

TEXAS COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

85th Legislative Session – May 19, 2017

ACTION ALERT & WEEKLY UPDATE

Several TCA Bills Are Still in Play!

CALL TO ACTION

Contact the [House Calendars Committee](#) and request that **SB 490** (Lucio) to add the number of school counselors to schools' Texas Academic Performance Reports and **SB 196** (Garcia) to require schools to post notices on their websites if their campuses do NOT have a full-time school counselor, nurse or librarian. Both bills are on TCA's 2017 [Public Policy Agenda](#).

What Happened This Week

Tensions between the House and Senate continue as the session ends and mean the end for many bills. Several Sunset bills and the Sunset extension bills fell short of hard calendar deadlines. Most everyone involved with the Legislature is planning for a Special Session.

- TCA Advocacy's Day attendees were [recognized on the House floor](#) by Representative Clardy, whose **HCR 81** was signed by the Governor last week. Go to 24:57 to view their recognition.
- **SB 490** (Lucio) was favorably reported from the House Public Education Committee, along with **SB 196** (Garcia) and **SB 2131** (West). There is still time to get them on the House Calendar. (See Call to Action)
- **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 was reported from the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and is on the Senate Intent Calendar.
- **SB 179** (Menendez) relating to penalties for bullying, including cyberbullying, was amended in the House last week. The Senate has appointed a conference committee to work out the differences between the two bills and has requested that the House do the same to. We are optimistic that TCA-supported language will be included in the final bill.
- **HB 1501** (Thompson) relating to child custody evaluations was passed by the Senate and sent to the Governor.
- **HB 2818** (Romero) which will codify the Supreme Court's decision on MFT's ability to diagnose was voted favorably from 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 set on the Senate Local Calendar.
- **HB 3083** (Price) adding LCDCs and making other changes to the Mental Health Professional Loan Repayment Program was voted favorably from the Senate Higher Education Committee.
- **SB 2001** (Watson) defining the practice of psychology was reported favorably from the House Public Health Committee.

What's Ahead – Week of May 21, 2017

There are hard deadlines in the week ahead for all Senate and House Bills. With the exception of Conference Committees to work out differences between House and Senate versions, all bills must be acted on by 5/24/17 or they are dead.

- **Saturday, May 20, 2017:** Last day for House committees to report out Senate Bills.
- **Sunday, May 21, 2017:** By 10 p.m., last House Daily Calendar with Senate Bills must be distributed.
- **Monday, May 22, 2017:** By 9 a.m., last House Local & Consent Calendar with Senate Bills must be distributed.
- **Tuesday, May 23, 2017:** Last day for the House to consider Senate Bills on second reading.
- **Wednesday, May 24, 2017:**
 - Last day for the House to consider Senate Bills on third reading or on the House Local & Consent Calendar
 - Last day for the Senate to consider all bills on 2nd and 3rd reading.

TCA's Watch List

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

What Can You Do?

- **ACT** on every alert that you receive. A call is better than an email; a visit is better than a call.
- **IDENTIFY** [who represents you](#) and load their contact information into your phone or computer.
- **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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