



# TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

*James White*

*House District 19  
Jasper, Newton, Hardin, Polk, Tyler*

CORRECTIONS  
CHAIR

REDISTRICTING

JUDICIARY &  
CIVIL JURISPRUDENCE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, May 27, 2019

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### **Texas House Passes Legislation Supporting Texas Peace Officers, Protecting the Preborn, and Strengthening Women's Health** - Weekly Legislative Update 5/17/19 -

(Austin, TX) - The Texas House passed Senate Bill 16 that creates a student loan repayment assistance program for future peace officers, which helps address the growing shortage of officers across the state. Peace officers put their lives on the line to protect our communities, and Texas is facing a critical shortage of officers.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) would be charged with operating a student loan repayment assistance program, similar to other loan repayment programs they currently operate. To apply for loan assistance, the peace officer must:

- Be employed as a Peace Officer on or after September 1, 2019;
- Obtain at least 60 hours of college credit at a community college or four-year institution;
- Become a Peace Officer following their higher education;
- Serve as a full-time peace officer for at least one year; and
- Maintain full-time employment while receiving repayment assistance.
- The student loan assistance provided by the THECB may not exceed five years and is limited to no more than \$4,000 per year, or \$20,000 in total.

A peace officer would be required to submit an application in each subsequent year after the initial application and approval to confirm he or she is still meeting the requirements of the program. Each year, an approved applicant would be eligible for up to \$4,000 or 20% of the total stated in the person's application. House Bill 1, the Texas budget passed by the House, includes a contingency rider in Article XI for this bill totaling \$2,500,000 in fiscal year 2021.

Furthermore, the House moved passage of Senate Bill 22. In order to protect Texas taxpayers and defend the unborn, SB 22 ensures that **no taxpayer dollars are used to fund abortion providers**. While measures have passed in each of the last several legislative sessions to prevent state funds from going to the abortion industry, the existing prohibitions do not impact transactions made by political subdivisions at every level of government.



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SB 22 prohibits government entities at the state and local level from entering into a taxpayer funded transaction or contract with abortion providers or affiliates of abortion providers. Taxpayer resource transactions required by federal law, confirmed by the Health and Human Services Commissioner and the Attorney General, are excluded from the prohibition. Additionally, the Attorney General is authorized to bring action on behalf of the state in the event of a violation.

Texas House Republicans have repeatedly stood on the side of life and increased access to women's health services. Taxpayers who oppose abortion should not have to see their tax dollars subsidizing the abortion industry and SB22 makes certain this never occurs.

Additionally, the House took steps to ensure that we aim to strengthen health services available to our Texas women. The Legislature passed and sent the following bills to the governor:

- HB 25: Relating to a pilot program for providing services to certain women and children under the Medicaid medical transportation program.
- HB 170: Relating to coverage for mammography under certain health benefit plans.
- HB 253: Relating to a strategic plan to address postpartum depression.
- HB 541: Relating to the right to express breast milk.
- HB 650: Relating to inmates of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.
  - This is my legislation that ensures that we treat women in the criminal justice with the dignity they deserve. I was honored to have the female legislators, in particular those who serve on the Corrections Committee, join me in authoring this legislation.
- HB 1651: Relating to the care of pregnant women confined in county jail.
- HB 2169: Relating to reporting concerning female prisoners who are confined in county jails and to the provision of feminine hygiene products to female prisoners.
- SB 24: Relating to the provision of informational materials and certain other information to a pregnant woman before an abortion.
- SB 436: Relating to statewide initiatives to improve maternal and newborn health for women with opioid use disorder.
- SB 750: Relating to maternal and newborn health care and the quality of services provided to women in this state under certain health care programs.
- SB 2132: Relating to the provision of information to certain women enrolled in the Healthy Texas Women program.



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The Capitol of Texas belongs to you and visiting the Capitol during the biennial legislative session is a great experience. To assist in arranging your visit please call Saul Mendoza, my Chief of Staff, at (512) 463-0490. Or, you can email him at [saul.mendoza@house.texas.gov](mailto:saul.mendoza@house.texas.gov).

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