

SENATE JOURNAL

EIGHTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE — SECOND CALLED SESSION

AUSTIN, TEXAS

PROCEEDINGS

NINTH DAY

(Wednesday, September 3, 2025)

The Senate met at 6:14 p.m. pursuant to adjournment and was called to order by Senator Perry.

The roll was called and the following Senators were present: Alvarado, Bettencourt, Blanco, Campbell, Cook, Creighton, Flores, Hagenbuch, Hall, A. Hinojosa, J. Hinojosa, Huffman, Hughes, Johnson, King, Kolkhorst, Menéndez, Middleton, Miles, Nichols, Parker, Paxton, Perry, Schwertner, Sparks, Zaffirini.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

The Presiding Officer announced that a quorum of the Senate was present.

Senator Hall offered the invocation as follows:

Our dear heavenly Father, we are so humbly grateful for the honors that You've given us. We pray, Lord, that You'll look after our troops and first responders that are out there in harm's way so that we can be here safely doing Your work. We pray for those who have suffered losses, that You will bring them Your comfort, knowing that eternity's out there for them. We pray for Your guidance and direction, that we will seek Your help to understand what we should do that's the right thing to do. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Senator Zaffirini moved that the reading of the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day be dispensed with and the Journal be approved as printed.

The motion prevailed without objection.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

On motion of Senator Zaffirini, Senator Eckhardt was granted leave of absence for today on account of important family business.

On motion of Senator Zaffirini, Senator Gutierrez was granted leave of absence for today on account of important family business.

On motion of Senator Zaffirini, Senator Birdwell was granted leave of absence for today on account of important business.

On motion of Senator Zaffirini, Senator West was granted leave of absence for today on account of important business.

**INTRODUCTION OF
BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS POSTPONED**

The Presiding Officer announced that the introduction of bills and resolutions on first reading would be postponed until the end of today's calendar.

There was no objection.

SENATE BILL 8 WITH HOUSE AMENDMENT

Senator Middleton called **SB 8** from the President's table for consideration of the House amendment to the bill.

The Presiding Officer laid the bill and the House amendment before the Senate.

Floor Amendment No. 14

Amend **SB 8** (house committee report) on page 6 as follows:

- (1) On line 2, strike "\$5,000" and substitute "\$25,000".
- (2) On line 3, strike "\$25,000" and substitute "\$125,000".

The amendment was read.

Senator Middleton moved to concur in the House amendment to **SB 8**.

The motion prevailed by the following vote: Yeas 18, Nays 8.

Yeas: Bettencourt, Campbell, Creighton, Flores, Hagenbuch, Hall, A. Hinojosa, Huffman, Hughes, King, Kolkhorst, Middleton, Nichols, Parker, Paxton, Perry, Schwertner, Sparks.

Nays: Alvarado, Blanco, Cook, J. Hinojosa, Johnson, Menéndez, Miles, Zaffirini.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

HOUSE CHAMBER

Austin, Texas

Wednesday, September 3, 2025 - 1

The Honorable President of the Senate
Senate Chamber
Austin, Texas

Mr. President:

I am directed by the house to inform the senate that the house has taken the following action:

THE HOUSE HAS PASSED THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

HCR 20

Craddick

Commemorating the 75th anniversary of St. Ann's Catholic School in Midland.

Respectfully,

/s/Stephen Brown,
Chief Clerk

House of Representatives

CONCLUSION OF MORNING CALL

The Presiding Officer at 6:32 p.m. announced the conclusion of morning call.

HOUSE BILL 7 ON THIRD READING

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate **HB 7**, sponsored by Senator Hughes, at this time on its third reading and final passage:

HB 7, Relating to prohibitions on the manufacture and provision of abortion-inducing drugs, including the jurisdiction of and effect of certain judgments by courts within and outside this state with respect to the manufacture and provision of those drugs, and to protections from certain counteractions under the laws of other states and jurisdictions; authorizing qui tam actions.

The bill was read third time and was passed by the following vote: Yeas 17, Nays 8, Present-not voting 1.

Yeas: Bettencourt, Campbell, Creighton, Flores, Hagenbuch, Hall, A. Hinojosa, Huffman, Hughes, King, Kolkhorst, Middleton, Parker, Paxton, Perry, Schwertner, Sparks.

Nays: Alvarado, Blanco, Cook, J. Hinojosa, Johnson, Menéndez, Miles, Zaffirini.

Present-not voting: Nichols.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

(Senator Flores in Chair)

HOUSE BILL 18 ON SECOND READING

Senator A. Hinojosa moved to suspend the regular order of business and Senate Rule 7.12(a) to take up for consideration **HB 18** at this time on its second reading:

HB 18, Relating to a restriction on the acceptance of political contributions and the making of certain political expenditures by a member of the legislature and certain political committees during certain periods in which a member is absent from a legislative session; authorizing a civil penalty.

The motion prevailed by the following vote: Yeas 18, Nays 8.

Yeas: Bettencourt, Campbell, Creighton, Flores, Hagenbuch, Hall, A. Hinojosa, Huffman, Hughes, King, Kolkhorst, Middleton, Nichols, Parker, Paxton, Perry, Schwertner, Sparks.

Nays: Alvarado, Blanco, Cook, J. Hinojosa, Johnson, Menéndez, Miles, Zaffirini.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

The bill was read second time and was passed to third reading by the following vote: Yeas 18, Nays 8. (Same as previous roll call)

BILLS AND RESOLUTION SIGNED

The Presiding Officer announced the signing of the following enrolled bills and resolution in the presence of the Senate:

SB 54.
HCR 13.
SB 8.

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
HOUSE BILL 20 ON SECOND READING

On motion of Senator Perry and by unanimous consent, the regular order of business was suspended to take up for consideration **CSHB 20** at this time on its second reading:

CSHB 20, Relating to measures to prevent and reduce fraudulent charitable solicitations and theft during declared disasters, including establishing a designation program for disaster relief nonprofit organizations and financial institutions; creating a criminal offense; increasing a criminal penalty.

The bill was read second time and was passed to third reading without objection.

All Members are deemed to have voted "Yea" on the passage to third reading except as follows:

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
HOUSE BILL 20 ON THIRD READING

Senator Perry moved that Senate Rule 7.18 and the Constitutional Rule requiring bills to be read on three several days be suspended and that **CSHB 20** be placed on its third reading and final passage.

The motion prevailed by the following vote: Yeas 26, Nays 0.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

The bill was read third time and was passed by the following vote: Yeas 26, Nays 0. (Same as previous roll call)

RECESS

On motion of Senator Zaffirini, the Senate at 8:49 p.m. recessed until 9:45 p.m. today.

AFTER RECESS

The Senate met at 10:06 p.m. and was called to order by the President.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

HOUSE CHAMBER

Austin, Texas

Wednesday, September 3, 2025 - 2

The Honorable President of the Senate
Senate Chamber
Austin, Texas

Mr. President:

I am directed by the house to inform the senate that the house has taken the following action:

THE HOUSE HAS CONCURRED IN THE SENATE AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

HB 8 (79 Yeas, 47 Nays, 1 Present, not voting)

THE HOUSE HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORTS:

SB 5 (129 Yeas, 0 Nays, 2 Present, not voting)

Respectfully,
/s/Stephen Brown,
Chief Clerk
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1 ON SECOND READING

On motion of Senator Perry and by unanimous consent, the regular order of business was suspended to take up for consideration **CSHB 1** at this time on its second reading:

CSHB 1, Relating to youth camp emergency plans and preparedness; authorizing penalties.

The bill was read second time.

Senator Perry offered the following amendment to the bill:

Floor Amendment No. 1

Amend **CSHB 1** (senate committee report) in SECTION 5 of the bill, by striking added Section 141.0091(c), Health and Safety Code, and substituting the following:

(c) The executive commissioner by rule shall require a youth camp operator to, at each youth camp the operator operates:

(1) maintain an operable radio capable of providing real-time weather alerts issued by the National Weather Service or a similar professional weather service at the camp;

(2) install and maintain at the camp an emergency warning system that:
(A) is capable of alerting all campers and camp occupants of an emergency; and

(B) includes a public address system operable without reliance on an Internet connection;

(3) monitor safety alerts issued:
(A) by the National Weather Service or a similar professional weather service; and

(B) by local river authorities, if applicable to the camp, or through other local emergency notification systems; and

(4) certify the operator's compliance with this subsection.

The amendment to **CSHB 1** was read and was adopted without objection.

All Members are deemed to have voted "Yea" on the adoption of Floor Amendment No. 1 except as follows:

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

CSHB 1 as amended was passed to third reading without objection.

All Members are deemed to have voted "Yea" on the passage to third reading except as follows:

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1 ON THIRD READING

Senator Perry moved that Senate Rule 7.18 and the Constitutional Rule requiring bills to be read on three several days be suspended and that **CSHB 1** be placed on its third reading and final passage.

The motion prevailed by the following vote: Yeas 26, Nays 0.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

The bill was read third time and was passed by the following vote: Yeas 26, Nays 0. (Same as previous roll call)

SENATE RESOLUTION 85

Senator Huffman offered the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the State of Texas, 89th Legislature, 2nd Called Session, 2025, That Senate Rule 12.03 be suspended in part as provided by Senate Rule 12.08 to enable the conference committee appointed to resolve the differences on Senate Bill 5 (making supplemental appropriations for disaster relief and preparedness and giving direction and adjustment authority regarding those appropriations) to consider and take action on the following matters:

(1) Senate Rule 12.03(4) is suspended to permit the committee to add text on a matter not included in either the house or senate version of the bill in proposed SECTION 4 of the bill, by adding contingent appropriations to the Department of State Health Services for campground and youth camp safety, to read as follows:

SECTION 4. DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES: CAMPGROUND AND YOUTH CAMP SAFETY CONTINGENT APPROPRIATIONS. (a) Contingent on the enactment of S.B. 1 or similar legislation of the 89th Legislature, 2nd Called Session, 2025, relating to campground and youth camp safety, the amount of \$2,594,265 is appropriated from the economic stabilization fund for use during the two-year period beginning on the effective date of this Act, and the amount of \$2,484,726 is appropriated from the general revenue fund for use during the state fiscal year beginning September 1, 2026, to the Department of State Health Services to implement the provisions of that legislation. The department shall adjust the amount of license fees established under Section 141.0035, Health and Safety Code, as necessary to recover the costs of the appropriations made under this subsection.

