket costs have increased over time and how these increases have affected employees and school districts, and make appropriate recommendations. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Appropriations)*
3. Examine the immediate and long-term fiscal impact of the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) health care plan (TRS-Care). *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Appropriations)*
4. Examine the new reporting requirements proposed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).
5. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Public Education

1. Monitor the implementation of HB 5 (83R) and report on recommendations for improvement. Work with the Texas Education Agency, the State Board of Education, and public and higher education stakeholders to ensure the creation of additional rigorous mathematics and science courses needed to address the current and projected needs of the state's workforce.
2. Explore innovative, research-based options for improving student achievement beyond standardized test scores. Evaluate standards for effective campus management as well as teacher preparation, certification, and training. Review current teacher evaluation tools and instructional methods, such as project-based learning, and recommend any improvements that would promote improved student achievement. Engage stakeholders on how to recruit and retain more of our "best and brightest" into the teaching profession.
3. Solicit input from leading authorities on the traits and characteristics of good governance, effective checks and balances between the board and administration and the effective relationship between a board and the superintendent. Review current oversight authority by the Texas Education Agency over school board policies on governance. Make recommendations on trustee training, potential sanctions, and means of grievances, as well as recommendations on whether the role of trustee or superintendent needs to be more clearly defined.
4. Review successful strategies and methods that have improved student achievement at chronically underperforming schools. Identify alternatives that could be offered to current students who are attending these schools and determine how to turn these schools around. Identify the benefits and concerns with alternative governance of underperforming schools.
5. Review the broad scope and breadth of the current TEKS in the tested grades, including the format, testing calendar, and the limitation on instructional days available. Recommend options to streamline the assessment of TEKS and focus on core concepts. Review current federal testing requirements in grades 3-8 to determine if testing relief is possible.
6. Examine the role of the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) in serving school districts. Review the programs and services of HCDE, specifically the department's ability to assist school districts to operate more efficiently. Report any costs or savings the HCDE provides districts and taxpayers. Make recommendations to improve the operation of the HCDE.

7. Review the state regulatory and administrative systems related to public school bond issuances. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Investments and Financial Services)*
8. Study the impact of SB 393 (83R) and SB 1114 (83R). Assess the impact of school discipline and school-based policing on referrals to the municipal, justice, and juvenile courts, and identify judicial policies or initiatives designed to reduce referrals without having a negative impact on school safety. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Corrections)*
9. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Public Health

1. Assess the prevalence of nonmedical prescription drug use in the state (including opioid analgesics, stimulants, tranquilizers, and sedatives). Identify adverse health impacts. Recommend strategies to curb emerging substance abuse trends among children, pregnant women, and adults, as well as to reduce health care costs and mortality.
2. Study and make recommendations for improvements to the licensing, regulation, and monitoring of compounding pharmacies, including a review of the joint cooperative efforts between the Texas State Board of Pharmacy, Department of State Health Services, and U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Consider the impact of the passage of SB 1100 (83R), additional appropriations made by the 83rd Legislature to strengthen inspections, and any relevant federal legislation.
3. Identify strategies to support the efficient exchange of electronic health information with Texas Health and Human Services enterprise agencies. Examine legal and technical issues around the accessibility of information held in registries maintained by state agencies to authorized health care providers. Identify issues related to health information exchange and providers' liability, as well as concerns related to transitioning patient data in cases where a provider selects a new electronic health record vendor.
4. Examine the current practice for dispensation of biologic and follow-on biologic (biosimilar) pharmaceutical products in our state. Review any practices for interchangeability of drugs that might pertain to these particular medicines. Review and make recommendations regarding the substitution of biosimilar and biologic medicines.
5. Monitor transition of the state's immunization registry to a new system. Determine whether the registry can be better utilized to prevent and/or respond to communicable disease outbreaks, including pertussis. Identify potential factors contributing to the rise in the number of pertussis cases and strategies to prevent future outbreaks.
6. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature, including HB 15 (83R). In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Special Purpose Districts

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of existing special purpose districts in the state. Study how special districts interact with other local governments and local taxpayers during and after their creation. Examine circumstances under which special districts are accountable to local taxpayers and make recommendations on ways to increase spending transparency among districts.

House Committee on State Affairs

1. Study the methods state agencies use for planning for investment in future infrastructure. Specifically, review how agencies determine what investments in infrastructure will be necessary to meet the state's demands and facilitate continued economic expansion. Review how agencies determine the costs and benefits associated with future infrastructure investment to ensure that the citizens of the state are receiving the best value and what other factors agencies use to make investment decisions.
2. Study Title 15 of the Election Code, which regulates political funds and campaigns, including requirements for financial reports by campaigns, candidates, officeholders, and political committees. Specifically, study what types of groups are exempt from reporting requirements in the Election Code and make recommendations on how to make the political process more transparent.
3. Study the different financial assurance options used by state agencies to ensure compliance with environmental clean-up or remediation costs. Determine whether the methods utilized by state agencies are appropriate to ensure sufficient funds will be available when called upon.
4. Review state agency contracting with businesses seeking to provide goods and services to the state. Study the procedures agencies use to determine the costs versus benefits when evaluating proposals. Determine whether additional disclosure and reporting requirements are necessary to ensure transparency and accountability and to promote ethical business practices.
5. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Technology

