

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
External Relations Department
Interdepartmental Correspondence Sheet

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Jim Campbell, External Relations Director

COPIES: Terry M. Brechtel, City Manager; Christopher Brady, Assistant City Manager; Veronica M. Zertuche, Deputy City Attorney; File

SUBJECT: Staff Briefing on the 78th Legislature's Interim Charges

DATE: March 11, 2004

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this presentation is to provide City Council with an overview of the issues the 78th Legislature will study during the "interim" (or period between legislative sessions), and their possible impact on the City of San Antonio and Texas municipalities.

There is no formal action requested.

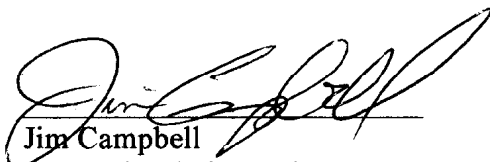
BACKGROUND

The Texas Legislature meets in regular session for 140 days in odd-numbered years, and in special sessions as needed. The time between sessions, or "interim," has traditionally been used to conduct in-depth studies of significant issues, to review the effectiveness of new legislation, and to develop legislative proposals for the following session. An interim study begins with a "charge," which describes the topic of study. Standing House and Senate committees are traditionally assigned interim charges by the Speaker of the House or the Lieutenant Governor. They can also be assigned by passage of a simple resolution, or by action of a committee chair.

On November 4, 2003, House Speaker Tom Craddick announced a list of over 180 issues that will be studied during the interim by 40 House standing and select committees. Similarly, Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst on January 30, 2004, released a list of issues that will be studied by the Senate's 16 standing and select committees. Soon after these lists were released, the External Relations Department sent City departments a copy of the House and Senate interim charges, and requested that they review these charges and provide an analysis of the issues relating to their department's jurisdiction, indicating those that may have an impact on City operations and services. A complete list of the House and Senate interim charges is attached.

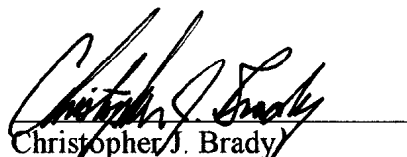
Staff's presentation will focus on the following:

- Interim charges identified by City departments that may impact operations, programs and services.
- Interim charges identified by the Texas Municipal League as having an impact on municipal governments.



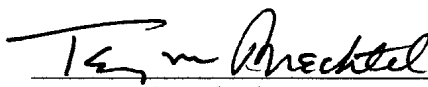
Jim Campbell
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ATTACHMENT(S)
ITEM NO 16

INTERIM STUDY CHARGES

Texas House of Representatives

78th Legislature

Issued by

Tom Craddick
Speaker of the House of Representatives

November 4, 2003
Austin, Texas

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK**

1. Evaluate the impact of the feral hog population in Texas in relation to economic harm to landowners and to the potential threat of spreading highly contagious animal diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease.
2. Assess the state's brush control efforts to ensure that available programs and funding are utilized to fulfill their maximum potential and also examine the impact of invasive aquatic plants (hydrilla, water hyacinth, etc.) and animals (zebra mussels, etc).
3. Monitor the agencies under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
APPROPRIATIONS**

1. Analyze the structure of the General Appropriations Act; including the "building blocks" concept, methods to provide greater transparency within agency bill patterns, standards for capital budgets and the number and effectiveness of performance measures. (Joint Interim Charge with Senate Finance Committee)
2. Actively monitor the performance of state agencies and institutions, including operating budgets and plans to carry out legislative initiatives, caseload projections, performance measure attainment and other matters affecting the fiscal condition of the agencies and the state.
3. Examine the number of general revenue dedicated accounts and accounts held outside the state treasury. This evaluation should consider account balances, revenue sources and historical uses of funds.
4. Evaluate the use of contracts by state agencies and institutions for professional services, consulting, construction, major information systems, etc.
5. Review the history of the state's use of bonds and other instruments of debt financing. Examine the Bond Review Board's debt service guidelines.
6. Evaluate all current funding streams for graduate medical education for financial viability and educational effectiveness in light of changes in Medicaid, managed care and other cost factors, including the impact of uncompensated care. This evaluation shall include a review of the role of the state's teaching hospitals in the provision of indigent health care and the role of graduate medical education in addressing health care needs of under-served regions of the state.
7. Review the effectiveness, efficiency and funding mechanisms of the community supervision and parole supervision systems. Examine accountability for various community supervision programs administered through local community supervision and corrections departments. Study the advisability, methods and costs of creating a progressive-sanctions model for the adult criminal justice system. (Joint Interim Charge with House Corrections Committee)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
BORDER AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

1. Identify specific areas of government effort that are lacking in coordination and develop strategies to improve communications between agencies of state government, the state and the federal government and between the Texas and Mexico governments.
2. Assess the feasibility of collaborative scientific and technological research projects between Texas and Mexico universities.
3. Identify areas of health care need that specifically affect the border region or that disproportionately affect the border region, and develop strategies to improve conditions and reduce demand on the health care system.
4. Monitor the dispute on Mexico's water debt. Explore ways to continue planning cooperation of sister cities for water and waste water.
5. Assess job training and retraining efforts in border areas and identify needs and solutions specific to this region of the state.
6. Study the issues relating to lending practices on the border, including the prevalence of subprime and predatory lending along the border.
7. Review and study all existing legislation affecting the development of transportation infrastructure in areas adjacent to the Texas-Mexico border. Study international trade issues as they relate to transportation, the adequacy of existing infrastructure to facilitate international traffic related to trade, the potential for development of inter-modal hubs and other mixed use facilities which promote more efficient trade and economic development, and the opportunities for contracting with Mexico or any of the Mexican states for joint development of transportation infrastructure. (Joint Interim Charge with House Transportation Committee)
8. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY**

1. Study ways to reduce specific cost drivers under the workers' compensation system related to provider, surgical and physical therapy services or care and the reduction of return-to-work time periods.
2. Study the cost effectiveness of the state workers' compensation system including:
 - a) Economic benefits, if any, of inclusion of the UT System, A&M University System, Texas Department of Transportation and Employees Retirement System under the State Office of Risk Management programs;
 - b) Costs or savings to the state by allowing state agencies to self-insure; and
 - c) The creation of workers' compensation provider networks for state employees.
3. Actively monitor the activities of the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission in the continued implementation of HB 2600, 77th Legislature and workers' compensation legislation passed during the 78th Legislature.
4. Monitor the implementation of HB 1366, 78th Legislature. Consider concerns from interested parties regarding the use of the remediation funds and recommend legislative changes to the 79th Legislature.
5. Study the potential impact on the cost and quality of medical care through employer and/or insurance carrier selection of initial treating doctor and change of doctor in the workers' compensation system.
6. Monitor the agencies under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
CIVIL PRACTICES**

1. Study the need for an inactive docket for claims alleging personal injury or death caused by exposure to asbestos fibers or other mineral dusts.
2. Monitor the legislation passed by the 78th Legislature, with a particular emphasis on the implementation of and rulemaking for HB 4.
3. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
CORRECTIONS**

1. Review the effectiveness, efficiency and funding mechanisms of the community supervision and parole supervision systems. Examine accountability for various community supervision programs administered through local community supervision and corrections departments. Study the advisability, methods and costs of creating a progressive-sanctions model for the adult criminal justice system. (Joint Interim Charge with House Appropriations Committee)
2. Study targeted contracting and review strategies and initiatives in the prison system related to oversight, efficiency, effectiveness and potential cost-savings of contracted services by private sector vendors.
3. Study the Council on Sex Offender Treatment, including treatment methods and effectiveness and explore the possibility of licensing of registered sex offender treatment providers.
4. Study the criminal justice mental health initiative in coordination with the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments.
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's oversight jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
COUNTY AFFAIRS**