(b) During the state fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2025, in addition to the capital budget authority other law grants to the department during that period, the Department of State Health Services may use \$500,000 in capital budget authority for the appropriations made by Subsection (a) of this section, if any.

(c) During the state fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2025, in addition to the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees other law authorizes the department to employ during that period, the Department of State Health Services may employ 16.0 FTE employees out of money appropriated by Subsection (a) of this section, if any.

Explanation: The change is necessary to appropriate money to the Department of State Health Services, and authorize the department to take other actions necessary, to implement the provisions of S.B. 1 or similar legislation of the 89th Legislature, 2nd Called Session, 2025, relating to campground and youth camp safety.

(2) Senate Rule 12.03(1) is suspended to permit the committee to change, alter, or amend text not in disagreement in proposed SECTION 6(a) of the bill, by changing the effective date to read as follows:

(a) Subject to Subsection (b) of this section, this Act takes effect immediately.

Explanation: The change is necessary to provide for an immediate effective date.

SR 85 was read and was adopted by the following vote: Yeas 26, Nays 0.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON SENATE BILL 5 ADOPTED

Senator Huffman called from the President's table the Conference Committee Report on **SB 5**. The Conference Committee Report was filed with the Senate on Wednesday, September 3, 2025.

On motion of Senator Huffman, the Conference Committee Report was adopted by the following vote: Yeas 26, Nays 0.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

SENATE RESOLUTION 87

Senator Campbell offered the following resolution:

WHEREAS, State Senator Brandon Creighton has been named the sole finalist for the position of chancellor of the Texas Tech University System; and

WHEREAS, A native of Conroe and an eighth-generation resident of Montgomery County, Brandon Creighton has ably represented the citizens of District 4 since first being sworn in as a member of the Texas Senate on August 26, 2014; prior to his election to the Senate, he served in the Texas House of Representatives, where he held such notable roles as chair of the House Federalism and Fiscal Responsibility Committee and chair of the Texas House Republican Caucus; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his tenure at the statehouse, Senator Creighton has consistently upheld conservative principles, advocating for tax relief, tort reform, and the preservation of state sovereignty; he has chaired multiple education-related committees in the Texas Senate, as well as House and Senate committees focused on

employment practices and Texas port oversight; along the way, he has spearheaded several major reforms in higher education, sponsored landmark school choice legislation, and played a key role in shaping policy in such areas as water and transportation infrastructure and border security; and

WHEREAS, Senator Creighton is an alumnus of The University of Texas at Austin and Oklahoma City University, where he earned his doctor of jurisprudence degree; as the lone finalist for the position of chancellor, Senator Creighton is poised to lead a university system that includes Texas Tech University and four other institutions that together enroll nearly 70,000 students; and

WHEREAS, Senator Brandon Creighton's proven record of leadership makes him an ideal choice to guide the Texas Tech University System into the future, and it is a privilege to join in recognizing him for his exemplary service to the State of Texas; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the 89th Texas Legislature, 2nd Called Session, hereby congratulate State Senator Brandon Creighton on his selection as the sole finalist for the position of chancellor of the Texas Tech University System and extend to him sincere best wishes for continued success in all his endeavors; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for Senator Creighton as an expression of high regard by the Texas Senate.

SR 87 was read.

On motion of Senator Parker and by unanimous consent, the names of the Lieutenant Governor and Senators were added to the resolution as signers thereof.

On motion of Senator Campbell, the resolution was adopted by a rising vote of the Senate.

PRESENTATION OF GAVEL

The President presented an honorary gavel to Senator Creighton for his service to the Senate and the State of Texas.

REMARKS ORDERED PRINTED

On motion of Senator Campbell and by unanimous consent, the remarks regarding **SR 87** were ordered reduced to writing and printed in the *Senate Journal* as follows:

President: Senator Campbell, good to see you standing tonight.

Senator Campbell: Thank you very much, it's good to be standing, that's for sure. Well, Mr. President and Members, I rise, today I rise in gratitude for a colleague's extraordinary service and admiration for the next chapter of his life. We're saying farewell to Senator Brandon Creighton, a true statesman. Soon, he will step down from the Texas Senate and become Chancellor of Texas Tech University System. This institution inherits not only his leadership, but also his deep sense of purpose, integrity, and Texas values. From the beginning of his legislative career, Brandon Creighton has built a legacy grounded in public service and constitutional principles with a relentless work ethic. He is a workhorse. Beyond the expertise and the procedural command, Senator Creighton brought clarity to complex debates, and he never lost sight of the people that we serve. For the past several sessions, I've had the

distinct honor as serving Vice-chair under Senator Creighton's leadership in the education committee. Let me say there are leaders who manage and there are leaders who inspire, Chairman Creighton does them both. He approaches education policy not as a partisan issue, but as a moral and a generational responsibility. Senator Creighton has never shied away from difficult issues, he's carried the landmark legislation, DEI, CRT, school choice, teacher pay, tenure reform, parents' bill of rights, faculty senate reforms, just to name a few. This changed how we thought about education in our state. In the spirit of being chairman of education, when he debated on the floor he had done his homework. That's supposed to be funny. He was prepared and knew what the issue was, what issue mattered. He has been a respected voice on the committee in the Chamber and across the Capitol. And while your seat in the Senate will soon be empty, your legacy will not. You will live on the, your legacy will live on the students whose futures you shaped, the institutions you strengthened, and the policies that will serve Texans for generations to come. With your departure, our spirits are down but our guns up. Thank you.

President: Thank you. Senator Bettencourt, what purpose?

Senator Bettencourt: To ask the author some questions.

Senator Campbell: No.

Senator Bettencourt: Okay. Well—

Senator Campbell: The answer's no.

President: Do you yield? Senator Campbell, you don't yield? That's good.

Senator Campbell: I will yield.

Senator Bettencourt: Thank you.

Senator Campbell: Briefly.

Senator Bettencourt: Well, however briefly, we do have one hour and—

Senator Campbell: Briefly.

Senator Bettencourt: —24 minutes to go here.

Senator Campbell: You're using your seconds.

Senator Bettencourt: You know, Senator Campbell, when you, when you developed this very illustrious, you know, resolution, did you notice that at this point in time, Senator Blanco, Senator Middleton, I don't see even a little hint of orange left in this man at this time. Do you?

Senator Campbell: His blood bleeds red.

Senator Bettencourt: It's, excuse me?

Senator Campbell: Blood, his blood will bleed red—

Senator Bettencourt: That's right.

Senator Campbell: —as everyone's.

Senator Bettencourt: Right. Yeah, that's right. And not only, you know, has his blood done this, well, as a Catholic I would say what, Senator Parker, you know, transfiguration at this point in time. The whole world knows, okay, that they have a fantastic chancellor because anyone that can pass those bills that Senator Campbell listed would have to go down in legend, regardless of what school they started, because they're going to lead the chancellorship of your nursing alma mater. Is that not true?

Senator Campbell: No.

Senator Bettencourt: Oh, it is? Please correct the record.

Senator Campbell: Medical.

Senator Bettencourt: Medical. Right. And with that, I do seem to remember a day, Senator Campbell, that medically we did have to intervene with Senator Creighton because he was so determined to vote on constitutional carry that he came out, and despite all medical advice, decided that he was going to sit through a vote, and I think we ended up, I think you ended up doing a very good ER summary that morning, or, I believe. Do you agree?

Senator Campbell: We were right there for him.

Senator Bettencourt: We were right there with him. I seem to remember Uncle Paul still having the hands of a third baseman and keeping your head off the floor, and now your head is, literally, in Lubbock. Right, Senator Perry? And with that, I want to just say this, all good things come to an end. Your service here has been a great thing, but all good things start again. And congratulations, my friend.

President: Senator Parker, what purpose? You don't need her permission to yield, by the way. Senator Bettencourt didn't realize that, it's a resolution, you can just speak.

Senator Parker: Thank you, Mr. President. And I will speak, I will just simply speak. But I want to thank the Senator for bringing such a great resolution, and I just want to congratulate our dear friend, Senator Creighton. He's been such an incredible role model for all of us in the Legislature, he's worked tirelessly. The policies that he's been able to pass over the years will really transform the future of education, not just in Texas but for the country as a whole. And frankly, I want to salute the leadership of Texas Tech because they couldn't have picked a better candidate to be their Chancellor and to lead it into an incredibly bright future. You will be, my assessment, without question the leading most conservative chancellor in the country in what you're going to accomplish for that institution. And we're all going to miss you greatly here, all the wonderful work, all the things you've done for so many years that will benefit Texans for many generations. But now you're in a new environment, a new type of leadership, you will serve the 70,000 students so well for generations to come. So, we wish you all the best. God bless you, my friend, and thanks for all your service to Texas and now to Texas Tech.

President: Thank you, Senator. Looks like the screen is empty, so let me add my remarks. Senator, you took on a task when I called you last year, can we combine K through 12 to K-16. Was that this year or two years ago? Two years ago. And that's really a heavy lift. I was education chair at one time, and I just had K through 12 and

didn't have the volume of bills that you had this time, plus higher ed. And if you think about it, Members, that moment has created this moment, because he made his name for himself in higher education in the state and across the country. And the bills of the senate faculty now going away, the bills of DEI, and other bills in higher education, is changing the landscape for higher education and universities in the country, in the country. He will be the most conservative member, he probably will not find a whole lot of friends when he goes to those association meetings with all the other superintendents, I mean the chancellors. But you've changed higher education for the nation, and again, those we think for the better. And it's also changing if you think of Glenn Hager, if you think of John Zerwas. There's a whole new look, at least in Texas, of who they think should lead universities. People with legislative experience, people who have been accountable to the people, people who have a record. You don't just have to have, you know, nine letters behind your name and some education degree to run a university, when it really takes more than just that. So, we know you're going to be successful. We're proud of you, and we know we're going to see you back here. Mr. Chairman and soon to be Chancellor, don't expect any favors. We're going to treat you just like the rest of them. Alright? But we're proud of you and this is really an historic moment. And Texas Tech made the right decision for all of Texas. I see your light's on. Senator Perry, you're up.

