



# *Beyond the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislature*

SAFE-D  
Annual Conference  
February 22-24, 2024



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Austin, Texas 78746  
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# 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session Statistics

(8349 bills and JRs)

(Passed means Sent to the Governor, Signed, FWOS, Vetoed, Filed with SOS, and Election Date)

Bill Type	Range	Democrat		Republican		Total		
		Filed	Passed	Filed	Passed	Filed	Sent to Gov	
House Bills	HB 1 - HB 5418	2463	152	2950	592	5413	744	14%
House Concurrent Resolutions	HCR 4 - HCR 126	30	7	93	56	123	63	51%
House Joint Resolutions	HJR 1 - HJR 207	80	0	126	7	206	7	3%
Senate Bills	SB 1 - SB 2633	1136	188	1497	314	2633	502	19%
Senate Concurrent Resolutions	SCR 1 - SCR 62	25	16	37	19	62	35	56%
Senate Joint Resolutions	SJR 1 - SJR 93	32	2	61	4	93	6	6%
<b>Total</b>		3766	365	4764	992	8530	1357	16%

\*source Telicon

\* Over 7200 bills and JRs filed in 2021;  
 Nearly 7600 bills and JRs filed in 2019



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# Important Dates

- **March 5, 2024**
  - Primary Election Date
- **May 28, 2024**
  - Primary Runoff Election Date
- **November 6, 2024**
  - General Election Date
- **January 14, 2025**
  - 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature Convenes
- **June 2, 2025**
  - Sine Die, 89<sup>th</sup> Legislature



# Important Legislative Dates

- **March 5, 2024**
  - **Primaries**
    - **15 Senate Seats are up**
    - **2 races without an incumbent in Senate (Springer, Whitmire)**
    - **6 incumbent Rs and 7 incumbent Ds in Senate**
    - **30 R and 46 D races with unopposed incumbents in House**
    - **45 R and 11 D races with opposed incumbents in House**
    - **16 races without incumbents**
- **November 8, 2024**
  - **High political motivation of electorate for Presidential Election**



# Elections

- **Speaker Phelan is opposed in his District**
  - **Wants to be Speaker again**
  - **Outcome dependent on Primaries and General**



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# Elections

- **House Members to Depart**

- Schaefer (R)
- Kacal (R)
- Raney (R)
- Morrison (R)
- Thompson (R)
- Herrero
- Murr (R)
- Anderson (R)
- Ortega
- King
- Price (R)
- Goldman (R)
- Neave Criado
- Sherman
- Johnson, Julie
- Johnson, Jarvis

- **Senate Members to Depart**

- Whitmire
- Springer (R)



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# ESDs and the Legislature



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# SAFE-D Legislative Vision

- Emergency Services Districts are created by voters to provide more reliable funding for fire protection and emergency medical services. As a result, the primary mission of Emergency Services Districts is to protect the lives and property of their citizens when they are threatened by emergencies. In order to accomplish this critical and essential function, Emergency Services Districts must have a predictable, reliable and adequate level of revenue, and SAFE--D must oppose any efforts to diminish this revenue.





# SAFE-D Legislative Vision

- SAFE-D will work for legislative outcomes that preserve or enhance the authority of Emergency Services Districts to provide the first line of defense for their communities in natural disasters and other emergencies.



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# ESD Issues in the 88th



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# SAFE-D 88<sup>th</sup> Agenda

- SAFE-D will propose and support legislation to allow emergency services districts to provide Mobile Integrated Healthcare/Community Paramedicine to reduce the taxpayers' cost of emergency medical services.
- SAFE-D will propose and support legislation to clarify ESDs' exclusive ability to designate the service providers necessary to accomplish the mission given to the districts by the voters who created them.



# SAFE-D 88<sup>th</sup> Proposals

- SAFE-D will propose legislation to allow ESDs to collect sales tax on electric and gas sales to the same extent as other local governments. SAFE-D will monitor legislation affecting sales tax collection, including collection for online sales.
- SAFE-D will propose a constitutional amendment to allow a separate Interest-and- Sinking Tax Rate, beyond the 10-cent-per-\$100 rate currently included in the State Constitution, for emergency services districts, addressing the limitation imposed by a constitutional rate fixed in 1987.



# SAFE-D 88<sup>th</sup> Proposals

- SAFE-D will strive to preserve emergency services districts' access to both property tax revenues and sales tax revenues to assure resources necessary for the safety of their citizens.
- SAFE-D will work to preserve local control of taxpayer-provided resources, including the process for selection of individuals to serve on the governing body of emergency services districts.



# SAFE-D 88<sup>th</sup> Support

- Efforts to increase funding to ESDs from allocation of existing insurance premium taxes.
- Efforts to assure that funds collected from insurance company assessments for the Rural Fire Department Assistance Fund are fully distributed to address fire department needs.
- Decreasing or removal of the required amount of debt to qualify an emergency services district for exemption from a full audit.
- Legislation to eliminate unnecessary and redundant reporting to state agencies.





# SAFE-D 88<sup>th</sup> Opposition

- Any efforts to remove or limit local control of funding and service decisions by emergency services districts.
- Any efforts to “defund emergency services,” such as raids on ESDs’ tax bases by other governmental entities or reducing the funding available for emergency services districts to provide services that their taxpayers expect.



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# SAFE-D 88<sup>th</sup> Opposition

- Any legislation that will impair the ability of emergency services districts to provide services within their communities.
- Any legislation that will impair the ability of emergency services districts to communicate with their elected representatives.



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# TML Attack on ESDs in the 88<sup>th</sup>

- allow cities to **remove themselves** from an ESD if the city is capable of providing services to the area.
- expressly authorize ESDs to expand into a city's limits or ETJ **only** with city council approval; and
- **require** an ESD to enter into a **sales and use tax sharing agreement** with a city when a city annexes territory located in an ESD and, should negotiations fail, enter into binding arbitration and/or mediation.



# 89<sup>th</sup> Interim Charges

- Quiet for Now
- Interim Studies
  - ESD Structure
  - ESD Services
  - ESD-City Relations
- Running Out of Time
  - See Election Issues Above



# Potential Issues in the 89<sup>th</sup>

- Political Subdivision Lobbying
- ESD Authority to Determine Service Providers
- ESD Preventative Healthcare/Paramedicine
- City Annexation Protection from Service Reduction
- Election of All ESD Commissioners
- More Property Tax “Reform”
- Vouchers/School Choice
- Education Funding



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# PREPARING FOR THE 89TH



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# What YOU Can Do

- Support Candidates at Polls/Vote
- Write letter or email to your Legislator and Candidates (introduce yourself)
  - Ask for opportunity to meet
    - invite the Legislator or Candidate to lunch, coffee, social event, fire department activity, Christmas Party (group, hospital or family)
  - *SAFE-D can help*
- Be persistent.



# What YOU Can Do

- **ATTEND Legislative Task Force**
  - This Morning @ 11:15pm
  - Grand Ballroom
  - Identify current issues
  - Establish Priorities
- **Future Meetings of Task Force during Interim**



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# *Texas Legislature Website*

- <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>



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