1. Study ways to increase efficiency and provide for greater local control through restructuring county government.
2. Consider the increased costs associated with Court Administration and Security as it relates to the implementation of the Fair Defense Act and heightened security requirements.
3. Review the proliferation of sub-standard housing in counties not covered by the Local Government Code, Chapter 232, Subchapters B and C and ways to bring these areas up to minimum standards.
4. Determine whether county fees/fines are at appropriate levels and have maintained their proper function and application.
5. Study the concept of ways to limit unfunded state mandates by reviewing what other jurisdictions have done.
6. Review the amount of taxes collected and services delivered in incorporated areas versus unincorporated areas of counties.
7. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
CRIMINAL JURISPRUDENCE**

1. Study moving the DWI administrative license revocation hearing process from the State Office of Administrative Hearings to the trial court handling the DWI criminal prosecution.
2. Review criminal laws and procedures relating to the substantive and procedural rights of defendants in proceedings before the Board of Pardons and Paroles.
3. Review Code of Criminal Procedure Article 2.13 and Art. 14.03 as they relate to a peace officer's authority to act outside of the peace officer's geographic or territorial jurisdiction.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction, including considering the ongoing functions of the Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
DEFENSE AND STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS**

1. Examine ways that Texas and other states assist local communities that are affected by military base closures. Include opportunities for Texas to benefit from Base Realignment and Closure Commission actions.
2. Monitor the development of a Homeland Security Strategy as set forth in HB 9, 78th Legislature, under the Office of the Governor and identify ways to bring homeland security missions to Texas.
3. Evaluate the uses and security of the ports in the state, including optimizing their role in the deployment of military troops and what measures the state can take to minimize security risks from potential terrorist attack.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction, including the implementation of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission and other legislation by the 78th Legislature.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

1. Evaluate job training programs offered by the state and whether the state's efforts have been negatively impacted by the loss of the Smart Jobs program. Study the role of career and technology job training programs and their effectiveness in adult education programs, job retraining programs, post-secondary education and high school programs. Recommend legislative changes to enhance job training programs or provide incentives for business recruitment and retention.
2. Review the state's role in tourism and the effects of moving tourism functions within the Governor's office under SB 275, 78th Legislature. Examine how the state can assist rural communities in the promotion of tourism.
3. Actively monitor the status of the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund. Review the impact of legislative changes enacted by SB 280, 78th Legislature, on funding of the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund.
4. Study how businesses currently view the Texas Workers' Compensation System and whether it deters business growth or expansion into Texas. Study any reforms that could be used as an incentive for economic development, business recruitment or business retention.
5. Study the role that Texas ports have in the economic growth of the state and how the state can partner with ports in developing trade, business recruitment and relocation and the transportation of goods and services both in domestic and foreign markets.
6. Evaluate the state's role in serving economic development interests in rural Texas after the passage of SB 275, 78th Legislature, and other economic development legislation from the 78th Legislature.
7. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction, with special attention paid to the agencies' implementation of sunset legislation.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
ELECTIONS**

1. Review compliance with the provisions of the Federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and implementation through the Secretary of State's office of the legislation passed as issues surrounding HAVA become more settled.
2. Examine the risks, costs, benefits and efficiencies of the entire canon of Texas Election Law for an omnibus rewrite and recodification.
3. Monitor the Texas Ethics Commission rulemaking for the implementation of HB 1606, 78th Legislature.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
ENERGY RESOURCES**

1. Assess the development of new exploration activities and maintenance of current production of natural gas. Evaluate opportunities to expand infrastructure for liquified natural gas (LNG) in Texas and explore the feasibility of LNG imports into Texas.
2. Examine the benefits and challenges associated with alternative forms of energy generation technologies, such as wind and hydrogen fuel cells, and what if any state government involvement should be considered. (Joint Interim Charge with Regulated Industries Committee)
3. Evaluate current bonding requirements for oil and gas operators and explore alternative methods of financial security that would balance the economic interests of small oil and gas producers with environmental concerns.
4. Monitor the agencies under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION**

1. Conduct a study on the regulation, design, planning, construction, installation, operation, licensing, maintenance and inspection of on-site sewage disposal systems.
2. Examine compliance histories and incentives to reward compliance by entities regulated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.
3. Monitor the implementation of HB 1365 (78th Legislature), Texas Emission Reduction Plan, to ensure compliance with federal Clean Air Act standards and deadlines.
4. Monitor the agencies under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

1. Evaluate the access to capital for small business ventures and consumers, especially in the application of state usury laws for large commercial loans. Examine whether Texas laws should be amended to better conform to the national lending environment or to make them simpler for lenders and borrowers to follow.
2. Explore the limits of federal law in relation to the state's enforcement activities, regulation of terms of lending contracts, consumer protections and disclosures and the registration or licensure of entities not currently subject to state regulation so as to reduce the potential for anti-consumer lending behavior in this state.
3. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and implementation of legislation passed by the 78th Legislature.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
GENERAL INVESTIGATING**

1. Continue investigation into the Houston Police Department Crime Lab, and other crime labs as necessary.
2. Continue review of the creation of special purpose districts and their use of tax dollars.
3. Investigate use of funds at Texas State Technical College.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM**

1. Study the duplication of services across state agencies, including a study of statutory authority, and evaluation of possible cost savings associated with combining small agencies by function or type. Also consider the costs, risks and benefits of co-locating and sharing of services of small agencies.
2. Study and evaluate the efficiency of hiring practices by state agencies. Include a review of agency rulemaking and policies in regards to human resources, as well as the procedures for termination of employment. Compare agency procedures with statutory requirements and evaluate the costs and efficacy of additional procedures that agencies impose above statutory requirements.
3. Evaluate the efficiency of logistical operations at major state agencies. Include an analysis of operations, logistics and major information systems.
4. Monitor the implementation of HB 7 from the 78th Legislature, Third Called Special Session.

**SELECT COMMITTEE
ON
HEALTH CARE EXPENDITURES**

1. Monitor the implementation of the Driver Responsibility Act in respect to the collection of associated surcharges for trauma care. Specifically evaluate the funding and distribution of funds to trauma care facilities.
2. Study the effects of "crowd out" in the Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid Program to determine accurate data and to ascertain if additional policy changes are needed to prevent "crowd out" of private insurance and escalating public insurance costs.
3. Evaluate the funding source of the Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Program and the criteria that a hospital must meet to participate in the DSH program in comparison to the balance and fairness of other state and federal funding streams.
4. Study current consumer-directed care models that are in use by the state and look at other states' consumer-directed care models that may benefit Texas in areas such as long-term health care and chronic health care. Place emphasis on the Program of All-Inclusive Care For the Elderly model to ascertain its true potential for both cost-effectiveness and improved health outcomes. Identify barriers to the model's expansion in Texas.
5. Continue to identify and seek new models for the provision of health care benefits within the Employee Retirement System and the Teacher Retirement System.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
HIGHER EDUCATION**

1. Review the efficiency of Texas' financial assistance programs and the methods used to disseminate financial assistant information.
2. Review the effectiveness of developmental education. Evaluate the current method of administration at Texas' two-year and four-year institutions of higher education.
3. Examine eligibility criteria and definitions relating to admissions and access to financial assistance at Texas' institutions of higher education, as they relate to mobile students and to students who obtain nontraditional secondary educations.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of legislation passed in the 78th Legislature.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
HUMAN SERVICES**

1. Study ways to increase the adoption of special-needs children through efficiency in the Adoption Assistance Program.
2. Study the incident of abuse and neglect of individuals receiving services in community care settings. The committee will evaluate the effectiveness of procedures to prevent abuse and neglect, methods to streamline reporting and investigations and the adequacy of available enforcement mechanisms.
3. Assess the effectiveness of new marriage promotion initiatives in the Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (TANF) program.
4. Monitor congressional re-authorization of TANF and child care programs and the impact of federal policy changes on Texas' welfare reform efforts. Report any needed policy changes to accommodate new federal policy for the 79th Legislature.
5. Monitor the implementation of HB 669, 78th Legislature, which mandates police presence with Child Protective Services workers during priority calls. The study should include, at minimum, the impact on victims, parent cooperation and local law enforcement availability.
6. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
INSURANCE**

1. Monitor the implementation and effect of SB 14 and SB 127, 78th Legislature, and the stability, affordability and availability of homeowner insurance in Texas.
2. Monitor the implementation and effect of SB 418, 78th Legislature, regarding prompt pay.
3. Monitor the implementation and effect of SB 10 and SB 541, 78th Legislature, in relationship to the costs and availability of health insurance coverage.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
JUDICIAL AFFAIRS**

1. Perform a needs assessment and cost analysis of the visiting judge program in the state.
2. Formulate a system for determining when the creation of new district courts and county-courts-at-law is warranted.
3. In coordination with the Texas Legislative Council, review recent decisions of Texas appellate courts and identify those decisions that: (1) failed to properly implement legislative purposes; (2) found two or more statutes to be in conflict; (3) held a statute to be unconstitutional; (4) found a statute to be ambiguous; or (5) suggested legislative action.
4. Consider the efficacy and cost of deriving juries from the pool of registered voters versus licensed drivers, particularly in rural counties.
5. Review all current court fees and determine what, if any, adjustments should be made to the court fee structure.
6. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the legislation passed by the 78th Legislature.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
JUVENILE JUSTICE AND FAMILY ISSUES**

1. Review the law governing presumption of parentage and examine the adequacy of relief available to presumed parents who are child support obligors and who assert a claim of paternity fraud.
2. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the legislation passed by the 78th Legislature.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

1. Examine the effect that the changes made by SB 89, 76th Legislature, have had on the annexation process in the state and determine if any further changes to the law need to be made.
2. Evaluate need and possible strategies for a stable, long-term funding source for coastal hazard mitigation and the coastal erosion program at the General Land Office.
3. Evaluate necessity of and potential state, local and private funding mechanisms for a purchase of development rights program in the state.
4. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LAW ENFORCEMENT**

1. Review the requirements for incoming peace officers, police administration and police academies and study the current requirements of initial and continuing education training for adequacy and effectiveness.
2. Study home alarm systems and the interaction of law enforcement and private security in determining the appropriate response to home alarms.
3. Examine the efficiency of the concealed handgun licensing process.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LICENSING AND REGULATION**

1. Actively monitor the implementation of HB 2519, 78th Legislature, to streamline bingo processes at the Lottery Commission, review the commission's processes for leasing of facilities and the commission's audit authority. Also, compare the distributions to charities as a percentage of revenues in Texas with charitable bingo in other states.
2. Monitor the implementation of SB 283, 78th Legislature, sunset legislation for the Board of Architectural Examiners. Pay particular attention to the interior designer's transformation to a "Practice Act."
3. Monitor the implementation of HB 1487, 78th Legislature, creating a state wide license for electricians. Pay particular attention to any unintended consequences, such as any erosion in Texas right-to-work laws.
4. Monitor the implementation of HB 329, 78th Legislature, licensing mold remediators.
5. Identify licenses and duties that could be handled more efficiently at the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. Estimate cost savings and policy implications associated with such moves.
6. Study ways to reduce the incidence of underage drinking in Texas. Include an analysis of best practices in other states.
7. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
LOCAL GOVERNMENT WAYS AND MEANS**

1. Examine the system of appraising property for tax purposes, specifically include an examination of the appeals process, the application and effects of the rollback rate and the limit on annual tax increases of all property.
2. Explore the use of "Texas Purchasing Companies" as a tax reduction strategy by businesses seeking local sales tax rebates in cities other than the location of the actual business.
3. Study the methods and procedures for appraising timber land for property tax purposes.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
NATURAL RESOURCES**

1. Assess the current condition of the Edwards Aquifer and the Edwards Aquifer Authority, including the authority's ability to meet the current statutory requirements of its enabling legislation, specifically its ability to meet or alter pumping limits contained in the Edwards Aquifer Act.
2. Examine the issues associated with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's authority to amend, impair, interpret or modify the terms of water contracts between willing parties, including the possible impacts this authority could have on the financing of public/private water projects.
3. Evaluate the availability and cost effectiveness of using brackish groundwater and surface water as an alternative source of water supply, including assessing the regulatory restrictions or impediments that impact cost and what measure or regulatory changes are needed to facilitate use of this water source by political subdivisions.
4. Monitor agencies and programs under committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
PENSIONS AND INVESTMENTS**

1. Examine the feasibility, risks and benefits associated with the use of Pension Obligation Bonds in order to reduce unfunded liabilities in municipal and state retirement systems.
2. Study the risks, benefits and impact associated with the "retire in place" practice as it relates to the Employees Retirement System, Teacher Retirement System, County and District Retirement System and Municipal Retirement System.
3. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and legislation passed by the 78th Legislature.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC EDUCATION**

1. Assess the textbook adoption and distribution system. Investigate alternative methods of delivering educational resources using technology.
2. Evaluate the extent to which public school tax dollars are used directly or indirectly to promote or oppose legislation.
3. Perform a comprehensive analysis of state law with respect to educator contracts and certification. Make recommendations for changes which would improve student performance.
4. Examine and assess the effectiveness and efficiency of statewide educational initiatives, including programs to reduce dropout and increase graduation rates.
5. Investigate and assess the mission and performance of University Interscholastic League and other quasi-educational organizations in terms of their role in improving student achievement.
6. Compare special education laws in Texas to other states and to federal standards. Make recommendations for reducing state and local administrative costs to increase resource allocation for direct services to students.
7. Examine the impact on students, schools and local economies from changes to the school start date.
8. Examine issues related to state aid to school districts for debt service, including issues related to the types of facilities that should be eligible for state support.
9. Study and monitor issues related to the educational needs of dependents of military service men and women, including records transfer and implementation of reciprocity agreements with other states.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC HEALTH**

1. Study the need to regulate products containing dietary supplement ephedra. Include a review of other state actions.
2. Examine the demographics and costs of diabetes in Texas. Assess the impact diabetes will have on Texas' population, budget and health care system in the future and recommend appropriate policy changes.
3. Investigate the practice of allowing corneal tissue to be taken and used for transplantation without prior consent. Recommend appropriate state policy changes.
4. Collect, review and report on the statistics and statewide impact of drug and alcohol abuse by pregnant women on the unborn.
5. Review the current operations of the Texas Immunization and Kidney Health Care programs. The review should determine if the operational and administrative changes made to the Medicaid Vendor Drug Program will continue to meet the needs of Texans who do not qualify for Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program or private insurance and recommend any necessary changes.
6. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
REDISTRICTING**

1. Develop a plan to redistrict the Court of Appeals districts.
2. Consider changes to the structure and nomenclature of the various levels of courts below the Court of Appeals level with specific attention to how they can be smoothly integrated into the new Court of Appeals districts.
3. Consider modifications to the districts of district and county attorneys.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
REGULATED INDUSTRIES**