Senator Perry: Well, I hate to be the Red Raider that didn't say something, but at the same time, I've already had conversations with Brandon. It was an interesting process, to say the least. And when his name came up, I thought, wow, that would be awesome. And sure enough, I think Tech has picked a winner. His history and his ability, his work ethic, but what was exciting about it is there's just a culture in the Plains and the Panhandle and West Texas, that you can find the most qualified, competent person from around the country, but when they get there sometimes it's just something they've never been exposed to. I think it's God's country. I tell, you know, Brandon's actually coming home from the mission field, he just didn't know it. He was down there at the Orange County, but he's coming home back to where his home will be. But there's just a culture out there. And I told somebody when I heard Brandon's name, I said, you know, his, he would fit, him and Tamarah both, will fit a culture that I'm privileged to be a part of. And it's really about people, and it's about that culture. You know, your predecessor, Dr. Mitchell, kind of set the table and transformed Tech to be that university system that people look to as a conservative university in the world of nonconservative universities. It has its faults, it's not perfect, but I really do think what you said, Governor, he has changed the face of higher ed in Texas and across this country. And what I see in him and where he's going to go with Tech, is Tech's already on the trajectory and it's done some things that are beyond its wildest dreams because of this Legislature and ability to get some things done. But with Brandon's leadership to finish up some of the conservative ideas that he's had and implemented in the state, that system, in Tech and university world will actually be the target going forward of what a university that's run under a conservative system looks like. I've told the predecessors, several of them have come on the Senate floor, Montford, Duncan, Hance, those guys, I said if you will ever just step out and trust the fact that if you will be the conservative answer to the higher ed system, you won't be able to build enough dormitories. I think that's where I see this

man taking Texas to the next level because people are hungry for common sense, practical, that when you graduate you're actually going to have an income and not living in your parents' basements. And so, I'm excited for what lies ahead for him. I'm excited for what lies ahead for my alma mater. But really the community in general is going to welcome you and warm you like you've never felt, it's just a great place to be. And I'm excited to be a part of it. So, congratulations. All roads lead to Lubbock it seems like, this session for sure. But you really are going to find a community that you've never been exposed to, and I'm excited for that because I know you're going to respond in a way that they've never had leadership for in different ways for that university system. So, congratulations. I didn't mean to steal your thunder, Sir—

President: No.

Senator Perry: —being after—

President: No, no.

Senator Perry: —but I got to thinking, you know, tomorrow's paper is going to be the only Red Raider in the Senate didn't stand up and say something. But, again, we've had several conversations over the last week and can't wait, can't wait to see him get started. On that note, when he asks for exceptional items, that stops right there. Right, Chairwoman? That's just, it's a whole different level of conversation. So, no problem, thanks.

President: Yeah, suddenly he's going to be on the other side of the table. Senator Creighton, you're recognized.

Senator Creighton: Thank you, Mr. President. I'm going to be brief so I can make it through this. I, first, I appreciate the kind words. I have an incredible amount of reverence for this Chamber. I mean, it starts not just being a kid, starts with not just being a kid coming here with my father as a little kid touring the building, and especially these incredible pieces of art at the back of this Chamber, but also seeing older composites and one is in this gallery of family members from the past that have served. And not just a reverence for the Chamber itself and the history it represents, but the people that I have been able to serve with. And I'm not meeting eyes with any of you on purpose. The value of my time here is tied to you. And it's incredible what the great State of Texas offers with the fact that 30 million people-plus chose you, sent you here. And I don't have a worry in the world with my exit from this floor, because you're here, not a worry at all. I am, you know, reflecting on my time here. I visited, as I mentioned, with my dad as a kid, and then in after working at a chemical plant for a couple of years as a pipe fitter's helper in fireproof coveralls, very hot work, I looked for the biggest air-conditioned building I could find. And it was a building I had been in before, and I dreamed of coming back. And I entered this Chamber after Carleton Turner and Betty King gave me a job, and Lieutenant Governor Hobby was in his last year, to Lieutenant Governor Bullock coming in just after that. And I was just in awe of the building, how it looks when it's lit at night, how it looks with this pink granite when the sun is setting on it. And I'm in more awe today of this building than when I first saw it. And again, it's tied to not just the architecture, but the people that I'm able to work with, each of you, that have been incredible allies or unmistakable, amazing adversaries. And I have great respect for

each and every one of you in either description, but I call all of you friends. And I'll always be holding that in my heart as I will spend the rest of my life speaking probably to much smaller groups as I make this change, talking about the quality of individuals that I have been able to serve with and what you bring to this state and how well positioned we are for the future to lead the nation and the world because of the decisions that you've made and to have been able to share in that for an eternity second with each of you in this role in public service, with the public support of all of us being here. What a blessing. What an amazing, incredible blessing for every second of it. And to have worked with you on education issues and, Governor Patrick, thank you for the opportunities to work in that subject matter jurisdiction, and for your friendship. Because I don't believe there's, I've seen many Lieutenant Governors, I've personally spent time with Hobby and Bullock and watched many others with great respect. I've never seen a Lieutenant Governor manage and handle very difficult situations like you have, and I appreciate the opportunities you've given me. I appreciate serving alongside each and every one of you. I wouldn't be leaving the Senate for another opportunity if I felt for one second that Texas would not be positioned for greatness because of who's here remaining. And, yes, I'll be on the other side. And, Senator Perry, thank you for what you said, because I'll be coming to your home and your community. And I have every intention in my heart to excel and to soak up those West Texas values. And I'm proud of it, proud to join the Red Raider family and to work hard to advance that institution and that system in ways that, it's incredible already because of you and many others that have worked hard to bring it where it is today. And what an amazing opportunity to join. We're all part of a proud and vast history called Texas. I've told many of you, I took my son, Cannon, to the Alamo, Cannon Barret Creighton, not too long ago with a couple of his friends. There was a family in front of us from Switzerland in line, there was a family right behind us from France, and his friends were just as much in awe of the fact that there was a family from Switzerland and France walking through the line with us as I think they were of the mission itself. But it just shows the reverence for Texas and the respect all over the world for bravery and fortitude and competence and character and integrity and a never-quit attitude that is just in our DNA. I know from serving with you, it's in yours. And I know each of you have family members and you've raised kids and now have grandkids that will make sure we're just fine. Because when you have a leader and you have an individual among many that steps forward, incredible things will happen when you take a stand. So, I'll end with that before I'm unable to continue. And I appreciate each and every one of you and the opportunities you've given me and the patience you've had with me through the years. And I can't thank you enough for that and I love each of you.

President: Senator Parker, your light is on. Did you want to add something? Yes.

Senator Parker: Just very simply, Mr. President, would like to make a motion to add all Members' names to the resolution.

President: Any objection? Hearing none. Senator, and you've been a great leader on education, but you had the support of great Members on some tough votes, and it was just a team effort as always with everything we do here. So, you're going to do great, you're off for a great adventure, it's a great adventure. And it just reminds us, we

never know what God has in store for us because never in anyone's imagination, the beginning of this session or five years ago, three years ago, would anyone think, you know, that this would happen. And I just think it's great for Texas Tech and great for the Texas Senate actually. Senator Campbell to close.

Senator Campbell: Brandon, you have a golden opportunity to further develop the conservatism, the conservative university system that will serve as a model for America. God go with you, my friend, as you embark on this new, unique, exciting calling on your life. And with that, Mr. President, I move adoption.

President: Would all those in favor of the resolution stand? And, Senator Creighton, I will gavel down this with this gavel for you, we'll have a gold plate on it later and we'll give it to you. Resolution is adopted.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

HOUSE CHAMBER

Austin, Texas

Wednesday, September 3, 2025 - 3

The Honorable President of the Senate
Senate Chamber
Austin, Texas

Mr. President:

I am directed by the house to inform the senate that the house has taken the following action:

THE HOUSE HAS REFUSED TO CONCUR IN THE SENATE AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING MEASURES AND REQUESTS THE APPOINTMENT OF A CONFERENCE COMMITTEE TO ADJUST THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO HOUSES:

HB 27 (non-record vote)

House Conferees: Harris - Chair/Ashby/Bell, Keith/Bonnen/González, Mary

Respectfully,

/s/Stephen Brown,
Chief Clerk

House of Representatives

BILLS SIGNED

The President announced the signing of the following enrolled bills in the presence of the Senate: **HB 7**, **HB 8**.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The President acknowledged Senator Nichols on his retirement from the Texas Senate.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE**HOUSE CHAMBER**

Austin, Texas

Wednesday, September 3, 2025 - 4

The Honorable President of the Senate

Senate Chamber

Austin, Texas

Mr. President:

I am directed by the house to inform the senate that the house has taken the following action:

THE HOUSE HAS PASSED THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:**SB 1**

Perry

Sponsor: Darby

Relating to campground and youth camp safety.

(Committee Substitute)

THE HOUSE HAS CONCURRED IN THE SENATE AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:**HB 1** (122 Yeas, 4 Nays, 1 Present, not voting)**HB 20** (132 Yeas, 0 Nays, 1 Present, not voting)

Respectfully,

/s/Stephen Brown,

Chief Clerk

House of Representatives

PRESENTATION OF GAVEL

The President presented an honorary gavel to Senator Nichols for his service to the Senate and to the State of Texas.

REMARKS ORDERED PRINTED

On motion of Senator Bettencourt and by unanimous consent, the remarks regarding Senator Nichols were ordered reduced to writing and printed in the *Senate Journal* as follows:

President: So, last week, Members, was the last day for Brian Birdwell, assuming we weren't going to be here tomorrow. So, it is now the last day for Robert Nichols, who came in with me as a freshman in 2007. He is the dean of the Republican side of the ledger. And I know that some of you will also want to honor him on the floor as we did Brian Birdwell, and then I'll turn to you, the man of few words, to give you a chance to make some comments. Robert, you've been a, just a rock, a rock of the Senate. You spoke rarely but everyone listened when you did. And you changed the direction of transportation in this state for decades to come. The bills you passed in '15 and '17 and had massive support from the public on the constitutional amendments. And you're my friend. You've been a great Senator and like so many others here are going to be greatly missed on the floor, greatly missed on the floor. So, Members, Senator Perry, to recognize to speak to Robert Nichols.

