

Legislative News and Information from the  
Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce

# Priority Update

May 4, 2009

## Priority Update

Of the 2,067 bills already passed by the House and/or Senate and sent to the Governor, 45 bills have been signed. There has been no vetoes or law without signature. The remainder of the bills are awaiting the Governor's actions. With little over a month to go in the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature, the House and Senate have a full agenda. Legislation being tracked by the Chamber is listed below. If there are questions or concerns regarding any of the bills listed, you may contact Michael Burlison, *Director of Legislative and International Affairs*, at 214.217.8481 or by e-mail at [mburlison@irvingchamber.com](mailto:mburlison@irvingchamber.com). Or you may go directly to the Web site at <http://www.house.state.tx.us/welcome.php> and click on bills to search and read any text available on any pending legislation.

### **Transportation:**

**HB 565** by McClendon/Harper-Brown (D-San Antonio/R-Irving) relating to the abolition of the Texas Transportation Commission and the creation of the commissioner of transportation as an elected statutory state officer. *Left pending in committee.*

**HB 2116** by Pickett (D-El Paso) relating to the issuance by the Texas Transportation Commission of general obligation bonds for highway improvement projects. *Reported favorably as substituted to Calendars Committee.*

**HB 2244** by Leibowitz (D-San Antonio) relating to the coordination of the planning, construction, operation, and maintenance of a statewide passenger rail system by the Texas Department of Transportation. *Referred to Transportation Committee.*

**HB 2418** by McClendon (D-San Antonio) relating to the coordination of the planning, construction, operation, and maintenance of a statewide passenger rail system by the Texas Department of Transportation. *Referred to Transportation Committee.*

**HB 3505** by McClendon (D-San Antonio) relating to the use of money from the Texas rail relocation and improvement fund for rail projects. *Referred to Transportation Committee.*

**HB 3932** by Harper-Brown (R-Irving) relating to the establishment of a road user fee pilot program by the Texas Department of Transportation. *Left pending in committee.*

**HB 4203** by Harper-Brown (D-Irving) relating to the authority of the Texas Department of Transportation to enter into funding agreements to expedite an agency's environmental review duties related to transportation projects. *Companion (SB 502) considered in lieu of in committee.*

**HB 2490** by Harper-Brown (R-Irving) relating to the designation of the Diamond Interchange. *Referred to the Senate Transportation & Homeland Security Committee.*

**SB 855** by Carona (R-Dallas) relating to local options regarding transportation and mobility improvement projects in certain counties. *Referred to House Transportation Committee.*

**SB 1382** by Carona (R-Dallas) relating to the coordination of the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of a state-wide passenger rail system by the Texas Department of Transportation. *Referred to House Transportation Committee.*

### **Education/Workforce Development:**

**HB 2471** by Keffer (R-Eastland) relating to career and technical education in the public schools and high school graduation requirements. *Left pending in committee.*

**SB 3** by Shapiro (R-Plano) relating to public school accountability, curriculum, and promotion requirements. *Referred to House Public Education Committee.*

**HB 59** by Branch (R-Dallas) relating to the establishment of a law school in the City of Dallas by the University of North Texas

### **Casino Gambling:**

**HB 4062** by Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles (D-Alice) relating to authorizing the operation of video lottery games by licensed horse and greyhound racetrack operators, to providing a defense for the operation of video lottery by Indian tribes, to the authority of the Texas Lottery Commission and the Texas Racing Commission, and to the conduct of gambling in this state; providing penalties. *Left pending in committee.*

**HB 1724** by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) relating to the authorization and regulation of casino and slot gaming in this state, the creation, powers, and duties of the Texas Gaming Commission, and the powers and duties of the Texas Racing Commission; providing penalties. *Left pending in committee.*

### **Resolutions Passed by the Board of Directors of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber in support/opposition to 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature:**

**Resolution 2008/2009 – 1** Supporting Comprehensive Immigration Reform.

**Resolution 2008/2009 – 02** in Opposition of H.B. 800, The “Employee Free Choice Act; AKA the “Card Check” Bill.

**Resolution 2008/2009 – 05** in Support of House Bill 2490 by Representative Harper-Brown (R-Irving) Relating to the Designation of the Diamond Interchange as recommended by the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

**Resolution 2007/2008 – 11** in Support of the University of North Texas College of Law.

**Resolution 2007/2008 – 13** in Support of the Discontinuation of the Diversion Transportation User Revenues to Non-Transportation Uses and the Appropriation of all Revenue Generated from Highway User Fees and Taxes to Fund Transportation Projects.

System. *Placed on General State Calendar.*

## **Health Care:**

**HB 1876** by Chisum (R-Pampa) relating to creating the health care access fund to recruit health care providers in health professional shortage areas and to support federally-qualified health centers and to using for those purposes revenue from a tax imposed on certain tobacco products. *Committee Report sent to Calendars.*

## **Economic Development:**

**HB 2459** by Burt Solomons (R-Carrollton) would establish a franchise tax or premium tax credit for qualified community development investments in active low-income community businesses. *Committee Report sent to Calendars.*

**HB 1277** by Angie Chen Button (R-Garland) would allow Texas Enterprise Fund money to be used for incentives to retain businesses located in Texas during a fiscal biennium on the first day of which the unemployment rate in Texas is 7% or more. *Placed on General State Calendar.*

**HB 1573** by Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) would require recipients of money from the Texas Enterprise Fund to provide health benefits for their employees. *Committee Report sent to Calendars.*

**HB 1991** by Rafael Anchia (D-Dallas) would require all money distributed from the Emerging Technology Fund from September 1, 2009 through August 31, 2011 (except funds awarded for biotechnology, medicine, and life sciences) to be used for the research and development of low carbon fuels; and low carbon electric generation technologies. *Left pending in committee.*

**HB 3103** by David Leibowitz (D-San Antonio) would require entities that acquire, by merger, acquisition, or other transfer, ownership or control of another entity that has received an Enterprise Fund grant to report the change in ownership or control to the governor and comply with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement. *Referred to Senate Economic Development Committee.*

**HB 3281** by Norma Chavez (D-El Paso) would prohibit money from the Texas Enterprise Fund from going to any business that has received a federal bail-out under the Troubled Asset. *Left pending in committee.*

**HB 3329** by Solomon Ortiz, Jr. (D-Corpus Christi) would require recipients of funding from the Texas Enterprise Fund to provide health care benefits to all of its employees. *Left pending in committee.*

**SB 966** by Rodney Ellis (D-Houston) would repeal Subchapter F, Chapter 111 of the Tax Code which authorizes sales and franchise tax refunds for economic development incentives on property taxes paid on property located in a reinvestment zone. *Left pending in committee.*

## **Veterans Affairs:**

The House passed **HB 38** by Representative Frank Corte (R-San Antonio) which would allow veterans, their spouses, and children to pay in-state tuition at Texas colleges and universities. Representative Marc Veasey added an amendment to exempt from tuition the children of military personnel who are deployed in a foreign combat zone.

## **Air Quality:**

**SB 16** by Kip Averitt (R-Waco) would provide incentives for new, point source-oriented air quality technologies; modify and enhance existing state air quality programs; establish appliance standards and energy efficient building Grant Program. *Passed the Senate and scheduled for public in the House Environmental Regulation Committee 4/29/09.*

## **Film Production:**

Governor Rick Perry signed **HB 873** by Dawna Dukes (D-Austin) which promotes the entertainment industry in Texas by providing incentives for the film, television, video and digital interactive media production industries.

## **Casino Gambling:**

**HB 4062** by Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles (D-Alice) relating to authorizing the operation of video lottery games by licensed horse and greyhound racetrack operators, to providing a defense for the operation of video lottery by Indian tribes, to the authority of the Texas Lottery Commission and the Texas Racing Commission, and to the conduct of gambling in this state; providing penalties. *Left pending in committee.*

**HB 1724** by Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) relating to the authorization and regulation of casino and slot gaming in this state, the creation, powers, and duties of the Texas Gaming Commission, and the powers and duties of the Texas Racing Commission; providing penalties. *Left pending in committee.*

## **Resolutions Passed by the Board of Directors of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber in support/opposition to 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature:**

**Resolution 2008/2009 – 05** in Support of House Bill 2490 by Representative Harper-Brown (R-Irving) Relating to the Designation of the Diamond Interchange as recommended by the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

**Resolution 2007/2008 – 11** in Support of the University of North Texas College of Law.

**Resolution 2007/2008 – 13** in Support of the Discontinuation of the Diversion Transportation User Revenues to Non-Transportation Uses and the Appropriation of all Revenue Generated from Highway User Fees and Taxes to Fund Transportation Projects.

## **Resolutions Passed by the Board of Directors of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce regarding Federal Issues:**

**Resolution 2008/2009 – 1** Supporting Comprehensive Immigration Reform.

**Resolution 2008/2009 – 02** in Opposition of H.B. 800, The “Employee Free Choice Act, AKA the “Card Check” Bill.

*Priority Update*