

TEXAS COUNSELING ASSOCIATION
85th Legislative Session – April 7, 2017
WEEKLY UPDATE

CALL TO ACTION

- **HB 2898** (Gonzales) and **HB 2818** (Ramon) are set for a hearing in [House Public Health Committee](#) on Tuesday, April 11th at 8 am. If you are a constituent of a committee member, please call before 8 am on Tuesday and ask for their support on both these bills which are part of TCA's Legislative Agenda. **HB 2898** is the Sunset bill for the mental health boards. HB 2818 allows LMFTs and LPCs to use diagnostic manuals for billing purposes. (See What's Ahead)
- **HB 2313** (West) is pending in Senate Education Committee. If you are a **constituent of Senator West**, please call him and thank him for working with us on the amendment to this bill. (See What Happened This Week).
- **HB 11** (Price) is pending in House Public Health. If you are a **constituent of Chairman Price**, please call him and thank him for working with us on the amendments to this bill. (See What Happened This Week).
- **Call** sponsors and committee members on those bills listed in the Weekly Tracking Report or the What's Ahead section that are important to you. To read the full text of each bill, go to www.capitol.state.tx.us.

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. Please note that as bills move through the process, sponsors often offer "committee substitutes." As this happens, bill numbers change from HB and SB to CSHB and CSSB. This is important to note to ensure you are reviewing the most recent version of a bill.

What's Ahead (as of April 7, 2017)

Monday, April 10, 2017

- House Public Education Committee, Subcommittee on Educator Quality, 2 pm or upon adjournment, JHR 120 to hear 9 bills including **HB 2775** (Phelan) and **HB 2924** (Bohac) which related to supervision of certain candidates for educator certification.

Tuesday, April 11, 2017

- [House Public Health Committee](#), 8 am, E2.012 to hear 16 bills, including **HB 2898** (Gonzales) which is our SUNSET BILL to create the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council and the continuation and transfer of regulation of LPCs, LMFTs, SWs, Psychologists, LSOTP and LCDCs; and **HB 2818** (Ramon), to allow LMFTs and LPCs to use diagnostic manuals to billing for services. (See Call to Action Above). **TCA will testify for HB 2898 and HB 2818.**
- [House Public Education Committee](#), 8 am, E2.036 to hear 30 bills including **HB 1540** which is captioned "relating to counseling regarding postsecondary education. . ." but would only require the students and parents are counseled on the importance of selecting a major before enrolling in postsecondary studies.
- [Senate Business and Commerce Committee](#), 8 am, E1.016 to hear 25 bills, including **SB 1339** (Hinojosa) relating to the regulation of psychological associates and **SB 589** (Lucio) establishing the Board of Behavior Analyst Examiners and the requiring a license to practice as a behavior analyst or assistant. **TCA will sign a card in opposition to SB 589.**

What Happened This Week

With just seven weeks to go in the 85th Legislative Session and very little movement on ANY legislation, committee hearings are getting longer and notice of hearings on bills is getting shorter. That said, there was some dynamic activity this week and TCA is beginning to see some movement on key legislation. In addition to filing cards on several bills, TCA testified on the following:

- **HB 743** (Farrar) to amend Chapter 33 of the Education Code to define “social work.” While TCA [testified](#) in the House Public Education Committee “on” the bill, we suggested that this was best handled in the Occupations Code or by rule of the Social Work licensing board. The bill was left pending. It does not have a Senate companion.
- **HB 11** (Price) to consider the mental health of public school students in school planning, educator training requirements, curriculum requirements, educational programs, state and regional programs and services, and health care was heard in the House Public Health Committee. TCA [testified](#) “for” the bill with the request that it be amended to add “effectiveness on school counseling programs” to the list of continuing education for principals. TASB, TASA, TESP and TASSP all agreed to that amendment. TCA also requested that school counselors be added to the list of educators eligible to serve on School Health Advisory Committees and that the bill reference the list of non-physician mental health providers listed in the Health and Safety Code rather than create another list in the Education Code. These requests are acceptable to the sponsor and should be taken up as floor amendments. HB 11 was left pending
- **SB 2131** (West) to expand postsecondary advising for high school students and require school counselors to document on student transcripts exactly when it takes place and by whom was heard in Senate Education Committee. TCA [testified](#) “for” the bill with the contingency that the sponsor work with TCA to amend the section on documentation by school counselors. Our recommendations are acceptable to the sponsor and should be included in a committee substitute.

Other action this week included:

- **CSHB 10** (Price) relating to access to and benefits for mental health conditions and substance use disorders passed the House on a 130/13 vote and was sent to the Senate. Its companion **CSSB 860** (Zaffarini) was favorably reported from the Senate Business and Commerce Committee.
- **CSHB 22** (Huberty) relating to public school accountability was favorably reported from the House Public Education Committee.
- **CSHB 442** (Martinez, A) relating to the online publication of home addresses of certain occupational license holders was favorably reported from the House Licensing and Administrative Procedures Committee.
- **CSHB 1486** (Price) relating to peer specialists, peer services and the provision of those services under the medical assistance program was favorably reported from House Public Health Committee.
- **CSHB 1501** (Thompson) relating to child custody evaluations was favorably reported from the House Juvenile Justice and Family Issues Committee.
- **HCR 81** (Clardy) commending mental health professionals for their contributions to the state on the occasion of National Mental Health Month (May) passed the House and is headed to the Senate.
- **SB 1** (Nelson) – was heard on the House floor on Thursday, 4/6 in a marathon session. The House substituted their appropriations bill for the Senate version and then added amendments and riders that perpetuate the philosophical differences between the House and Senate. An anti-voucher rider was adopted by large margins; CPS, foster care and services for children with disabilities are the beneficiaries of a rider to cut funds for the Enterprise Fund. SB 1 now heads

to a conference committee of House and Senate members to try to hash out their differences and pass the one bill the Legislature is required to enact each session.

What Can You Do?

- IDENTIFY [who represents you](#) and load their contact information into your phone or computer.
- REGISTER at www.txca.org/advocacydays to attend the April 18 and/or May 16 Advocacy Days. 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.
- REVIEW bills that interest you and let jan@txca.org know what you think about them. Set up a personal tracking system at www.capitol.state.tx.us.
- 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@txca.org with questions or requests for additional information.

Connect with us.



Texas
Counseling
Association



TCA