Senator Perry: Well, I'll go with your analytical mind, and you're soft spoken and your demeanor and how you approach problems is commendable. But as a mentor, I don't think you recognize the impact you had on everybody that watched. As a freshman, coming in here in '15, it didn't take long to kind of figure out the prominence that you had earned and deserved in the position you held. And what I appreciated about it and what I tried to take from it was: do your work, get your numbers right, do the analytics. And then, it's really hard to argue against you. So, it makes you a self-fulfilling prophecy of success when you know your stuff. So, you are a perfectionist, but you're pragmatic and you're a hardworking individual. Your word is your bond, found that out again today, not surprised by some conversations. So, greatly missed, you'll fill a, transportation, I don't know who's going to pick up that task. I would not be a good road guy. So, but it's just your professionalism in how you approach things that is going to be missed. But your wisdom, and then I can't ignore the fact you're probably the most, if not one of the most, interesting people I've ever met with your stories and your patents and your hunting trips and the worldly travels. And all of your accomplishments in the way you've went about your career and your life clearly indicate that you always were a man with a purpose. And you very much are a success because of that. But I will miss you, but you're not going to be far. I've still got your number. I will probably throw ideas at you, this is what they're talking about doing down here, what do you think, because I value your opinion and your insights on that. So, we're going to, we're going to miss you, but at the same time, your legacy for roads and how you approach things will go on in this floor for decades to come.

President: Senator Campbell, you're recognized.

Senator Campbell: Thank you, Mr. President. Well, Chairman Nichols, my goodness, we're all going to miss you. When I came in, you know, God tells us to surround ourself with wisdom. And I couldn't have been positioned better. I was on transportation, I've had the honor of sitting next to him in the desk as soon as I had an opening. You've been a great role model. You're an engineer, you think like an engineer, you explain like an engineer. And it's, it was just, I was always able and I believe still am. I've got your number, too. You've always been able to explain things and well. And for me that's been great. And the logic behind, the logic and reasoning behind why you're voting, being a man of his word and knowing what is good for a Senator and their district, he's told me a couple of times over the years we've been here together, this is not good for your district. You can't vote that. And that takes a lot and I appreciate that, you know, my first session. And remember you said—

Senator Nichols: I remember.

Senator Campbell: —and I just can't appreciate, I mean, I can't, I'm not happy you're leaving, but I can understand. I don't know that you can appreciate the impact you've made on my life, my role here in the Senate, you're a great role model and have taught me a lot. And I appreciate that and thank you very much. Family man, loves, loves his children. Yes, I've read the stories to his hunting trips. You're just interesting, smart, and you do love the Senators. You've got a lot of love in your heart. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Members.

President: Senator Hagenbuch.

Senator Hagenbuch: Chairman Nichols, I know I'm the new guy and only been here for a little time. I guess 1/20th or less than 1/20th of the time you been here, but I wanted to honor and thank you for your mentorship, for your friendship. As I've begun my time in the Texas Senate, I've learned more from you than you know. You've been an excellent role model. I want to commend you for your many years of dedicated service to the people of Texas. You've been a steady hand and the trusted voice in this Chamber, always putting Texans first. From your early work as a TxDOT Commissioner to your leadership in the Senate in transportation as a chairman of that committee, but also in many other areas, you've left a lasting mark on our state and on this transportation system, building safer roads, improving infrastructure, making sure our communities are connected for the future. Beyond transportation, you've been our champion for rural Texas, for education, and responsible government. You serve with integrity, humility, and unwavering commitment to the people you represent. Thank you for your service, your friendship, and your legacy of leadership. I wish you and your family every blessing in the next chapter of your most interesting life.

President: Senator Schwertner.

Senator Schwertner: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Nichols, you are rightly recognized for your intellect and supreme analytical ability, as well as, as really not just knowledge of an issue but the history of the issue going back sometimes decades and decades. Always knew when I was going to come to you to seek your advice or going against you, God, God willing, and hopefully not often, that I was always have, you know, always leave with more knowledge, much more knowledge, and you were always coming at it from the point of view of someone that cared about Texas greatly. And that was all your guiding light. And so, you'll be sorely missed as the dean of the Republican Caucus for the way you dealt with other individuals on this floor and other Members of, that came into this, to this building on the opposite side as well. I highly respect you and I miss you in B and C. The questions that are probing and very pointed and very needed on that dais at times. So, congratulations on your service during your TxDOT career, on the commission and over your many decades here in the Senate. Godspeed.

President: Senator Cook.

Senator Cook: Like everyone else in here, I have just been endlessly impressed by you so many times. And I know we've had some real laughs about having different views on transportation policy, but I just wanted you to know what a comfort it was to walk into a new place and know that there was not someone who just knows where Jacksonville is but loves Jacksonville and comes from it. And so, it's just an honor to serve with you and I feel very lucky to have overlapped even briefly. And I just love East Texas. So, thank you.

President: And you're a Jacksonville girl. Right? Senator Bettencourt.

Senator Bettencourt: You know, Robert, I knew you were thinking about leaving when I asked a question one night about public-private partnerships on toll roads. And an hour and three minutes later I got my answer, and because I knew that was your way of imparting wisdom. And I have to admire the serendipity of these relationships,

because, oh, it's not just, you know, Pete saying it, you know, on Mayes' ranch back when he was a game warden, but there's a lot here. And I can remember calling up in your Jacksonville plant because Robert was one of the first users of industrial robotics and he actually bought Unimation equipment, which was what I was selling. And he had an engineering manager that had, I think, 13 kids. It was like a full softball team, right, the same guy? And I realized that maybe, Senator Perry, values were different in the urban, from the urban area to the rural area. But you showed who you were to me 20 years ago when you were a TxDOT Commissioner and we had a dinner at a lunch, and I think you remember this, Mr. President, Ed Handy's place, about I-10, and it was a mess. The design that was, had been created was a flat mess, Robert, it's, and you know. And Ed Handy, who has little tolerance for alternate life forms, aka politicians, explained that problem. And you looked at it and said, You're right. We've got these entire exit ramp strategies wrong, the lanes are wrong, everything is wrong, but I'll fix it. And he did it, Members, by saying, you know, it's too late to change any of this. The environmental studies are done but soon as that's done, I'll change it. Now, 20 years later, hundreds of millions of people have taken that road. And because Robert Nichols decided to straighten out that problem, has saved the public unbelievable amounts of time on their commutes, because one engineer, one man, looked at a problem, cut through the red tape, realized these crazy citizens were right. Okay? And made a difference that doesn't get into the history books, doesn't get coverage by the *Houston Chronicle*, but I know that everybody that drives that freeway owes a great debt of gratitude to you because you have saved them countless hours. And every day in this Senate, you've approached that same problem. Might be the same, that, that's what, that side problem but the same solution. It's been an honor to know you. You are absolutely the most interesting man in any Senate in America. And if you don't believe it, before he leaves I want you freshmen to go down and see his office because every stuffed animal in that place was charging that man, in some cases within 10 yards, and the result is history as stuffed and posted downstairs. But your contributions will be long remembered because I will never forget the answer after one hour and three minutes, public-private partnerships don't work out like we thought they were going to, Paul. And Godspeed, because for you, I don't know what else you're going to do besides drive that old Model T around Jacksonville as soon as you get the frame straightened from that last wreck. But Godspeed, brother.

President: Senator Menéndez.

Senator Menéndez: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Nichols, you know, you, many times when a problem, issue, legislation, whatever it is, I observe how you go back and you look at the different roles that you have played, whether it's an inventor, I don't know how many patents you have, medical patents to your name, whether it was when you were being an engineer that was looked at how do you get things to be more efficient. We talked about that earlier when we talked about 8-track tapes. And how your job was to see what you could do to save more time in, and in the process. Or your days as a mayor, and I think your days as a mayor were probably what has helped in many ways, what I feel that you bring is such a great sense of just a common sense approach to solving problems that are not necessarily, they don't come from any kind of ideology, they come from what's the best thing for everybody, how does it make, solve the problem? I've seen you bring this to school safety, I've seen

you bring this approach to obviously, transportation and all your good work in the transportation, how you've led this state for so many years. You know, and it was evident to me, too, when back home, everybody in the community that knows you always looks forward to having you every year, Chairman Nichols is coming. And it was, it's always been a great thing to have you there. They love you. They enjoy your work. And the thing that, I think, that it's impressed me is when you talked about your days on TxDOT, how you would drive to every single TxDOT district and meet with all the different employees. There are a lot of people who run for office or try to get a position in life for the title, whether it be the title of Mayor or Senator, CEO. And then there are people who do things because they want to solve problems. You are, Sir, a problem solver, someone who is just a person of great integrity, someone who is highly respected, and someone who will be dearly missed here on the Senate floor of the State of Texas. You've done so much good for so many and it's been an honor and a privilege to serve with you. And so, wish you all the best in your life. I had the good fortune of speaking with your daughter for a little bit when y'all were in a caucus meeting and she can't wait for you to decide where y'all want to go visit first. And so, I can't wait to hear and see all the, all the good pictures. That's going to be great. But please know that I, anywhere I am, obviously, you will always be welcome. And I look forward to seeing you in the future. Thank you, Mr. President.

President: Senator Hinojosa.

Senator J. Hinojosa: Thank you, Mr. President. And just to share a couple of comments about Senator Nichols. Senator Nichols, I've never met someone that is as detailed as you are, very knowledgeable. And one of the best things you did for TxDOT in funding our highways, when you figured out this formula, how to take money from excess oil and gas revenue in the rainy day fund. That has been a lifesaver for our highway system, made our economy grow, made transportation better. And you were the key. I don't think anybody really understood the formula, but it really worked. And also very grateful to you that you would spend time to come down to the Rio Grande Valley, to know the Valley, know the bridges, and know the transportation needs that we have. And you're such a independent person that you make it, you make up your own mind based on facts, based on logic. And to me, that's very important because I saw you stand your ground when you were under a lot of pressure from lobbyists on certain legislation that was not good public policy and got, not good for the State of Texas. So, we, I, and I know that you are very experienced in transportation, your service at TxDOT, you travel all over the state. But also heard all your stories about your hunting trips, and it's just amazing. You're really an amazing person and I really appreciate your friendship. And I won't tell the stories about when you first became a freshman, and you were somewhere, having a nice time and I, that's when I first met you and I got to know you better as a friend and as a person. So, we're going to miss you, and hopefully you can still reach out when we need help, especially on issues dealing with transportation. But thank you for your service to our state. I thank you for your friendship and hope that friendship will continue. Thank you, my friend.

