

TEXAS COUNSELING ASSOCIATION
85th Legislative Session – April 28, 2017
WEEKLY UPDATE

Advocacy Builds Momentum for Professional Counselors

CALL TO ACTION

- Contact the [House Calendars Committee](#), especially if you are a constituent of any member and ask them to:
 - **Set HB 310** (Johnson) on the House calendar quickly. HB 310 would allow the allocation of compensatory education funds to support school counseling programs.
 - **NOT SET HB 3859** (James) on the House calendar. HB 3859 would “protect the rights of conscience” for child welfare workers. HB 3859 was favorably reported from House State Affairs on 4/26/17.
- Speaker Joe Strauss constituents: contact his office and ask him to refer **SB 490** to the House Public Education. SB 490 would require TEA to include in Texas Academic Performance Reports the number of school counselors at each campus.
- Review the *What’s Ahead* section. Contact your Senator or Representative and share your thoughts on the bills that are moving in the Senate and House next week.

TCA’s Watch List

The TCA [Weekly Tracking Report](#) includes the latest action on each bill that TCA is tracking. To read complete bills, go to www.capitol.state.tx.us and enter the bill number. *Pay close attention to House Bills that are being heard in the Senate and Senate Bills being heard in the House. Odds of passage increase as bills move through both bodies.*

What’s Ahead (as of April 28, 2017)

The House adjourned until 2 p.m. and the Senate adjourned until 1 p.m. on Monday, May 1, 2017.

Monday, May 1, 2017

- [House Human Services Committee](#), 8 a.m., E2.030, to hear 12 bills, including:
 - **HB 4056** (Rose) to direct TEA to include research-based best practices in physical or emotional trauma interventions, social and emotional learning, positive school climate; and positive behavior supports on their annual list of recommended programs.
- **House of Representatives Calendar:**
 - **HB 2895** (Price) to require institutions of higher education to post mental health resource information on their websites.
 - **HB 16** (Lozano) relating to sexual assault, family violence and stalking at public and private postsecondary educational institutions.
- [House Business and Industry Committee](#), 10 a.m. or upon adjournment, E2.016 to hear 11 bills, including:
 - **HB 3041** (Blanco) to all non-exempt employees to participate in academic, extracurricular and developmental activities of their children.
 - **HB 225** (Johnson, E) to prohibit employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
 - **HB 290** (Johnson, E) to prohibit sex discrimination in compensation.
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Tuesday, May 2, 2017

- [House Public Education Committee](#), 8 a.m., E2.036 to hear 26 bills, including:
 - **HB 3853** (Coleman) adds a new funding stream in Chapter 42 for behavioral health services; amends Chapter 33 to define “behavioral health professionals” as LSSP, LPC, LCSW and Certified School Counselors; directs schools that receive the new funding to hire any one of the behavioral health professionals for each campus in its district; and prohibits the behavioral health professionals from test administration or assistance.

- **HB 1847** (Coleman) to require schools to post a notice if a school nurse is not assigned to a campus. (*TCA has been advised that the sponsor intends to add school counselors and librarians in a committee substitute.*)
- **HB 2519** (Stuckey) directing TEA to conduct a study on dropout recovery and prevention before the ninth grade.
- **House of Representatives Calendar:**
 - **HB 928** (White) relating to assisting children who are in foster care or adopted in the process of applying to institutions of higher education.

What Happened This Week

The pressure is mounting as we begin the last four weeks of the session. A very long, emotional and contentious debate on SB 4, aka “Sanctuary Cities Bill” created a logjam for many bills on the House Calendar. TCA is seeing bills move in the House and Senate but will be pushing hard in the weeks ahead to get those bills across the Rotunda.

- **HB 2898** (Gonzales) was voted favorably (10/0) as filed in House Public Health. It now needs to go through the administrative process of being reported from the Committee so that Calendars can set it for a vote on the floor.
- **HB 310** (Johnson) was sent to Calendars Committee. (See Call to Action).
- **HB 306** (Minjarez) was voted favorably as substituted from House Public Education. The substitute includes an important TCA amendment regarding the role of school counselors. It appears that this bill and its companion **SB 179** (Menendez) will be the anti-bullying vehicles this session. **SB 179** is on the Senate Intent Calendar.
- **HB 743** (Farrar) relating to social work services in schools failed to pass to third reading in the House on a very close vote (67N/58Y).
- **CSHB 2818** (Romero) which would codify the Supreme Court ruling regarding the ability of LMFTs to diagnose was reported from House Public Health Committee and sent to the Local and Consent Calendar.
- **HB 3083** (Price) which adds LCDC to the mental health professional loan repayment program, among other changes was voted favorably in House Public Health
- **HB 3808** (Clardy) which adds LMFTs to the mental health professional loan repayment program was voted favorably in House Higher Education.
- **HCR 81** (Clardy) commending mental health professionals on the occasion of National Mental Health Month was passed by the Senate.

What Can You Do?

- IDENTIFY [who represents you](#) and load their contact information into your phone or computer.
- [REGISTER to attend](#) the May 16 Advocacy Day. Bring a friend. TCA membership is encouraged but not required.
- ACT on every alert that you receive. A call is better than an email; a visit is better than a call.
- SHARE the *Weekly Update* and *Call to Action Alerts* across your networks and social media. Please acknowledge TCA as your source when you share.
- PROMOTE TCA as the voice of professional counselors in Texas to your colleagues.
- REVIEW bills that interest you and [email Jan Friese](#), TCA Executive Director, and let her know what you think about them. [Set up a personal tracking system](#).
- WATCH the [TCA Advocacy Video](#) on the TCA YouTube Channel to hone your advocacy skills.

Thank you for all you do to support professional counselors, your students and your clients. Contact [Jan Friese](#), TCA Executive Director, with questions or requests for additional information.

Connect with us:

