



- On Feb. 16, Gov. Greg Abbott delivers his State of the State Speech and presents seven emergency items, including cutting property taxes, school safety, and securing the border.
- On Feb. 23, Speaker of the House Dade Phelan releases his first set of priorities—eventual presenting 20 items—including property tax relief, school safety, and data privacy.
- Friday, March 10th, marks the 60-day bill filing deadline for the 88th Regular Session. A total of 8,345 bills and joint resolutions are ultimately filed, according to the Legislative Reference Library.
- On April 6, the Texas House of Representatives approves a historic \$302.7 billion state spending plan with a vote of 136-10.
- On April 17, the Texas Senate approves a \$308 billion spending plan for the next two years
- Conferees from both chambers meet publicly for the first time on April 25 to resolve budget differences.
- On May 23, Attorney General Ken Paxton calls for the resignation of Speaker Phelan, citing a video and accusing Phelan of presiding over the House “in a state of apparent intoxication. As of press time, Phelan had not responded to the accusation.
- Also on May 23, the House General Investigating Committee reveals that it has been investigating Paxton since mid-March for alleged misconduct.
- On May 27, despite the protests of former President Donald Trump and others, the Texas House of Representatives votes 121-23 to suspend the attorney general and refer him to the Senate for trial on charges of bribery, abuse of office, and obstruction; this is the first such impeachment since 1975. In the meantime, several major priority bills languish.
- On Sunday, May 28, one day before the official end of the Regular Session, the House and Senate set aside rules, compromise on legislation addressing the grid and economic incentives, and send those bills to the governor’s desk. However, issues including property tax relief, school funding, and proposed teacher raises remain unresolved.
- On the evening of Memorial Day, May 29, the Senate and House gavel out. Just a few hours after the Regular Session officially ends, Gov. Abbott announces Special Session #1 and alludes to calling multiple special sessions. Each special session may last up to 30 days.
- The First Called Special Session of the 88th Texas Legislatures gavel in on May 29 at 9 p.m. with the following agenda items:
 - **PROPERTY TAXES:** Legislation to cut property tax rates solely by reducing the school district maximum compressed tax rate in order to provide lasting property tax relief for Texas taxpayers.
 - **BORDER SECURITY:** Legislation solely for the purpose of increasing or enhancing the penalties for certain criminal conduct involving the smuggling of persons or the operation of a stash house.



Signatures Pending

Prior to announcing the Special Session, Abbott drew attention to the legislation he plans to sign addressing issues “that advance our state and the future of all Texans,” including laws that:



- End COVID restrictions and mandates;
- Provide more than \$5.1 billion to secure the border and fund the Texas National Guard, the Texas Department of Public Safety, and the border wall;
- Designate Mexican drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations;
- Prosecute fentanyl deaths as murder;
- Protect women’s sports and female collegiate athletes;
- Focus community colleges on preparing Texas students for high skill careers;
- Increase electric power generation to secure the Texas power grid;
- Hold rogue district attorneys accountable;
- Protect children from life-altering gender mutilation;
- Ban illegal DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) hiring practices in colleges and universities
- Add \$1.4 billion to make Texas schools safer;
- Require armed security at all schools;
- Provide access to mental healthcare for students at all schools; and
- Require regular safety checks of school buildings.

“Despite these major achievements, more must be done for the people of Texas,” Abbot declared “Many critical items remain that must be passed. Several special sessions will be required. To ensure that each priority receives the time and attention it deserves to pass into law, only a few w be added each session.”

“We must cut property taxes,” the governor emphasized. “During the Regular Session, we added \$17.6 billion to cut property taxes. However, the legislature could not agree on how to allocate funds to accomplish this goal. Texans want and need a path towards eliminating property taxes. The best way to do that is to direct property tax reduction dollars to cut school property tax

is.’



Oil and Gas Industry Perspective

The Regular Session was certainly “a trying one,” said Michael Lozano, director of Permian Basin Petroleum Association (PBPA) Government Affairs. While difficult, progress was made with regard to electric generation and transmission, the state budget, and funding for water projects, with the bulk of the work being accomplished in the last few days.

“Further, and more specifically, provisions were added to House Bill 1500 (H.B. 1500), the initial Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) Sunset bill, which included additional policy concepts to enhance the reliability of the grid by utilizing natural gas and other dispatchable generation,” Lozano reported. H.B. 1500 also includes provisions that would limit the potentially uncapped costs of performance credit measures that were offered in the interim by the PUC.

Other positive outcomes Lozano spotlighted included:

- Senate Bill 2627 relating to funding mechanisms to support the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities; this legislation made it to the governor’s desk.
- House Bill 5, the economic development bill, which was resurrected in the last days of the session and sent to the governor; this legislation contains provisions to incentivize natural gas generators.

General accomplishments include legislation that reins in local governments’ attempts to regulate fuel choice, prohibits the creation of anti-energy regulatory frameworks at the local level, and prohibits local governments from establishing climate charters, Lozano summarized. Also worth noting are the funding needs for the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), which were addressed in the state budget, along with additional funding for TexNet Seismic Response Monitoring at the Bureau of Economic Geology and for the RRC to contract advanced modeling to better analyze seismic data.

“In addition, our members saw a TCEQ Sunset bill that did not attack oil and gas development,”

Lozano observed.

“The PBPA would like to thank our members for their engagement and work this session,” Lozano shared. “Stay tuned for more.”

For more information on the PBPA and the Texas Legislature, go to www.pbpa.info.

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