President: Senator Zaffirini.

Senator Zaffirini: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Nichols, what can I say? When I heard that you weren't running for reelection, you know I called you, I started to call you and then I didn't and I said I would've called you but I was too busy sobbing because I will miss you so much. Your character, your integrity, your honesty, your intelligence, all those sterling virtues that everybody knows you reflect so well. But something more important to me is your fearlessness. Many Senators can be described as courageous. You don't need courage because you are never afraid. You always do the right thing for the families you represent. One of the things I particularly like about you is that you brought Collynn'rae into our lives. We all feel that we know her, she's such a special person, and she loves you so much, clearly a daddy-daughter relationship. And you have done such a good job in bringing her up. But the love that she has for you, the respect that she has for you says so much about you as a person. I especially will miss your little signs, your little notes that you write to me with, Kilroy was here, whenever you take great pride in arriving earlier than I do to a hearing. I will miss those little notes and I will miss sitting next to you. He would always write these notes that say, Kilroy was here, whenever he got to a hearing before I did. He took great pleasure in doing that. But truly your sense of humor is unique. Truly you are appreciated by this body because you are indeed the most interesting man of the Texas Senate. I remember meeting you when you came to Laredo as a TxDOT Commissioner and being so impressed with you then. What made you different is that you listened and that you not only listened, but you understood, and even beyond that, you did something about what you heard and what you observed. Because most people who run for the Senate can deliver a great speech. You can do that and more. You lead by example and you lead by listening, by observing, and by making a difference in everything you do. The first time I saw you, I thought of Sean Connery. And to this day I call 007 because you look like him so much. But we have all benefited from your leadership, from your fairness, from your example, and, my friend, we will all miss you so much. Thank you for your leadership. Thank you for who you are and what you have done for us. Thank you, Mr. President.

President: Thank you. Senator Hughes.

Senator Hughes: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Nichols, of course I had the pleasure of sharing the same region of the state and having known you for a long time, known of you for a long time and looking up to you and finally getting to work with you here. When we think about the model of a citizen legislator, different ways to do it, different shapes, different sizes, but if we think about the model of someone who has worked hard and, Senator, from working your way through school selling fireworks to being innovative and working hard and working smart, someone who has worked hard, made their own way, succeeded in business. And, of course, the way to succeed in business in America is to help people and you helped a lot of people, and you provided products, invented products, built, made products, found a better way to do it and at a price people could afford. So, you made their lives better and your life was better in the process. And you've hired people, and you've blessed so many people. And then, having accomplished, having conquered the world in business, I can't remember how many patents, you probably know the exact number, but a few more than I've got and most of us have, and having accomplished so much in business, not looking for a title, not looking for the praise of man, not looking to

become something else, but really wanting to serve. Again, the, what you did with TxDOT, the innovation has already been discussed and so many things like that where you saw a problem and you put your business sense and your work ethic at it and came up with a solution. You didn't take no for an answer. Never broke the rules, never broke the rules, always followed the rules, followed the law, but found a way to get it done and to get it done right. And what a joy to get to be with you here and to get to come alongside you and work closely with you. And I'll get to see you back home. I'm going to see you more than most of these folks, I think. Though, who knows, you might be in, don't know where you'll be enjoying some time off, but you deserve it. We're thankful for you. And we've all got stories about Senator Nichols, but my favorite one is when he was considering running for office. I, at one time, maybe somebody else here was, and you were thinking about running for the same office. That's another story for another day, but when you were looking at running for office, they were doing, one of his prospective opponents was doing some polling. And y'all know what it's like, you'll, you hear somebody's doing polling in your district. So, Senator Nichols got a call from somebody he knew real well in the neighborhood say, Hey, I just got a call and they're asking questions about you, asking about you and the, it was his mother is the one who got the call. So, the pollster called his mother, and I think she said she was going to vote for you, if I remember correctly. And a lot of other people did, too.

Senator Nichols: It was his polling.

Senator Hughes: I, it was, that's what, that was someone else in the room who was looking at the same race at the same time. I heard about that. And so, and I can identify with that, Senator Nichols. I've got a number of people in Tyler and southern Smith County that still wish you were their Senator, but they put up with me and you say nice things about me and I'm thankful for that. But we love you, we appreciate you, we admire you, we look up to you. So glad, it's, what you've done here is service. It's real service. I know you'll continue to, and I'm just glad to know you and look forward to seeing you back home. Congratulations.

President: Thank you. Yeah, there were five Senate seats open that year, much like this year. And we were kind of close to boundaries and I remember he asked someone, I asked, Well, who's Robert Nichols? And then he asked, who's that deejay in Houston? And so, it all kind of worked out like that. Senator Huffman.

Senator Huffman: Thank you. Robert, this is be tough for me. You know, Members, when I first got to the Senate in 2009, this place was the Wild West. Okay. A lot of you didn't serve when it used to be, you know, the 21-vote rule and things were a lot, lot different. We had a different Lieutenant Governor and our current Lieutenant Governor was down here in the trenches with us. But Robert Nichols, well anyway, I came in with kind of a deer-in-the-headlights kind of look and trying to figure the place out. It was tough. Like I said, it was a different atmosphere around here than we have today. And Robert Nichols took me under his wing and he had my back. We had a row, we called it the "no" row. And back then our real power was our no vote. Right? And he taught me that early and he helped me with transportation. I don't know how many of you have been exposed to a white board presentation. Right? Senator Nichols, when he brings the white board out and he, you know, has column A,

B, C, D, and he lays it all out for you but he did that for me. And he had my back in some political battles that he and I worked together quietly, took us several sessions, but we prevailed, and he was on my team, and I'm not even sure anyone in the world knew he was on my team helping me, but he was. He is that kind of Senator and friend. And so, we can talk about how brilliant he is, which he is, how the things that he does, the lives he's lived, the businesses he's made into huge successes, sold, and started over. And that's all a very important part of him and who he is. But what he leaves to this Senate, and I hope we all learn from this, is how to have each others' backs. Because when we don't have that, then we're not really a very good Senate anymore. Alone, standing alone as a Senator, yeah, you're a powerful with your vote but to accomplish great things, you have to be able to work together, and you have to be able to count on each other. And Robert Nichols hopefully taught us all that. So, that's what I remember about him, his character, his steadfastness, and his dear friendship. And I will miss him greatly, but I know he's going to go on to greater things. I don't think he's going to sit in Jacksonville, look at his trophies and his, I'm pretty sure we'll see him doing something great because he is a great man in every sense of the word. God bless you, my friend. Thank you.

President: You know that "no" row was very famous, and I used to sit in front of Robert as a freshman and a sophomore. And I would turn around to Robert a lot and say, Robert—look he's nodding his head—Robert, I don't understand this bill. Am I a yes or am I a no? And you cast a lot of votes for me, you might say. Yeah, I know, I know but it was, things were different back then. But the one, my, the best story about Robert, as a freshman I was in the lounge by myself sitting back there and there was a Senator who at that time was a bully at times. And I heard him yelling at Robert in the men's room. And this guy walked out in his bully mood huffing and puffing, and Robert came out, and I didn't know anything about Robert's background. And I said, Senator, that's not right. No one should talk to another Senator like that. And he said, Well, that doesn't bother me. I shot an 11-foot grizzly bear at about 11 feet, nothing scares me. And I'll never forget that day. There's an end to the story. So, he holds an event when I ran for Lieutenant Governor, in his home. And in his home, he has tiles to tell his life story. There's a tile of the tree if I recall, where you and your wife met. There's a tile of that car. So, he has all these painted tiles around. So, he said, I want you to come up to the bathroom and show you what I have. And he and his wife had separate bathrooms. And I go into the bathroom, and there's a massive shower and on the wall is the 11-foot grizzly painted on all the tile. So that's Robert Nichols. He walks, he wakes up with the grizzly. So, he is the most interesting person in the world. Robert, the floor is yours.

Senator Nichols: Thank you, thank you, thank you. I almost teared up on that last one. That's, it's very difficult to say goodbye. I'm not saying goodbye because I'm not gone yet. I plan on being here until I complete the job, which is January '27. I do not intend to burn down the building when I leave. I want to leave in good order. The first time, I really appreciate everything everybody said. It, and it is hard not to choke up on some of this, but I remember the first time I saw this Capitol. I think I was eight years old, nine years old, we took a field trip as a kid from school. We came and had a picnic on the Capitol grounds, I'll never forget it. The girls all did what girls did and the boys all played on the cannons and stuff and tried to climb the statues until they

