



State Representative Lyle Larson
TX HD-122

05.10.2011

Weekly Recap #17

What's new in District 122

With just three weeks until Sine Die, the last day of the 82nd Legislative Session, tension is high and many bills are poised to die as deadlines approach. Each day the House calendar is packed with bills that we debate well into the night.

The House convened on Saturday, the day before Mother's Day, to take up several pieces of legislation, including HB 274, also known as the "Loser Pays bill." HB 274 is a tort reform bill that would require plaintiffs who lose in a lawsuit to pay all of the legal costs incurred. Drama ensued shortly after we convened as several members wishing to kill the legislation threatened to leave the House floor and break the 2/3 quorum necessary to take up legislation. Several terse words were exchanged, but the bill finally passed with a vote of 86-11.

Last night, the House approved on second reading HB 12, which would prohibit sanctuary cities. The bill was finally voted on around midnight after hours of debate and impassioned speeches by members of both parties. SB 655, the Railroad Commission sunset bill, passed last week. The bill changes the name of the commission to the Texas Oil and Gas Commission. As we have previously discussed, I filed legislation that would require all state elected officials to resign to run for another office if they have more than one year left on their term. This would prevent concerns that have arisen recently with two of the three Railroad Commissioners currently running for office. The House also appointed the members of the conference committee to work out differences in the budgets passed by the House and the Senate.

Several of our bills are moving through the process. Last week, HB 2348, which would create a Cyber Security Council, was sent to the Calendars Committee. Last night, the Select Committee on State Sovereignty approved HB 3188, the EPA push back bill. Our HB 3597, which would assist public improvement districts, like Cibolo Canyons, which is home to the world's largest JW Marriott hotel. We look forward to working to pass these bills in the next three weeks.

The Texas Legislative Process - Points of Order

To provide you with some additional background on this process, the House governs itself with a set of rules adopted at the start of Session. If a legislator believes a rule has been violated, they can call a point of order, which questions whether or not a rule has been broken. When a point of order is called, the House Parliamentarian evaluates whether the point of order is valid. Points of order often deal with the paperwork associated with a bill. Every bill that makes it to the floor for a vote includes a bill analysis, a list of witnesses and witness affirmation forms and other documentation. Example of recent points of order include an assertion that a bill analysis doesn't accurately explain the bill, or that a witness affirmation form failed to include the witness's full address. Since Session began in January, legislators have called 61 points of order on several different bills, stalling some for days and sending some back to the committees they came from to be fixed.

At the Capitol



At the front microphone, speaking on a bill.

If we may be of assistance to you, please feel free to contact our Capitol office at (512) 463-0646 or lyle.larson@house.state.tx.us. Please continue to let us hear from you!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lyle Larson".