1. Gather and review information on the overall status of the telecommunications market in Texas, including the effects of inter-modal competition and emerging technologies. Recommend changes to Texas law to encourage new investment and technological innovation consistent with market-oriented public policies and the interests of Texas families and businesses. Gather and review information on the Federal Communications Commission Triennial Review and recommend adjustments to Texas law.
2. Study broadband service deployment, including other state's models used to transition to a fully competitive communications marketplace and any new technologies of competitive providers.
3. Study the process of economic dispatch and determine possible methods to improve the competitive electric utilities market and reduce costs and pollution caused by inefficient power plants.
4. Examine issues related to access of rights-of-way and easements to ensure state laws encourage non-discriminatory access for all broadband service providers regardless of technology used to offer the service or the regulatory status of the provider.
5. Examine the reliability of electric utility service and review authority and structure of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas.
6. Study the size and scope of the various broadband infrastructure platforms (e.g. cable, satellite, fixed wireless, DSL) in the state and how each are regulated under both state and federal law.
7. Determine how investment in broadband networks by both competitive local exchange carriers and incumbent local exchange providers can be encouraged through public policy changes.
8. Examine the benefits and challenges associated with alternative forms of energy generation technologies, such as wind and hydrogen fuel cells, and what if any state government involvement should be considered. (Joint Interim Charge with Energy Resources Committee.)
9. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction, including identifying possible ways to merge or streamline agency functions to produce long-term financial benefit to the state and better efficiency of the agencies.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
STATE AFFAIRS**

1. Review the process and appropriateness for naming public buildings for individuals.
2. Review and consider all issues related to disclosure protections for an individual's social security number to a member of the public in certain circumstances without the person's written consent.
3. Gather and study statistical information concerning judicial proceedings to bypass parental notification of a minor's abortion.
4. Monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction, including identifying possible ways to merge or streamline agency functions to produce long-term financial benefits to the state and better efficiency of the agencies.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
STATE CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES**

1. Actively study the rules, regulations and statutes which govern Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the department's responsibilities.
2. Review, for the purpose of safety, the discharges of fire arms for hunting and recreational shooting in our state-owned river beds.
3. Review the missions and goals of the Texas Commission on the Arts, the Texas Historical Commission and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and consider possible consolidation.
4. Research heritage, cultural, recreational and historical tourism programs the state is involved in and explore new ways to promote and improve tourism in the state.
5. Research the regulation and control of scenic by-ways and billboards.
6. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
TRANSPORTATION**

1. Review transportation best practices in other states to determine possible improvements in administration, operations, delivery of projects, and improving overall efficiency of the Department of Transportation.
2. Review and study all existing legislation affecting the development of transportation infrastructure in areas adjacent to the Texas-Mexico border. Study international trade issues as they relate to transportation, the adequacy of existing infrastructure to facilitate international traffic related to trade, the potential for development of inter-modal hubs and other mixed use facilities which promote more efficient trade and economic development, and the opportunities for contracting with Mexico or any of the Mexican states for joint development of transportation infrastructure. (Joint Interim Charge with House Border and International Affairs Committee)
3. Actively monitor and review Texas Department of Transportation's rulemaking, promulgation of policies and procedures, implementation of programs, and other activities related to the implementation of HB 3588, 78th Legislature. (Joint Interim Charge with Senate Infrastructure Development and Security Committee)
4. Actively monitor agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction, including identifying possible ways to merge or streamline agency functions to produce long term financial benefit to the State and better efficiency of the agencies.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
URBAN AFFAIRS**

1. Review the roles of special purpose districts; including justification, powers and responsibilities, as well as relationships with local elected governing bodies. Specifically, include an analysis of the use, benefits and drawbacks of tax increment reinvestment zones.
2. Actively monitor the implementation of SB 264, 78th Legislature, sunset legislation for the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Include an analysis of whether further reforms are needed through a review of best-practices in other states.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of current programs in meeting the state's housing needs and examine new alternatives such as urban land banks, homestead preservation districts and programs to provide gap financing.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of Uniform State Service Regions in allocation of Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) funds and low-income tax credits to develop housing and examine alternatives to meet the needs of the state's rural areas.
5. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
WAYS & MEANS**

1. Monitor the fiscal impact to the state due to interstate sales and monitor Texas' involvement and implementation of the Streamlined Sales Tax Project.
2. Monitor federal tax policy changes that will affect Texas, specifically the permanent elimination of the inheritance tax and the deductibility of state sales taxes against federal income tax.
3. Actively support the Select Committee on Public School Finance in their deliberations on developing an alternative system of public school finance.
4. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

**SELECT INTERIM COMMITTEE
ON
CHILD WELFARE AND FOSTER CARE**

Examine the current child welfare and foster care system in Texas, with an emphasis on the following:

1. Determine barriers to adoption, specific to minority children, in foster care. Determine activities that will increase the recruitment and retention of racial and ethnic minority families as foster care providers.
2. Evaluate means by which the state may promote substitute care with relatives of a child who is removed from the home by Child Protective Services.
3. Review the licensure requirements for and the performance of all types of foster care facilities, including residential treatment facilities, wilderness camps and emergency treatment centers. Assess the adequacy of communication and interaction between the licensing agency and other state agencies that place children within the foster care and Child Protective Care system. Explore other states' efforts that will promote "best practices" and identify program efficiencies with Texas child welfare system.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Suzanna Gratia Hupp

Vice-Chair: Elvira Reyna

Members: Bill Zedler
Joaquin Castro
Linda Harper-Brown
Toby Goodman
Elliott Naishtat
Leo Berman
Ruth Jones McClendon
Gabi Canales
Joe Pickett

**SELECT INTERIM COMMITTEE
ON
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY-RELATED WORKERS' COMPENSATION ISSUES**

In coordination with the Sunset Commission's review of the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission:

1. Review and evaluate provisions of construction contracts that indemnify a person against all or any portion of loss or liability for damages that are caused by or result from the sole, joint or concurrent negligence of the indemnitee or its agent (including an employee or another independent contractor directly responsible to the indemnitee) and that arise from personal injury, death, property damage or an action assessed by the governmental entity against the indemnitee or its agent. Consider changes that would not affect benefits and protections provided under the workers' compensation system. Review and evaluate current law related to prohibitions on certain indemnity agreements in other areas.
2. Study whether workers' compensation benefits should be the exclusive remedy for an on-the-job injury in construction-related cases if a party ensures that workers' compensation insurance is provided, by either directly providing the insurance or by using only subcontractors who provide workers' compensation insurance for their employees.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Co-Chairs: Joe Nixon
Helen Giddings

Members: Jack Stick
Jose Menendez
Lois Kolkhorst
Larry Phillips
Craig Eiland

**SELECT INTERIM COMMITTEE
ON
SEX OFFENDER STATUTES**

1. Examine Chapter 62 of the Code of Criminal Procedure to streamline and clarify the statutory provisions relating to the Sex Offender Registration Program.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Terry Keel

Vice Chair: Ray Allen

Members: Joe Driver
Dan Ellis
Juan Escobar
Pat Haggarty
Glenn Hegar
Terri Hodge
Aaron Pena

APPROPRIATIONS
ITEM NO 16

**INTERIM COMMITTEE CHARGES
TO SENATE STANDING COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES**

BUSINESS & COMMERCE

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Business & Commerce Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. Study and make recommendations relating to the Texas unemployment compensation insurance program, including, but not limited, the following:
 - trends in benefit fraud and claim overpayments;
 - effectiveness of Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) management and operational practices;
 - development and implementation of innovative unemployment fraud detection and collection strategies by the TWC;
 - other governmental research on misclassification of workers resulting in underpayments to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund;
 - options for leveraging federal funds; and
 - the feasibility of targeted audits to detect fraud.

Include recommendations to improve the transition of individuals off unemployment insurance, such as enhancing claimant job search programs and placement strategies.