ran us off. But we finally got in the rotunda. And when I walked in that rotunda as an eight- or nine-year-old, I looked up absolutely in awe. Oh my gosh, this place is amazing. And anybody who serves here who still walks through that rotunda and doesn't look up and go, Oh my gosh, what an honor it is to serve in this building. You just can't do it, you can recognize, anyway, that was my first experience. The, I've got so many things to say and so little time to say it in, but I do recall that meeting. And the polling, it was to my mother, she was about 95 years old. It was one of Dan Patrick's, Lieutenant Governor Patrick's pollsters. He was trying to find which district to run in. He had a house in Senate District 3, Lake Conroe, and he had a house in Harris County. He could have run in either one. So, this pollster is getting my mother on the phone and says, Ma'am, have you ever, you know do you vote Republican? Or whatever they ask her, and they said, let me give you four different names. And do you recognize any of these names? Yes, this is my son, this one's my son. Oh, well do you know that Dan Patrick did this or Dan Patrick did that? Now would that influence on who you vote for? Yes, this one's my son. Yeah, but you probably are not aware and this, whoever that pollster was, went down the entire list asking and every time she'd come back and say, No, this is my son. He found that out probably about 10 years ago, I guess, so it was a long time. But he was trying to decide on which one and then he finally realized his radio station didn't go that far up in the district. And so, I'm asking my consultant, I'm a freshman, I'm not even a freshman, I'm running for the Senate and I'm going, Well, who is this Dan Patrick guy? Oh, he is the deejay. He's a deejay on the radio? Yeah, he's the deejay. Well, does he play country music or rock and roll? I want to know if I got a problem because if rock and roll, there's no problem. But if he's a country deejay, I might have a problem. They said, yeah, he and they finally made up the mind and run down there. And, but along the way we wanted to meet and discuss things, kind of get to know him, him getting to know me, size each other up, I don't know we're going to hopefully in the Senate together. And this guy at Edd Hendee, I didn't know Edd Hendee from, this guy from Houston called me one day while I was a TxDOT Commissioner and said, I got a problem. I said, What's the problem. And it's I-10 and I'm a business owner. What kind of business do you have? I got a steakhouse. I thought it was a Western Sizzlin, you know a \$10 steak place. I didn't know, I could care less. But, he said, I want, let's get together. And we laid the maps out. I mean we laid the whole I-10 maps out. Anyway, but, we met in that restaurant, and it wasn't a Western Sizzlin, it was one of these \$100 a night steak places. And he brought his sidekick, guy who used to sell me robotics named Paul Bettencourt, and we got to know each other. But we became good friends, and he did sit here for a couple of sessions. And I think Jane Nelson was back here, and we had a very conservative row. I don't remember if Hager was up there, or were you on the front? Yeah, but what we really quickly realized is we pretty much agreed with each other. And so, we even got to comparing our no votes. And, Well how did, how did I miss this one? Why did you? And so, we became known as the "no" row. You need something killed, you come over here. We know how to get the job done. And if we don't like it, we'll kill it. And so, I would, went out and talked about it quite a bit. But things have changed a little bit. The, I was also in awe of this desk. We don't talk about our desks very much. This is the same original desk from 1887. I knew that the first day I came here. I also have been in the same seat, in the same spot for 20 years.

I've never moved, I like this spot. I got the great spot. I think I've got the best spot on the whole Senate. But I wondered if my predecessor, I also wondered what kind of things were voted off this desk. The history, I mean you go all the way back to the Texas Rangers and the Comanche Indians and all that kind of stuff. And so, I wanted to see if my predecessor left me a note. And so, I looked in the drawers, I don't pull the drawers out, I looked under the drawers. I mean I got under the desk, I studied everything this desk, and I finally in the very far back corner I found a melted peppermint stuck in the corner. It's all I ever found. But I hoped to leave something for the next one. The, some of the stories that were told, there are other stories. I know a freshman, I, you got a great freshman class. I'm really excited about the whole class, and everybody here. To the freshmen in particular, I would say, nobody gets anything done by themselves here. You're not going to get anything done by yourself. If you're trying to get something done by yourself, you will get nothing done by yourself. We do it collectively, hopefully you can get everybody on board. If you've got a good story to tell, you should be able to tell your story and overcome the objections and listen very carefully to those who object. A lot of times they have a good reason. Make sure you open up to what those reasons are and see if you can work those issues out. I think that's extremely important. I've always believed that, and I will to my dying day, I know. Going into, I am going to tell a few stories. The two people I've know the longest are sitting over here. Royce is not here, but in 1997, Members, when I finished my term, I will have served 30 years the State of Texas. I worked five legislative sessions before I ever came in as a Senator. But I had to be confirmed. And to get confirmed, you have 31 Members, and I was appointed by George W. Bush back in, it was in April. We're talking about late in the session. I got to go see 31 Senators before they, and that's the worst time of the year. And I did, I managed to speak to every one of them. And these are two that gave me time to discuss, and I remember that very first meeting. I remember it differently than the way you do. Because I went down as TxDOT Commissioner to meet, understand, and to do all these other things, but I remember a disagreement. I remember it differently than you did, but apparently, I was wrong because I was driving back on I-35 and I get a call from George W. Bush. What in the hell did you tell Zaffirini? I looked at my rearview mirror and Laredo was on fire. I had made her mad about something, and I said I don't know, but I'll go fix it. And so, I remember that meeting a little bit differently, but I did work it out. But yeah, I did fix it. And it's been an honor, Chuy, to serve with you. I did go down and spend time in your district. I actually been in everybody's district one, many, many times looking at your systems, but I appreciate that. Coming into the Senate my first time, let me back up a second. People, I never intended to even get into politics. I've had people say, Well, how did you get into politics? And my quick answer, my staff knows this, is it was an accident. I did not intend to. Well, how you, how do you accidentally get into politics? And I said, Well, I was mad, running my business, growing in my little hometown, and I was mad at the city council because some of the different kind of things they did. And so, I wanted to know, there were only five council, we had a mayor council. I wanted to know who's going to be that spot. Because if, there's one spot where everybody drops out, they run two years and drop out, run two, it had to be my precinct. So, I go down on my last week, nobody's filed, and I ask the city secretary, Well, surely somebody's filed. She said, Nobody's

filed. I said, Well, what happens if nobody files? And she just laughed, and I said, No really, what happens if nobody files? She said, see that door over there? And I said, Yes. She said, One minute to five this Friday, whatever idiot walks through that door, this is the city's secretary, whatever idiot walks in this door and signs that paper, that's your next city councilman. Made me so concerned I went down at 3 o'clock, waited all afternoon, and found out I was the idiot that signed up because nobody wanted that job. And I thought I was good at math because I majored in engineering. I learned to count when I got on the City Council. Four beats one and you can't flip those things. And I thought this is my town, too, by golly. If I give up, shame on me. We all have an obligation to serve, and so I guess this is my turn. So, I'm going to serve and I'm not going to let these guys beat me, and so we worked to get somebody else elected two years. But three beats two. Now two more years, now I'm six years in this process just to get three votes. Six years to get three votes and when I got the votes, how sweet it was. Then, I realized my community's impacted by the state. The hospital, Health and Human Services, the health department, TCEQ, the landfill, all of that, it all ties and somehow comes back to the state, that highway that goes through town is the state. Those are the state agencies, I better start paying attention who my state rep' was and so on. And then, next thing I know, I get the call after I sold all my businesses to have the opportunity to serve TxDOT. And I never intended to run for the Senate. I really never did. I had people ask me to run when an opening came up. Perry had reappointed me, it was not my intention. My predecessor was trying to talk me into it. I said, Why would I want to be in the Texas Senate? All y'all can do is vote yes or no. I mean that's really, you only get to vote yes or no. I've got constitutional authority in all \$10 billion, and I've got 15,000 employees. We can build projects wherever we want. But I learned real quickly, you can do a whole lot more when you put your minds together and collectively work to solve a problem. And that's what Brandon was trying to tell everybody. You can solve so many big problems when you put your minds together, the wisdom and experience of all these people. Coming in my freshman year, I had to stop the Trans-Texas Corridor and all those CDAs and all that kind of stuff because the train had left the station. I needed to do it. I needed to be able to override a veto and I'm a freshman. And I said, I need somebody tougher than boots in the House. The only person that I could find that I realize that I knew was a lady named Lois Kolkhorst, who hated my guts because I was working on moving the point of collection to the fuel tax, which made every distributor in the State of Texas hate me. I was the demon. And so, I knew she and I went up to a cocktail party before the session even started. And everybody's all dressed, and you know you got all this stuff, and everybody's got a little cocktail, and I went up to her and I said, I know you hate my guts, which is a pretty bold thing to do to go up to a Texas Senator and say that. But if you'll give me 20 minutes, if you'll give me 20 minutes of your time, not only will you no longer hate me, we are going to be closest of pals and we're going to be partnerships on something that you don't know much about. And she said, Yeah. I guess it was because I want to hear what this 20 minutes sounds like. But I talked her into it and once she knew, we bound together and we did not go one single day without having, she was a House Member, without having a conversation comparing notes every night. We took something that was quite large, and we stopped some major damages from this state. And we did it in a short period of time. We had 29

co-authors in the Senate before I filed. But I wouldn't file until we had it in the Senate, the House. We went until we got 111 co-authors on the face of the bill. Game, set, match, we filed them and we passed that thing. And we did and it stopped and made a lot of people start paying attention to something weren't paying attention to. There's a thousand stories like that. I don't want to go through every one of them. I would, I could sit and go row by row and tell a story about every one of y'all, which it's been an honor to serve. I will say I thank you very much Governor. If I'd known all those years that you were going to be Lieutenant Governor, I promise you I'd of been a lot nicer. If you were going to be Lieutenant Governor, I didn't know. But you have been nice to me and we've disagreed on some things, as you know. I think everybody does. And everybody's always been amazed. How do you keep your chairmanship when you vote sometimes the way you do? And I think I've never really been able to explain it except he knows where I'm coming from. You said that earlier, and why I do the things I do, but I appreciate it for giving me an opportunity to get things done that I would not been able to do before. You probably know when you make a decision like I did, because I will have served 30 years for the State of Texas. I will have served nine years at home, and it'll be the third time I have retired in my life. I can't, always seem to stay busy, but the thing that I dreaded the most, the thing I dreaded the most making that decision was to tell my staff. The crew that's sitting over here, been loyal to me for years. Some of the crew that have graduated, I know one of them's over there. Adrian's over there. But in our office, we kind of have a democracy, everybody gets to speak their word. I get to make the last decision. But I've never seen so many young people who get so devoted and so determined to fix things the right way. It inspires me to want to work harder, to work with a crew like that. I've got, the youngest one, McKenna Martinez, and she's been with me just a year. A law student, some of y'all know her dad, Mario Martinez. Shelby Vestal, she's gotten married a year or two ago. I'm so used to calling her first name. But, she's done amazing things. Jake Ellis, oh Trent, yeah, I didn't see you over here. But Jake Ellis, from his parents changed their names, not his parents but his ancestors when they came to Ellis Island. That's how their last name but, they served me. And, Angus Lupton, the man in the middle with the gray hair was a young man with dark hair and a bachelor when he came and worked for me 20 years ago. Married a lady, now they have four kids and now he has dark, well, he went from dark to gray. But, Angus, I appreciate everything you've done all these years. And a shout out to my three district people for their work and dedication. They really done a lot over the years because they feel like they're helping people. And they feel dedicated to serve. I know I'm going way past my time, Governor, but I'm not a guy that talks a lot on the mic. I thank all of y'all very much. There's a piece of every one of you in me. I've learned from y'all, I've tried to teach and mentor the best I know how. It's one of the greatest honors of my life to have had the opportunity to work in the Senate, and you can really tackle some big things I know, as Brandon said. And so, thank y'all very much. And I'm not gone, I'm just going to fade away like Birdwell said. So, I'll be here till I've finished is my game plan. So, thank you very much for the time. Thank y'all—

President: Thank you.

