

TEXAS COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

85th Legislative Session – May 12, 2017

ACTION ALERT & WEEKLY UPDATE

Wild Week – Your Calls Worked -- Final Stretch Ahead

CALLS TO ACTION

- Contact the [Senate Health & Human Services Committee](#) and request that SB 311 (Hinojosa) – the Mental Health Licensing Boards Sunset Bill be set for a hearing soon. If you are Senator Charles Schwertner’s constituent, he needs to hear from you (512-463-0105)! ***This is the MOST IMPORTANT ACTION ITEM!***
- Contact the [Senate Business & Commerce Committee](#) and request that SB 310 (Taylor, Van) – the Sunset Extension Bill – be set for a hearing soon.
- Contact the [House Public Education Committee](#) and request that **SB 196** (Garcia) be set for a hearing on Tuesday, May 16, 2017.
- [Register](#) for TCA’s final Advocacy Day on Tuesday, May 16th. Our efforts will make the difference! Join the other 200 professional counselors who have already advocated on your behalf. [Pre-registration](#) has been extended through Monday at noon.

What Happened This Week

Tuesday was the deadline to set House bills on the House Calendar and Thursday was the deadline to pass House bills on second reading. LOTS of bills died – including many supported by TCA – as the Freedom Caucus embarked on a strategy to delay votes and knock bills off the local calendar. It was ugly and sad, though there were moments of great statesmanship by those whose bills died an untimely death.

- **SB 490** (Lucio) to add school counselors to the Texas Academic Performance Report for each school was referred to the House Public Education Committee.
- **HB 2898** (Gonzales), the mental health licensing boards sunset bill, was set on the House calendar. YOUR CALLS WORKED! Unfortunately, it was not reached by the midnight 4/11/17 deadline and so is not eligible for consideration by the House. All focus is now on SB 311.
- **HB 3302** (Gonzales), the bill to extend the sunset dates for agencies whose sunset bills do not pass, was also not reached by midnight and so is not eligible for consideration by the House. This will impact many state agencies, including the mental health licensing boards. All focus is now on SB 310.
- **HB 3859** (Frank) allowing the personal religious views of certain child welfare workers to impact treatment and services they recommend or provide for those in their care without penalty, passed the House (93/49).
- **HCR 81** (Clardy) commending mental health professionals for their contributions on the occasion of National Mental Health Month was signed by the Governor. ***Rep. Clardy will recognize TCA in the House chamber on Tuesday.***
- **SB 179/HB 306** (Menendez/Minjarez) passed the House (130/11). It is expected to go to Conference Committee.
- **SB 196** (Garcia) the school counselor, nurse and librarian notice bill was referred to the House Public Education Committee.
- **HB 21** (Huberty) relating to public school finance was amended in the Senate Education Committee to include an Education Savings Account for special education students. It returns to the House where its passage is questionable.
- **HB 1501** (Thompson) relating to child custody evaluations was reported from the Senate State Affairs Committee and recommended for the Senate Local and Consent Calendar.

- **HB 2818** (Romero) which will codify the Supreme Court decision on MFT's ability to diagnose was referred to the Senate Business and Commerce Committee.
- **HB 2895** (Price) relating to the requirement that certain public institutions of higher education post mental health resources on their websites was reported from the Senate Higher Education Committee and recommended for the Senate Local and Consent Calendar.
- **HB 3083** (Price) adding LCDCs and making other changes to the Mental Health Professional Loan Repayment Program passed the House (126/16).
- **SB 2001** (Watson) defining the practice of psychology was referred to the House Public Health Committee.
- **SB 2131** (West) requiring documentation of postsecondary counseling and advising to high school students was referred to House Public Education Committee.

What's Ahead – Week of May 15, 2017

The House and Senate have adjourned until 2 pm on Monday. The House will turn its attention to Senate bills. Although there is still time for Senate bills to move through the Senate, their focus will shift to House bills.

Monday, May 15, 2017

- [Senate Health & Human Services Committee](#), 9 am, E1.016 to consider 19 bills, including:
 - **HB 1608** (Minjarez) to create a pilot program to provide summer internships for foster children.
 - **HB 2466** (Davis) relating to coverage for certain services related to maternal depression under Medicaid and CHIP
- [Senate Higher Education Committee](#), 10 am, 2E.20, to consider 7 bills, including:
 - **HB 3808** (Clardy) to add LMFTs to the Mental Health Professional Loan Repayment Program.

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

- [House Public Education Committee](#), 8 a.m., E2.036 to hear 24 bills, including:
 - **SB 490** (Lucio) – TCA's Bill to add school counselors to the TAPR reports for each campus
 - **SB 2131** (West) – to require reports on the postsecondary education counseling provided to high school students
 - **SB 2039** (Zaffirini) – relating to the development of a program and training for public schools on prevention of sexual abuse and sex trafficking
- [Senate Business & Commerce Committee](#), 8 am, E1.016 to hear 29 bills, including:
 - **HB 10** (Price) relating to access to and benefits for mental health conditions and substance abuse disorders
 - **HB 91** (White) relating to a review of occupational licensing requirements related to an applicant's criminal history

TCA's Watch List

The TCA Tracking Report is not available this week to allow staff time to process and delete the hundreds of House bills that are no longer eligible for consideration.

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 the source of the information.
- 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.

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