2. Study the current structure of Texas' usury laws in order to determine how they are effected by federal law and how state law impacts new economic development and job production in the State. Pay particular attention to the relationship between the Constitutional limits on commercial and consumer lending and the location of new financial services companies within Texas. Make recommendations for improving the structure while increasing economic development and enhancing consumer protections. A thorough assessment of the credit counseling and debt management industry should accompany the Committee's examination of this subject, including recommendations for improving services.
3. Study the creation of the Texas Residential Construction Commission (TRCC) established by HB 730, 78th Legislature, to determine its effectiveness in reducing lawsuits and improving consumer satisfaction with residential construction services. Issues to be covered shall include, but not be limited to, the:
 - registration of homebuilders, including the Texas Start Builder designation;
 - state-sponsored inspection and dispute resolution process;
 - preparation and adoption of new building performance standards;

- voluntary certification of arbitrators and filing of arbitration awards; and
- consumer complaint procedures and public information efforts.

In addition to those issues, the Committee shall study and make recommendations on improving the activities of the three task forces for which the TRCC has oversight responsibilities: The Mold Reduction and Remediation Task Force, the Task Force for Rainwater Harvesting and Water Recycling, and the Task Force for Residential Construction Arbitration.

4. Study the impact of the changes in home equity lending since the adoption of Proposition 16 and assess whether the changes have increased the number of home equity loans and improved consumer satisfaction with the lending market. The Committee shall examine and make recommendations for improving the home equity administrative interpretations and interpretative procedures, increasing the volume of new lines of credit, collecting foreclosure information since Proposition 16, surveying consumer experiences, and applying lender cures.
5. Study and make recommendations on improving the on-going implementation of SB7 (76th Legislature) with particular emphasis on evaluation of the following:
 - “price to beat,” and the implementation of claw-back provisions for residential and small commercial customers, including on-going requests to adjust fuel factors;
 - adequacy and effectiveness of Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) and its management structure;
 - cost-effectiveness and fairness of congestion management mechanisms;
 - delivery of power in areas outside of the ERCOT network;
 - stability of the System Benefit Fund; and
 - final calculation of stranded costs under the “true-up” provisions.
6. Study and make recommendations relating to improving the potential for further renewable energy development in Texas and the effectiveness of current policies encouraging the use of renewable energy sources. This study should focus on the State’s capacity for wind generation, current efforts by the General Land Office to commercialize wind generation on state lands, and solutions to the constraints on utilizing wind potential to its fullest. Include an analysis of state and federal mandates, federal tax credits, wind potential, transmission constraints, economics of electricity production and delivery, and environmental considerations.
7. Study the implementation of SB 14, SB 127, and HB329, the property and casualty insurance reform and mold remediation measures passed by the 78th Legislature, to determine whether the legislation meets the Legislature’s goals of reducing homeowners’ insurance costs and stabilizing the market. If not, make recommendations for reducing homeowners’ insurance costs. Examine implementation of new policies relating to the use of credit scoring and its impact on consumers and the market. Coordinate activities with

the Joint Property and Casualty Insurance Legislative Oversight Committee.

8. Study the implementation of SB 14, 78th Legislature, as it relates to the automobile insurance market to ensure that the legislation meets the Legislature's goals of ensuring a stable market. Make recommendations for improving consumer satisfaction and expanding the market. Coordinate activities with the Joint Property and Casualty Insurance Legislative Oversight Committee.

Joint Interim Charge with the Infrastructure Development & Security Committee

1. Study the possibility of whether a system failure in Texas could occur in a manner similar to the blackout that occurred in the northeastern United States. Include a review of the Texas electric system and make recommendations on ways to enhance the security and stability of the system. Review industry plans and procedures and determine their effectiveness in responding to system disruption. Study the transmission and distribution system in Texas and make recommendations on the policies to plan for and promote investment in future transmission needs.

Coordinate Texas activities with those of the federal government, neighboring states and Mexico to ensure consistent system planning and responses. This study shall include non-ERCOT areas of Texas.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Business and Commerce Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

Pursuant to Section 301.041, Government Code, it may be necessary to change the membership of a committee if a member is not returning to the Legislature in 2005. This will ensure that the work of interim committees is carried forward into the 79th Legislative Session.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Criminal Justice Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. **Study identity theft and its effects, and the impact of recent legislation addressing the issue (HB 2138, SB 473 and SB566, 78th Legislature). Make recommendations for enhancing the Texas' ability to implement effective programs to prevent identity theft. Monitor federal legislation regarding identity theft to ensure that state and federal laws are complementary and make recommendations for improvements.**
2. Study and identify best practices for probation and community supervision programs including: the Community Justice Assistance Division; local probation management structure; the use of Drug Courts and the courts' impact on recidivism; programs to reduce underage drinking; mental health issues and continuity of care; use of the Community Supervision Tracking System (CSTS) and other data issues related to Criminal Justice information system components; and the implementation of HB 2668. Make recommendations for legislative changes to achieve best practices.
3. Study the management efficiency and organizational structure of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, including implementation of recent restructuring by the TDCJ Board, and make recommendations on additional improvements, including possible consolidation of agency functions and other cost saving measures.
4. Study the use and effectiveness of current parole guideline policies and make recommendations for changes to improve the policies. Develop innovative options that improve efficiency and enhance safe and effective correctional policy.
5. Study and make recommendations relating to improving the use of specialized police agencies and officers, specifically, the necessity, accountability, qualifications, and jurisdictions of such police agencies.
6. Review the Crime Victims Compensation Fund (Fund), including state and local competition, use in state agency methods of finance, evaluation of grant programs, possible diversion of funds from crime victims as a result of prior legislation, and whether the Fund meets the objectives of its authorizing legislation.

7. Study the number of foreign citizens serving sentences in Texas prisons, including information relating to prison terms, recidivism, and types of offenses. Make recommendations for reducing the costs of providing prison services for this population, including leveraging of federal immigration funds and possible international agreements to pay home countries to transfer the prisoners to their respective countries to serve the remainder of their terms.
8. Study and make recommendations concerning the cost effectiveness and efficiency of private prisons, including private services performed at state-owned prisons.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Criminal Justice Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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EDUCATION

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Education Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

- 1. Study the implementation of SB 186 (relating to the computation of public school dropout and completion rates) and make recommendations for improvements to current statutes and programs. Explore opportunities for maximizing current resources and identifying additional state, federal, and privately-sponsored programs for at-risk students that offer innovative delivery of educational services that encourage students to finish school. Focus on mentoring programs, including, but not limited to Communities in Schools, and the use of technology to provide instruction.**
- 2. Study the performance of high school students on TAKS, the new state assessment instrument. Make recommendations to improve any performance deficiencies that are identified by the review, including alternative school schedules, mentoring programs, technology-based applications, and other innovative solutions.**
- 3. Study progress of implementation of SB 76 (relating to the provision of subsidized child-care services). Evaluate and make recommendations on opportunities for Texas to increase the educational component of the Head Start program. Examine and make recommendations relating to access to quality early education, including estimated costs, teacher availability, learning requirements, and access to services for students with special needs.**
- 4. Evaluate opportunities and make recommendations on increasing the supply of qualified teachers and improving their working conditions. The evaluation and recommendations should focus on preparation, recruitment, certification, and retention of qualified teachers, while not restricting alternative certification. Conduct an assessment of the impact of teacher incentives, including mentoring programs and other creative options for retaining teachers, and develop recommendations for implementing incentive programs.**
- 5. Study and make recommendations relating to the effectiveness of the current process of selecting, funding, and distributing textbooks. Identify areas where the current process can be made more cost efficient, including recommendations**

relating to innovative methods of providing instruction such as online distance learning, and the use of interactive software to address the specific challenges of remedial students and advanced readers. Identify costs and benefits of using technology to provide current and innovative instructional materials, including staffing and hardware requirements.