Senator Nichols: —very much. Bless you.

President: Senator, you, you've always been Transportation Chair because there is no one that could do the job better than you. That's why you're always the Transportation Chair. You've made all of us better Senators and better Lieutenant Governor and better people and you need to write a book. Your stories are incredible, and you didn't waste any time because we had to wait till midnight anyway, to another day. We were having a little event for Senators a few years ago and I was tending bar, and I handed him a red Solo cup, and he said, You know, I put the red in that cup. I said, you did what? I put the red in that cup. That song "Red Solo Cup," he, East Texas put the red in the red Solo cup. And then he told me, he said, You know I'm, I said, well how'd that happen? He said, I'm in plastics. I said, Well, plastics? He said, Yeah, he said, When, was it Skol, what tobacco company was that?

Senator Nichols: U.S. Tobacco.

President: Yeah, U.S. Tobacco, they switched from the cardboard on this tin to plastic on the bottom and their sales dropped 30 percent because you couldn't smell the tobacco. I don't smoke and I don't, but that's what happened. They turned him down on the first bid. They called him back and said, Our business is falling apart, can you help? And he said, send me the perfume, and so the plastic under that, Robert Nichols. Every time you get in an elevator the little, little piece in an elevator. See it's every time you go to the emergency room or a hospital because he walked into the emergency room and said, How are you handling all this blood and you're handling everything that's, and so I can make it instead of glass that can break. I can make it. He's everywhere. He's everywhere because he's a genius. And he's a great man and a great friend. Thank you, Robert. Thank you. And I have a gavel here that we'll engrave for you. Okay, alright, thank you, Robert.

SENATE RULE 7.21 SUSPENDED (House Amendments to Senate Bills)

On motion of Senator Perry and by unanimous consent, Senate Rule 7.21, was suspended as it relates to the printing of the House amendment to **SB 1**.

SENATE BILL 1 WITH HOUSE AMENDMENT

Senator Perry called **SB 1** from the President's table for consideration of the House amendment to the bill.

The President laid the bill and the House amendment before the Senate.

Amendment

Amend **SB 1** by substituting in lieu thereof the following:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT

relating to campground and youth camp safety.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the Heaven's 27 Camp Safety Act.

SECTION 2. Section 141.002, Health and Safety Code, is amended by amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivisions (1-a), (2-a), (2-b), and (2-c) to read as follows:

(1) "Cabin" means a structure used to provide temporary sleeping quarters for campers.

(1-a) "Camper" means a minor who is attending a youth camp on a day care or boarding basis.

(2-a) "Floodplain" has the meaning assigned by Section 762.001.

(2-b) "Floodway" means an area identified on the most recent flood hazard map published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. Section 4001 et seq.) as a regulatory floodway.

(2-c) "Governmental entity" means this state or a state agency or political subdivision of this state.

SECTION 3. Section 141.005(a), Health and Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) A person holding a license issued under this chapter must:

(1) renew the license annually by submitting a renewal application on a date determined by department rule on a form provided by the department; and

(2) submit a renewal application not later than the 30th day after the date the person:

(A) alters the boundaries of a youth camp operated by the person;

(B) completes construction of one or more new cabins located on the premises of the camp; or

(C) completes any renovation to one or more existing cabins located on the premises of the camp that:

(i) increases or decreases the number of beds in an affected cabin;

or

(ii) alters the method of ingress or egress to an affected cabin.

SECTION 4. Chapter 141, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Sections 141.0052, 141.0056, 141.0091, and 141.0092 to read as follows:

Sec. 141.0052. PROHIBITED LICENSURE OF YOUTH CAMPS WITHIN FLOODPLAIN; EXCEPTION. (a) The department shall not issue or renew a youth camp license for a youth camp that operates one or more cabins located within a floodplain.

(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the department may issue or renew a license to a youth camp described by Subsection (a) only if:

(1) each cabin location within a floodplain is a result of the cabin's proximity to a lake, pond, or other still body of water that:

(A) is not connected to a stream, river, or other watercourse; or

(B) is dammed; or

(2) each cabin is at least 1,000 feet from a floodway.

Sec. 141.0056. ONLINE YOUTH CAMP REGISTRY. The department shall post, maintain, and update on the department's Internet website a list of each youth camp with an active license issued under this chapter.

Sec. 141.0091. ADDITIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS; EMERGENCY PLAN. (a) As part of the health and safety standards established under Section 141.009, the executive commissioner by rule shall make applicable to a youth camp the requirements of Chapter 762 in the same manner as those requirements apply to a campground under that chapter.

(b) The executive commissioner by rule shall require a youth camp operator in the emergency plan the operator develops for a youth camp to:

(1) specify muster zones for campers and camp staff to gather in an emergency event that requires evacuation from any location within the premises of the camp;

(2) establish procedures for responding to an emergency event, other than an event addressed by Section 762.002, including:

(A) a lost camper;

(B) a fire on the premises of the camp;

(C) a severe injury, severe illness, serious accident, or death of one or more campers, visitors, camp staff, or camp volunteers that occurs:

(i) on camp premises; or

(ii) while under the supervision of camp staff;

(D) an aquatic emergency if the camp borders a watercourse, lake, pond, or any other body of water;

(E) an epidemic;

(F) an unauthorized or unknown individual present on the camp's premises;

(G) a transportation emergency; and

(H) any other natural disaster or emergency event required under department rules;

(3) establish procedures to identify and account for each camper affected by the emergency event;

(4) establish procedures to notify and communicate with:

(A) local emergency management services, including the emergency management director or coordinator designated under Section 418.1015, Government Code, by the political subdivision within which the camp is located;

(B) camp administrative and medical services staff; and

(C) the parents or legal guardians of each camper identified under Subdivision (3); and

(5) designate a camp emergency preparedness coordinator.

(c) The executive commissioner by rule shall require a youth camp operator to, at each youth camp the operator operates:

(1) maintain an operable radio capable of providing real-time weather alerts issued by the National Weather Service or a similar professional weather service at the camp;

(2) install and maintain at the camp an emergency warning system that:

(A) is capable of alerting all campers and camp occupants of an emergency; and

(B) includes a public address system operable without reliance on an Internet connection;

(3) monitor safety alerts issued:

(A) by the National Weather Service or a similar professional weather service; and

(B) by local river authorities, if applicable to the camp, or through other local emergency notification systems; and

(4) certify the operator's compliance with this subsection.

(d) In developing a youth camp's emergency plan, a youth camp operator must annually submit the initial or updated plan to the department for approval in the form and manner the department prescribes.

(e) If the department determines a youth camp's submitted emergency plan does not meet the minimum standards prescribed by department rules, the youth camp operator shall revise and resubmit the plan not later than the 45th day after the date the operator receives notice from the department of the plan's deficiencies.

(f) A youth camp operator shall include any updated youth camp emergency plan as an attachment to each application to renew the operator's license under Section 141.005.

(g) Notwithstanding Section 762.002(c), not later than the 10th business day following the date the department approves a youth camp's emergency plan or, if the department determines the plan is deficient under Subsection (e), the camp's revised emergency plan, the operator shall provide a copy of the plan to:

(1) for a camp located in a municipality, the emergency management director or coordinator designated under Section 418.1015, Government Code, for the municipality; and

(2) the emergency management director or coordinator designated under Section 418.1015, Government Code, for the county.

(h) In developing a youth camp's emergency plan, a youth camp operator may consult with an emergency management director or coordinator described by Subsection (g).

(i) The department shall store in a digital database each emergency plan submitted to the department under this section or Section 762.002 and provide access to that database to:

(1) the Texas Division of Emergency Management; and

(2) each member of the Youth Camp Safety Multidisciplinary Team created under Section 141.0081.

(j) A youth camp operator shall:

(1) provide the most recent version of a youth camp's emergency plan submitted under this section to the parent or legal guardian of:

(A) a camper who is participating in a camp session; or

(B) a prospective camper who is registered to participate in a future camp session;

(2) notify the parent or legal guardian of a camper or prospective camper described by Subdivision (1) if any area of the camp is located within a floodplain; and

(3) ensure the parent or legal guardian signs and submits to the operator a statement acknowledging receipt of the notice required under Subdivision (2).

(k) Not more than 48 hours after each youth camp session begins, the youth camp operator or a youth camp staff member shall conduct a mandatory safety orientation that:

(1) notifies each camper of the camp's boundaries and any hazards present on the camp premises;

(2) instructs each camper on behavioral expectations in an emergency event; and

(3) provides each camper developmentally appropriate instruction on the appropriate actions and procedures to follow in an emergency event, in accordance with the camp's emergency plan required under this section and Section 762.002.

(l) At least once a year, a youth camp operator shall:

(1) provide each youth camp staff member and volunteer with a copy of the camp's most recent emergency plan;

(2) ensure each staff member and volunteer successfully completes training on the camp's emergency plan in compliance with any minimum standards and required hours established by department rule;

(3) instruct each staff member and volunteer on the proper procedures to follow in an emergency event under the plan; and

(4) maintain written records documenting each staff member's and volunteer's successful completion of the training required under this subsection.

(m) A youth camp operator shall:

(1) conspicuously post in each cabin on the youth camp premises the proper evacuation route described in the youth camp's emergency plan; and

(2) ensure each evacuation route on the camp premises is illuminated at night.

(n) Notwithstanding Section 141.0025, the department shall not grant a waiver from a requirement prescribed under this section or Chapter 762.

(o) An emergency plan submitted to, received by, or accessed by the department, the Texas Division of Emergency Management, an emergency management director or coordinator designated under Section 418.1015, Government Code, or any other governmental entity under this section is confidential and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code.

