



STATE REPRESENTATIVE HUBERT VO

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



March 2021 • District 149

A Message From Representative Vo

As the Spring season arrives, I hope that 2021 has treated you well so far. With the 87th Texas Legislative Session well under way, I have been working hard over the past months to represent your interests here at the State's capitol. So far my colleagues and I have tackled ERCOT's response to Winter Storm Uri, begun deliberation on the Governor's list of "emergency items," and organized committee hearings to discuss some of the 5,174 bills filed in the legislature with members of the public. In addition, 5 of my own bills have already been referred to their respective House committees. I hope you will enjoy this short update on my work in Austin and I thank you for your interest in the legislative process.

Legislative Update

In the aftermath of Winter Storm Uri, which left over 4 million Texans without electricity, state lawmakers acted quickly to protect and demand answers for the public. The legislature held hearings with Bill Magness, the now-fired CEO of the Electric Reliability Council (ERCOT), and other ERCOT officials to investigate whether or not the blackouts could have been avoided, who or what is to blame, and whether the state needs to rethink ERCOT oversight. ERCOT is estimated to have overcharged Texans by \$16 billion last month, partly due to Public Utility Commission (PUC) market regulations. PUC has issued orders to ensure that energy consumers will not be held responsible: (1) temporarily blocking Texas electricity companies from disconnecting customers from power or water due to lack of payment, and (2) stopping companies from sending invoices or bill estimates to customers until issues are resolved. The Texas House is now considering legislation to weatherize the electric grid and natural gas pipelines in order to prepare for future storms

Bills Referred to Committee

Earlier this month, 5 of Representative Vo's bills filed for the 87th legislative session were referred to committee for in-depth deliberation:

- House Bill 1151, *Relating to the days and hours during which the polls are open for early voting by personal appearance*, to the Committee on Elections.
- House Bill 1152, *Relating to the criminal offense of unlawfully prohibiting an employee from voting*, also to the Committee on Elections.
- House Bill 1153, *Relating to the applicability of the Texas Fair Housing Act to certain sales and rentals*, to the Committee on Business & Industry.
- House Bill 1155, *Relating to the authority of certain municipal utility districts to select the municipality that will have authority over the district*, to the Committee on Land & Resource Management.
- House Bill 1157, *Relating to hiring and licensing certain veterans as peace officers*, to the Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety.

Detailed information on these and other pieces of legislation can be found at capitol.texas.gov.

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