1. Study the current laws, rules, and processes in place for the Department of Information Resources's Cooperative Contracts and recommend improvements to the 84th Legislature. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Government Efficiency and Reform)*
2. Examine the public's accessibility to government services and agencies through the use of mobile applications and online services. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Government Efficiency and Reform)*
3. Study the feasibility of an integrated identity management program (IIMP) for state agencies. Examine best practices in the deployment of technology to safeguard state data and programs, limit fraudulent or unauthorized access to state hardware and software, and develop a secure state digital infrastructure. Determine potential savings to the state and make further recommendations on the implementation of IIMP that encompass both logical and physical security.
4. Study whether abuses in the patent system interfere with the goal of expanded opportunity and innovation for Texas businesses and whether actions by the state can address any such abuses.
5. Evaluate Texas's competitiveness with other states in recruiting and cultivating the software industry, including entertainment software; fostering economic development; and creating potential new jobs. Examine current incentives and regulations and whether these assist or hinder the expansion of the entertainment software industry in Texas.
6. Review state regulatory and tax policy to ensure that investment in technology infrastructure, goods, and services is unfettered and that Texas is able to capitalize on innovation to fuel additional job growth, business expansion, and investment. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Ways and Means)*
7. Monitor and review the efforts of the Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Texas Technology Task Force (TTTF). The TTTF shall study emerging transportation, communication, and computing technologies and determine physical infrastructure and system components that TxDOT or other state departments would need to provide to enable selected technologies. The task is to be completed by TTTF as directed by SB 1 (83R), item 44, Article VII-31. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Transportation)*

8. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Transportation

1. Evaluate actions by state agencies under the committee's jurisdiction to increase transparency, accountability, and efficiency. Consider the cost-saving outsourcing of technologies and recently developed practices, such as the conversion of roadways, used by the Department of Transportation designed to demonstrate savings. Identify and make recommendations on the credibility and effectiveness of these goals.
2. Monitor the usage of state funds by the Texas Department of Transportation for improving road quality in areas impacted by Energy Sector activities.
3. Evaluate the status of Texas's port system, including a review of the structure and operations of the Maritime Division of the Texas Department of Transportation.
4. Evaluate the status of passenger and freight rail in Texas, including a review of the structure and operations of the Rail Division of the Texas Department of Transportation.
5. Review the state of our current transportation infrastructure outside of the five most populous areas. Explore future needs of our infrastructure and make recommendations to ensure long-range sufficiency.
6. Monitor the implementation of the "Turn-Back Program" by the Texas Department of Transportation, specifically its fiscal impact to municipalities and taxpayers.
7. Examine county authority to utilize tax increment financing and transportation reinvestment zones to fund transportation projects.
8. Monitor and review the efforts of the Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Texas Technology Task Force (TTTF). The TTTF shall study emerging transportation, communication, and computing technologies and determine physical infrastructure and system components that TxDOT or other state departments would need to provide to enable selected technologies. The task is to be completed by TTTF as directed by SB 1 (83R), item 44, Article VII-31. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Technology)*
9. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and

d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Urban Affairs

1. Examine population growth in Texas cities and the impact the growth has had on housing, available land resources, city centers, businesses, and the state's economy. Evaluate Texas's preparedness to respond to future growth and ensure economic stability. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Land and Resource Management)*
2. Examine strategies to address the chronic graffiti problem. Study solutions implemented in other states and cities and whether those programs have been successful, and make appropriate recommendations.
3. Examine the recommendations contained in the report by the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (TCCVS), study whether these recommendations have been implemented, and examine new methods to help homeless Veterans using state, regional, and local resources. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs)*
4. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.

House Committee on Ways and Means

1. Monitor the implementation of recent amendments to the property tax. Examine whether the frequency of reappraisals strikes the proper balance between stability and predictability in values for taxpayers and taxation at market value.
2. Monitor the implementation of recent amendments to the franchise tax.
3. Study methods used to evaluate the impact of taxes on individuals and businesses.
4. Review the current process for resolving contested cases involving state taxes and fees. Examine the need for the creation of an alternative, independent review process to hear and decide such cases.
5. Review the various state event trust fund accounts to ensure that the accounts are operated in a manner that is transparent and accountable.
6. Evaluate the actions of the comptroller's office to increase transparency, accountability, and efficiency. Examine ways to increase efficiency in the administration of taxes through the use of technology. Identify and make recommendations to implement these goals.
7. Review state regulatory and tax policy to ensure that investment in technology infrastructure, goods, and services is unfettered and that Texas is able to capitalize on innovation to fuel additional job growth, business expansion, and investment. *(Joint charge with the House Committee on Technology)*
8. Conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 83rd Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee should:
 - a. consider any reforms to state agencies to make them more responsive to Texas taxpayers and citizens;
 - b. identify issues regarding the agency or its governance that may be appropriate to investigate, improve, remedy, or eliminate;
 - c. determine whether an agency is operating in a transparent and efficient manner; and
 - d. identify opportunities to streamline programs and services while maintaining the mission of the agency and its programs.