Sec. 141.0092. REDUNDANT INTERNET CONNECTIONS REQUIRED. (a) In this section, "broadband service" has the meaning assigned by Section 490I.0101, Government Code.

(b) A youth camp operator shall provide and maintain for a youth camp:

(1) Internet services through a broadband service that connects to the Internet using end-to-end fiber optic facilities; and

(2) a secondary Internet connection through a broadband service distinct from the service described under Subdivision (1).

SECTION 5. Section 141.008(a), Health and Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The executive commissioner may adopt rules to implement this chapter. In adopting the rules the executive commissioner shall comply with Subchapter B, Chapter 2001, Government Code, including Sections 2001.032(b) and 2001.033,

Government Code. ~~[In developing the rules to be adopted by the executive commissioner, the department shall consult parents, youth camp operators, and appropriate public and private officials and organizations.]~~

SECTION 6. Subtitle A, Title 9, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Chapter 762 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 762. CAMPGROUND SAFETY

Sec. 762.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Cabin" means a structure used to provide temporary sleeping quarters for transient overnight guests.

(2) "Campground" means, regardless of profit:

(A) a commercial property designed to provide cabins for transient overnight guest use; or

(B) a recreational vehicle park, as defined by Section 13.087, Water Code.

(3) "Campground operator" means a person who owns, operates, controls, or supervises a campground, regardless of profit.

(4) "Floodplain" means any area within a 100-year floodplain identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. Section 4001 et seq.). This term includes any area removed from the 100-year floodplain by a letter of map amendment, a letter of map revision based on fill, or a substantially similar administrative process conducted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(5) "Governmental entity" means this state or a state agency or political subdivision of this state.

Sec. 762.002. FLOODPLAIN SAFETY REQUIREMENTS. (a) A campground operator shall:

(1) install and maintain in each campground cabin located within the floodplain an emergency ladder capable of providing access to the cabin's roof; and

(2) develop an emergency evacuation plan for:

(A) evacuating on issuance of a flash flood or flood warning campground occupants who are at a campground area within the floodplain;

(B) evacuating campground occupants on issuance of an evacuation order by the emergency management director or coordinator designated under Section 418.1015, Government Code, for the county or, if applicable, the municipality in which the campground is located, due to a wildfire, hurricane, or other disaster; and

(C) sheltering campground occupants in place on issuance of:

(i) a tornado warning; or

(ii) an order to shelter in place issued by the emergency management director or coordinator for the county or, if applicable, the municipality in which the campground is located.

(b) A campground operator shall:

(1) implement the emergency evacuation plan developed under Subsection

(a)(2)(A) on issuance by the National Weather Service of a flash flood or flood warning for an area of the campground; and

(2) implement the emergency evacuation plan developed under Subsection (a)(2)(C) on issuance by the National Weather Service of a tornado warning for an area of the campground.

(c) A campground operator shall send a copy of an emergency evacuation plan developed under Subsection (a)(2) to:

(1) for a campground located in a municipality, the emergency management director or coordinator designated under Section 418.1015, Government Code, for the municipality; and

(2) the emergency management director or coordinator designated under Section 418.1015, Government Code, for the county.

(d) An emergency plan submitted to, received by, or accessed by an emergency management director or coordinator under Section 418.1015, Government Code, or any governmental entity under this section is confidential and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code.

Sec. 762.003. FIRE PROTECTION STANDARDS. (a) This section does not apply to a campground owned or controlled by a governmental entity.

(b) A campground must comply with the National Fire Protection Association 1194, Standard for Recreational Vehicle Parks and Campgrounds, 2021 Edition, other than Sections 1.1.1 and 5.1.1.1.

(c) A governmental entity may adopt a policy, rule, ordinance, or order to regulate environmental health and sanitation, electrical distribution system safety, liquefied petroleum gas storage and dispensing safety, or fire protection only if the policy, rule, ordinance, or order does not impose standards more stringent than the standards described under Subsection (b).

SECTION 7. Section 141.0035(b), Health and Safety Code, is repealed.

SECTION 8. Not later than January 1, 2026, the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall adopt the rules required by Section 141.0091, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 9. Notwithstanding Section 141.0091, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, a youth camp operator is not required to submit a youth camp emergency plan to the Department of State Health Services until April 1, 2026.

SECTION 10. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect on the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.

The amendment was read.

Senator Perry moved to concur in the House amendment to **SB 1**.

The motion prevailed by the following vote: Yeas 26, Nays 0.

Absent-excused: Birdwell, Eckhardt, Gutierrez, West.

CO-SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 1

On motion of Senator Perry, Senators Bettencourt, Blanco, Campbell, Cook, Flores, Hagenbuch, Hall, A. Hinojosa, J. Hinojosa, Huffman, Johnson, Kolkhorst, Middleton, Paxton, Sparks, and West will be shown as Co-sponsors of **HB 1**.

CO-SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 7

On motion of Senator Hughes, Senators Huffman, Kolkhorst, and Sparks will be shown as Co-sponsors of **HB 7**.

CO-SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 18

On motion of Senator A. Hinojosa, Senators King and Middleton will be shown as Co-sponsors of **HB 18**.

CO-SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 20

On motion of Senator Perry, Senators Blanco, Campbell, Hall, A. Hinojosa, J. Hinojosa, Johnson, Kolkhorst, Menéndez, Middleton, and Sparks will be shown as Co-sponsors of **HB 20**.

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON
SENATE BILL 5**

Senator Huffman submitted the following Conference Committee Report:

Austin, Texas
September 2, 2025

Honorable Dan Patrick
President of the Senate

Honorable Dustin Burrows
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Sirs:

We, Your Conference Committee, appointed to adjust the differences between the Senate and the House of Representatives on **SB 5** have had the same under consideration, and beg to report it back with the recommendation that it do pass in the form and text hereto attached.

HUFFMAN
CAMPBELL
FLORES
J. HINOJOSA
PERRY
On the part of the Senate

BONNEN
FAIRLY
M. GONZÁLEZ
KITZMAN
RAYMOND
On the part of the House

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT**

relating to making supplemental appropriations for disaster relief and preparedness and giving direction and adjustment authority regarding those appropriations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. TRUSTEED PROGRAMS WITHIN THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR: FEMA MATCH AND DISASTER FUNDS. The amount of \$200,000,000 is appropriated from the economic stabilization fund to the Trusteed Programs within the Office of the Governor for the two-year period beginning on the effective date of this Act to be used:

(1) to match federal money received related to disaster response, relief, and recovery; and

(2) for the disaster needs of this state in a manner consistent with Strategy A.1.1, Disaster Funds, as listed in Chapter 1170 (H.B. 1), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023 (the General Appropriations Act), and Chapter 1185 (S.B. 1), Acts of the 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025 (the General Appropriations Act).

SECTION 2. TRUSTEED PROGRAMS WITHIN THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR: LOCAL GRANTS. The amount of \$50,000,000 is appropriated from the economic stabilization fund to the Trusteed Programs within the Office of the Governor for the two-year period beginning on the effective date of this Act to be used for the purpose of making grants to assist counties, municipalities, or other local governments operating within Bandera, Bexar, Burnet, Caldwell, Coke, Comal, Concho, Edwards, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Hamilton, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, Kinney, Lampasas, Llano, Mason, Maverick, McCulloch, Menard, Real, Reeves, San Saba, Schleicher, Sutton, Tom Green, Travis, Uvalde, or Williamson County, as provided by the governor's declaration of disaster on July 4, 2025, regarding a heavy rainfall and flooding event and the subsequent amendments to that declaration, in establishing and implementing a system of flood warning sirens and flood gauges and purchasing other related equipment.

SECTION 3. TRUSTEED PROGRAMS WITHIN THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR: METEOROLOGICAL FORECASTING. The amount of \$28,000,000 is appropriated from the economic stabilization fund to the Trusteed Programs within the Office of the Governor for the two-year period beginning on the effective date of this Act to be used for the purpose of providing disaster preparedness grants for enhanced atmospheric measurement and modeling techniques to improve meteorological forecasting, enhance weather intelligence and forecasting accuracy, and improve flood management and timeliness of flood warnings.

SECTION 4. DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES: CAMPGROUND AND YOUTH CAMP SAFETY CONTINGENT APPROPRIATIONS. (a) Contingent on the enactment of S.B. 1 or similar legislation of the 89th Legislature, 2nd Called Session, 2025, relating to campground and youth camp safety, the amount of \$2,594,265 is appropriated from the economic stabilization fund for use during the two-year period beginning on the effective date of this Act, and the amount of \$2,484,726 is appropriated from the general revenue fund for use during the state fiscal year beginning September 1, 2026, to the Department of State Health Services to implement the provisions of that legislation. The department shall adjust the amount of license fees established under Section 141.0035, Health and Safety Code, as necessary to recover the costs of the appropriations made under this subsection.

(b) During the state fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2025, in addition to the capital budget authority other law grants to the department during that period, the Department of State Health Services may use \$500,000 in capital budget authority for the appropriations made by Subsection (a) of this section, if any.

(c) During the state fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2025, in addition to the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees other law authorizes the department to employ during that period, the Department of State Health Services may employ 16.0 FTE employees out of money appropriated by Subsection (a) of this section, if any.

SECTION 5. LIMITATION, REPORTING, AND TRANSFER PROVISIONS OF GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACTS APPLY. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, the provisions relating to limitations, reporting, or transfer of Chapter 1170 (H.B. 1), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023 (the General Appropriations Act), and Chapter 1185 (S.B. 1), Acts of the 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025 (the General Appropriations Act), apply to the appropriations made by this Act.

SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. (a) Subject to Subsection (b) of this section, this Act takes effect immediately.

(b) This Act takes effect only if it receives a vote of two-thirds of the members present in each house of the legislature, as provided by Section 49-g(m), Article III, Texas Constitution.

The Conference Committee Report on **SB 5** was filed with the Secretary of the Senate.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Senator Zaffirini, the Senate at 12:00 a.m. adjourned until 12:10 a.m. Thursday, September 4, 2025.

APPENDIX

BILL AND RESOLUTIONS ENROLLED

September 3, 2025

SB 8, SR 1, SR 85, SR 87