6. Study the TEA's implementation of the state's new accountability system and make recommendations to resolve any problems found. Examine the impact of the federal No Child Left Behind law on the state's accountability system and make recommendations for changes to state law to meet the federal legislation. Examine the ability of the current PEIMS database to meet future information needs and recommend changes, if necessary. Review and make recommendations on innovative alternatives for tracking student performance.
7. Study successful partnerships between school districts and the business community and make recommendations for maximizing the use of effective partnerships, improving the delivery of education services, and enhancing educational opportunities for Texas students, especially at-risk students.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Education Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

Pursuant to Section 301.041, Government Code, it may be necessary to change the membership of a committee if a member is not returning to the Legislature in 2005. This will ensure that the work of interim committees is carried forward into the 79th Legislative Session.

HIGHER EDUCATION

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Higher Education Subcommittee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed review of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. Study the impact of admissions policies on enrollment in Texas public institutions and make recommendations for improving the admissions procedures, as necessary. The study should include, but not be limited to, a review of recent court decisions on college admissions policies, and an evaluation of the impact of the "Top 10%" law on college admissions.
2. Study and make recommendations on the proper role, scope, and mission of community colleges. Develop innovative approaches to incorporating the community college system into the delivery of K through 16 education. Study the feasibility of allowing community college districts to expand their service areas for taxing purposes.
3. Study developmental education programs in public higher education institutions. Identify alternative means of assessing the need for developmental education, the effectiveness of delivery of developmental education programs, and the appropriate role of developmental education.
4. Study and make recommendations to modify the student financial assistance programs to provide better incentives for students to graduate on time with better grades, such as the B-On-Time program and work-study programs, and to simplify the application process for financial aid programs.
5. Review and make recommendations relating to the adequacy of funding for graduate medical education, including funding required for professors, facilities, research programs and students. Review and make recommendations relating to increasing the number of health professionals.

Joint Interim Charge with the Senate Finance Committee

1. Study and make recommendations relating to the development of a statewide accountability system for higher education that is consistent with funding strategies for higher education.

2. **Study and make recommendations evaluating the cost of increasing the number of Tier 1 universities in Texas. Reexamine current and alternative methods of funding regional universities, community colleges, health science centers and their reimbursement for the provision of indigent health care, and universities.**
3. Study the budgetary impact of legislation to deregulate tuition at institutions of higher education. This study should include, but not be limited to, a review of recent tuition increases authorized by this Act, their impact on affordability of higher education, and an evaluation of the expenditure of these funds.

Reports

The committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Higher Education Subcommittee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

Pursuant to Section 301.041, Government Code, it may be necessary to change the membership of a committee if a member is not returning to the Legislature in 2005. This will ensure that the work of interim committees is carried forward into the 79th Legislative Session.

FINANCE

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Finance Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

General Responsibilities

1. **General Budget Oversight.** Monitor state agency implementation of House Bill 1 by reviewing key strategies, programs, and rider provisions.
2. **Revenue Oversight.** Monitor and track the Texas' key revenue sources. Develop recommendations to keep the Legislature apprised of key revenue source activity throughout the duration of this and future fiscal biennia.

Specific Charges

Health & Human Services

- **Major Health-related Caseload and Cost Estimates.** Study the sources of and means by which state agencies track and report on budget-driving caseload and health care cost increases submitted to the Legislature. Make recommendations for improvement, as needed.
- **Monitor Implementation of Article II Reorganization.** Monitor the budget elements of the Health and Human Services Commission reorganization. Coordinate work with the Legislative Oversight Committee and the Senate Committee on Health & Human Services.
- **Conduct Comprehensive Data Review of All Programs in Article II.** Develop comprehensive tables of information on programs at each agency that convey historical information about method of finance, appropriations, program description, performance highlights, number of FTEs, and date of last audit in a manner that is conducive to the Legislature's decision-making.
- **Funding for Homeland Security.** Monitor and report on the amount and uses of federal homeland security dollars in Texas appropriated through the Governor's Office and directly to local governments.

Public & Higher Education

- **Tuition Deregulation.** Study the budgetary impact of legislation to deregulate tuition at institutions of higher education. This study should include, but not be limited to, a review of recent tuition increases authorized by this Act, their impact on affordability of higher education, and an evaluation of the expenditure of these funds.
- **Tuition Revenue Bond Authorization.** Review recent history and beneficiaries of TRB authorization by previous legislatures. Recommend procedures, criteria and priorities for potential new TRB authorizations and funding sources for the 79th Legislature.
- **Nature and Use of Local Funds.** Develop a representative sample profile of local funds at various types of agencies and institutions of higher education and report on amounts, revenue sources, expenditures, and how these funds impact the use of General Revenue appropriated in the General Appropriations Act.
- **Funding for Higher Education.** Study all funding of institutions of higher education in conjunction with the Senate Higher Education Subcommittee. Assess the cost and requirements of increasing the number of Tier 1 universities in Texas. Reexamine current and alternative methods for funding regional universities, health science centers and their reimbursement for the provision of indigent health care, community colleges, and universities.
- **Accountability.** Study and make recommendations, in conjunction with the Senate Higher Education Subcommittee, relating to the development of a statewide accountability system for higher education that is consistent with funding strategies for higher education.
- **Public School Finance.** Provide support for the Joint Select Committee on the revenue and property tax relief portion of public school finance. Also, examine ad valorem taxation in Texas, focusing on the establishment of growth caps and the impact of caps on local government finances.

Natural Resources & Economic Development

- **Fund 006.** Review revenue sources into and appropriations out of Fund 006. Review policy decisions by the 78th Legislature that will impact the future of the Fund. Make recommendations for improvement, as needed.
- **Enterprise Fund.** Monitor and report on current and potential future uses of the Enterprise Fund. Study and develop recommendations for using economic development funds and assessing potential projects, including, but not limited to, establishing criteria for investment, developing standards for cost-benefit analyses, leveraging local participation, and incorporating claw-back provisions if goals are not met.

General Government, Regulatory, & Judiciary

- **Review of Fees.** Conduct comprehensive review of and report on fees at state regulatory agencies, including historical information on fee amount, expenditures, appropriations, populations affected and general impact to the state budget.
- **Revisit Rising Health Care Cost Study of the 77th Legislature.** Review the cost study and determine which cost elements of the study have not been controlled and make recommendations to the 79th Legislature to address bringing them under control. Examine the budget impact of policy decisions of the 78th Legislature and make recommendations for improvement.

Criminal Justice & Public Safety

- **Adult and Juvenile Correction Populations.** Monitor population trends in the adult and juvenile correction facilities and determine if budget decisions made in the 78th Legislature remain viable. Make recommendations for improvement, as necessary.

General Budget and Tax Issues

- **Rainy Day Fund.** Track the history of appropriations out of and deposits of revenue into the Texas' rainy day fund. Monitor FY 2004-2005 deposits of revenue to the fund. As needed, make recommendations on how to improve revenue sources and the manner in which the fund can be spent.
- **Pension Fund Review.** Report on the current condition of the state's pension systems, including an analysis of unfunded liabilities. Make recommendations, as necessary, to ensure Texas meets its financial obligations in the future.
- **Issuance of State Bonds.** Review the role of the Public Finance Authority and the Bond Review Board in the issuance of state bonds, and make recommendations, as necessary, for improvements.
- **Budget Certification.** Study the budget certification process. Make recommendations on how to improve the process of certifying the state budget by the Comptroller of Public Accounts.
- **General Appropriations Act Bill Pattern Review.** Review effectiveness of current and past bill patterns, and make recommendations, as necessary, for improvements.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Finance Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

Pursuant to Section 301.041, Government Code, it may be necessary to change the membership of a committee if a member is not returning to the Legislature in 2005. This will ensure that the work of interim committees is carried forward into the 79th Legislative Session.

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Government Organization Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. **Study consolidation of those agencies related to the arts, cultural, and library services; consolidation of certain agricultural-related agencies; and consolidation of certain licensing agencies or their administrative functions.**
2. **Study the management of state assets and leases, including real estate, leased space, inventory and other assets by the General Land Office, the Texas Building and Procurement Commission, as well as other agencies. Explore and make recommendations on the possible use of sale-leaseback opportunities for properties that the state now owns. Review allegations of theft of state property and make recommendations on enhancing security of state assets.**
3. **Review the use of inventory management in transportation and other programs. Explore the cost efficiencies and economic benefits of co-locating agencies in small, mid-size, and large cities around the State.**
4. **Study the effectiveness and make recommendations on improving debt collection strategies across all state programs and the identification of uncollectible state receivables.**

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Government Organization Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Health & Human Services Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. Study and make recommendations on structural reform, efficiency improvements, and cost savings in the state Medicaid and CHIP programs, with a goal of changing the method and delivery of service to reduce costs while providing the intended services. The Committee should examine and make recommendations to:
 - lower institutional costs;
 - subsidize private insurance in lieu of Medicaid and CHIP where possible;
 - use consumer-directed care models;
 - reimburse health care providers based upon outcomes where feasible;
 - match currently unmatched local funds with federal funds;
 - alter Texas' current method of finance and distribution of DSH;
 - develop possible HIFA waiver options that incorporate premium subsidization;
 - develop accountability and incentive measures for outcomes within Medicaid managed care and CHIP;
 - seek flexibility from federal government to allow options and waivers and enhance federal funds;
 - examine local models for delivery of Medicaid while maintaining best practices; and
 - expand access to mental health services through expansion of behavioral health organization model.

The Committee will coordinate these studies with the Health and Human Services Transition Legislative Oversight Committee review of mental health and mental retardation services.

2. Monitor implementation and make recommendations to improve HB 2292. Include reviews of implementation of the preferred drug list and prior authorization and the new call center for determination of program and service eligibility. The Committee will coordinate activities with the Health and Human Services Transition Legislative Oversight Committee.
3. Study and make recommendations on improving Texas's county and local indigent health care system. Consider whether the system should be regionalized to reflect usage and gain efficiencies, so that one or more counties are not paying for regional health care.
4. Monitor the implementation and make recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of

legislation relating to the Board of Medical Examiners, legislation relating to childhood immunizations, legislation relating to the pilot front end Medicaid fraud reduction systems, federal developments related to TANF reauthorization and related programs, expansion and new construction of Federally Qualified Health Centers, federal developments related to prescription drugs in Medicare and the effect on Medicaid. Also, monitor and report on the use of new federal Medicare funds allocated for Texas.

5. Study and make recommendations on increasing electronic transactions in health care. Review the use and make recommendations on improving technology in health care administration, including expediting pre-authorizations and increasing the efficiency of claims processing so that medical providers are paid once procedures are pre-authorized and performed, and administrative costs lowered, benefitting both the consumer and the managed health care organizations.
6. Study health facility regulation in Texas and make recommendations that facilitate innovation and patient safety. Concentrate studies on hospitals, including niche hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers and long term care facilities, and make recommendations for improving patient choice, facility competition, indigent health care, and for maintaining a competitive, patient-oriented health care industry.
7. Study and make recommendations on improving the Protective and Regulatory Services service levels payment system and tiered adoption subsidy program. Study and make recommendations on improving the recruitment and retention of foster care families.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from

previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

Pursuant to Section 301.041, Government Code, it may be necessary to change the membership of a committee if a member is not returning to the Legislature in 2005. This will ensure that the work of interim committees is carried forward into the 79th Legislative Session.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT & SECURITY

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Infrastructure Development and Security Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. Study the implementation and make recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of HB 3588 relating to the construction, acquisition, financing, maintenance, management, operation, ownership, and control of transportation facilities including, but not limited to, multimodal transportation and the progress, improvement, policing, and safety of transportation in Texas. Monitor and report on the adequacy and use of the trauma care funds generated as a result of the legislation and make recommendations for improving the funding of trauma care services.
2. Study the proof of financial responsibility verification program administered by Texas Department of Insurance and the Department of Public Safety and make recommendations for improving compliance by drivers in Texas.
3. Study and make recommendations for innovative approaches to highway construction and maintenance. Focus on recommendations for streamlining Texas Department of Transportation operations, including methods of expediting permitting procedures while maintaining environmental safeguards. Examine and make recommendations for regional options for increasing financing, including, but not limited to, the creation of a local option motor fuels tax.
4. Evaluate and make recommendations relating to funding allocations for TransTexas Corridor projects. Monitor and report on the status of the projects, including their impact on local, regional, and state transportation.
5. Study the federal re-authorization of TEA-21. Analyze and make recommendations relating to the impact of re-authorization on transportation in Texas, including an assessment of state plans and programs for implementing any required changes.
6. Study and report on the distribution of federal funds to Texas through the Governor's Office, state agencies, and directly to local units of government for homeland security measures, including but not limited to, public health and welfare, safety, awareness, and the subsequent use of any funds that might be awarded. Make recommendations relating to the development of a method for tracking this information across jurisdictions and state programs. Evaluate the allocation and efficient use of future federal funds to the state and

local governments and identify opportunities to enhance current state funding for homeland security and other measures.

7. Evaluate state and local efforts to enhance the security of Texans and make recommendations for improving Texas' ability to detect, deter, and respond to acts of terrorism, including state plans and programs for addressing bioterrorism. Regarding bioterrorism events, the Committee shall focus on **early detection of an incident, reporting of information from local health entities, and ability to organize and administer a mass vaccination**. Make recommendations relating to improvements to state and local communications networks and develop innovative methods for sharing federal, state, and local information.
8. Study the issue of interoperable communications for first responders. The Committee shall assess the status of this capability and evaluate available technology and costs. In addition, the Committee shall explore pilot programs and proposals by entities such as DPS and the Sheriff's Association, who have been working to assess new technologies and the cost of implementation of systems to assist in effective communication between all parts of the state.
9. **Study the issues associated with consular identification cards ("Matricula Consular"), with particular attention to security and verifiability, banking access, local law enforcement relations, and driver's license issuance. Review current FBI reports on security and verifiability. Consider the implications that acceptance of the card on a state or local level would have on federal immigration policy and homeland security.**

Joint Interim Charge with the Senate Business & Commerce Committee

1. Study the possibility of whether a system failure in Texas could occur in a manner similar to the blackout that occurred in the northeastern United States. Include a review of the Texas electric system and make recommendations on ways to enhance the security and stability of the system. Review industry plans and procedures and determine their effectiveness in responding to system disruption. Study the transmission and distribution system in Texas and make recommendations on the policies to plan for and promote investment in future transmission needs.

Coordinate Texas activities with those of the federal government, neighboring states and Mexico to ensure consistent system planning and responses. This study shall include non-ERCOT areas of Texas.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report

should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Infrastructure Development & Security Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. Study and make recommendations on the need for statutory language relating to fees charged for copies of documents filed electronically or in paper format with a county clerk. Examine all state and local policies relating to document fees and analyze the impact of any recommended changes on local and state revenues.
2. As required by SB 264, 78th Legislature, jointly study with the House Urban Affairs Committee the effect of subdividing uniform state service regions into urban/exurban areas and rural areas and upon the provision of state and federal financial assistance to meet housing needs of rural areas.
3. **Study the unique challenges and opportunities in rural areas from an economic development standpoint. Study the future and unmet needs of rural communities, residents and businesses and examine the quality of infrastructure, housing, health care, and community involvement. Make recommendations for promoting investment in growth industries in rural areas.**
4. **Study and make recommendations relating to development of the Texas wine producing industry. Assess the impact of state and federal laws on the shipment and delivery of wine and make recommendations for increasing the economic impact of the wine producing industry in Texas.**

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND TRADE

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate International Relations and Trade Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

2. Study the activities of the U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Program: Border 2012, particularly in reference to the grant program. The Committee shall also monitor the distribution of funds from the North American Development Bank and the Border Environmental Cooperative Commission, as well as monitoring the activities of the International Boundary and Water Commission. The Committee should make recommendations for efficient use, tracking, and leverage of funds and for effective coordination of state policies relating to the border region.
2. Study the implementation of HB 109 and make recommendations for improvement of the import/export and certification system and for maximization of the tax dollars collected.
3. Study trends and issues concerning trade, immigration, and employment along the Border, including the impact of ten years of NAFTA, and make recommendations to enhance economic development and growth. Examine the impact of the US-VISIT program and the Trade Adjustment Act of 2002, and the current transition of oversight of the Border to the Department of Homeland Security and make recommendations for improvement in state law, as necessary.
4. Study and make recommendations for improving colonias infrastructure, including water services, wastewater services and transportation infrastructure. All recommendations should include an analysis of cost effective alternatives for achieving results and an assessment of current efforts to improve infrastructure.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate International Relations and Trade Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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JURISPRUDENCE

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Jurisprudence Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. Study the jurisdiction of all local and state courts, including civil and criminal justice courts.
Make recommendations for changes to any court's jurisdiction to improve the efficiency or effectiveness of the judicial system. Review and make recommendations relating to concurrent jurisdiction of county courts at law and district courts over eminent domain proceedings.
2. Study judicial salaries, supplements, retirement, and benefit issues for sitting, visiting and retired judges.
3. Study arbitration statutes, and the role of the American Arbitration Association. Specifically, the Committee shall make recommendations to improve and ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness of arbitrators and arbitrations.
4. Study insanity defense laws, specifically evaluating the impact of changing the defense of "not guilty by reason of insanity" to "guilty, but insane."

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Jurisprudence Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim

committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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NATURAL RESOURCES

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Natural Resources Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. **Study the ongoing efforts, and make recommendations, as needed, to achieve cleaner air in Texas including:**
 - **Implementation of HB 1365, 78th Regular Session;**
 - **State Implementation Plan revisions;**
 - **Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) implementation of the 8-hour air quality standard;**
 - **Early action compacts and other innovative air quality planning tools;**
 - **Emissions transport issues, including recent court decisions and federal legislation implementing transport policy;**
 - **Transition of the Texas Council on Environmental Technology to TCEQ; and**
 - **Regional air quality challenges.**
2. Study long-term funding and planning solutions to combat erosion along the Texas coast with particular attention to: the National Flood Insurance Program, securing, matching and additional federal dollars, and alternative funding approaches.
3. Study and make recommendations regarding current state and federal laws relating to the permitting and operation of landfills. Issues to be considered include the generation and transportation of waste; the selection, approval, and regulation of treatment and storage facilities; the projected demand for new facilities; and the adequacy of existing technology to safely dispose of waste.
4. **Study the consistent implementation of federal and state air and water quality standards by local governments and make recommendations for improving the consistency and effectiveness of the requirements.**

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Natural Resources Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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AGRICULTURE

INTERIM CHARGES

1. **Study and make recommendations to enhance current efforts for the early detection, exclusion, and treatment of diseased plants and animals.**
2. **Explore new technologies and business opportunities in agriculture and make recommendations to enhance and develop agriculture.**

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report

should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Agriculture Subcommittee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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STATE AFFAIRS

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate State Affairs Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

3. Study the implementation of changes made to the state group health insurance plans and identify additional cost-saving measures. Study the feasibility and practicality of offering health reimbursement accounts as an alternate health insurance plan for those insured in ERS, TRS, and university plans. Provide recommendations regarding whether the current method of administering these programs is in the best interest of the State of Texas and the various insured populations, or whether such programs might be more efficiently administered in another fashion.
2. Monitor the implementation of HB 1549, 78th Legislature, the Federal Help America Vote Act of 2002, to assure that Texas meets the criteria to secure the proposed federal funding. Make recommendations for statutory changes required to implement federal legislation and improve the efficiency of the process.
3. Study the implementation of SB 10 and SB 541, and make recommendations, as needed, to make health insurance more accessible, and affordable for all Texans.
4. Study the April 2003 United States Supreme Court decision in *Kentucky Association of Health Plans v. Miller* to determine its impact on Texas laws regulating health insurance plans under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and make recommendations to changes in state law to conform with recent federal court decisions.
5. Study the reimbursement methodology of health care plans operating in Texas for out-of-network claims, specifically focusing upon the reimbursement of usual and customary charges, and make recommendations on how to improve their effectiveness. The study and recommendations should encompass all plans, including those participating in Texas' Medicaid managed care program and should consider federal and state laws as well as Health & Human Services Commission rules relating to the reimbursement of out-of-network claims.
6. Study the implementation of House Bill 4 and Proposition 12 in achieving lower medical

malpractice rates and providing more access to affordable health care. Monitor and report on trends in medical malpractice insurance rates and the effect of tort reform on access to health care and provider shortages in certain regions, particularly along the Border.

7. Study and report on the affordability, reasonableness, and impact of mandatory liability insurance on the nursing home industry. Assess and report on the effects of the admissibility of quality reports.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate State Affairs Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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VETERANS AFFAIRS & MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Veterans Affairs & Military Installations Committee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. Study the impact of recent state and federal legislation with regard to protecting the personal privacy of Veterans' discharge records.
2. Study existing language of the Hazelwood Act (Section 54.203, Education Code) which entitles wartime veterans and their children to a waiver of tuition and fees at some State-supported colleges and universities, and make recommendations, including cost estimates, on possible amendments to this Act to permit Veterans who have not fully used their entitlement under the Act to pass on residual benefits to their children.
3. Monitor the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) implementation of HB 591, relating to reciprocity agreements between states concerning admissions of military personnel, and HB 261, relating to instate tuition levels for military personnel.

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous

spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

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BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE

INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Base Realignment and Closure Subcommittee is charged with conducting a thorough and detailed study of the following issues, including state and federal requirements, and preparing recommendations to address problems or issues that are identified.

1. **Study and evaluate the implementation of SB 652, SB 1295 and SJR 55, 78th Legislature. Address defense community use of loan programs created by these bills and make recommendations on how to best use loan proceeds to maintain Texas bases. Study the effects of urban encroachment upon Texas military installations.**
2. **Study and communicate national Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) developments, criteria and timelines to the Texas Military Planning Commission (TMPC) and affected military communities. Coordinate and monitor all BRAC issues associated with the Governor's and Lt. Governor's offices, the TMPC, the Office of State-Federal Relations, the State Congressional Delegation, and the Texas House Committee on Defense Affairs and State-Federal Relations.**

Reports

The Committee shall submit copies of its final report no later than December 1, 2004. The printing of reports should be coordinated through the Secretary of the Senate. Copies of the final report should be sent to the Lieutenant Governor (5 copies), Secretary of the Senate, Senate Research, Legislative Budget Board, Legislative Council, and Legislative Reference Library.

The final report should include recommended statutory or agency rulemaking changes, if applicable. Such recommendations must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations should also include state and local fiscal cost estimates, where feasible. The Legislative Budget Board is available to assist in this regard.

Budget and Staff

Travel costs shall be paid from the operating budgets of Senate members. All other costs shall be borne by the Senate Base Realignment and Closure Subcommittee's interim budget, as approved by the Senate Administration Committee. Due to overall budget constraints, it is recommended each interim committee budget include only critical expenditures and, where possible, reductions from previous spending levels.

The Committee should also seek the assistance of legislative and executive branch agencies where appropriate.

Interim Appointments

Pursuant to Section 301.041, Government Code, it may be necessary to change the membership of a committee if a member is not returning to the Legislature in 2005. This will ensure that the work of interim committees is carried forward into the 79th Legislative Session.