



Texas Legislative Glossary

Texas Legislative Council
For the 85th Legislature

Texas Legislative Glossary

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to provide professional, nonpartisan service and support
to the Texas Legislature and legislative agencies.
In every area of responsibility,
we strive for quality and efficiency.*

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Legislative Glossary

A

ACT—A public law enacted by the Texas Legislature. A bill that has been passed by both chambers of the legislature and presented to the governor becomes law if it is signed by the governor, if it is not signed by the governor within a specified period, or if the governor vetoes the bill and the veto is overridden by a two-thirds vote in each chamber.

ACTION—A description of a step that a measure undergoes as it moves through the legislative process.

ACTUARIAL IMPACT STATEMENT—A document prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that provides an assessment of financial risk for any bill or joint resolution that proposes to change benefits or participation in benefits of a public retirement system or change the financial obligations of the system.

ADJOURNMENT—The termination of a meeting. Adjournment occurs at the close of each legislative day on completion of business, with the hour and day of the next meeting set before adjournment. See [RECESS](#).

ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE—See [SINE DIE](#).

ADOPTION—The approval or acceptance of a measure, usually applied to amendments or resolutions.

ADVICE AND CONSENT—The procedure by which the senate gives approval to or confirms appointments made by the governor.

AMENDMENT—Any proposed alteration to a bill or resolution as it moves through the legislative process. Amendments to a measure may be proposed by members in their assigned committees or by any member of a chamber during that chamber's second or third reading consideration of the measure.

APPORTIONMENT—The determination of the number of members that each state sends to the U.S. House of Representatives.

APPROPRIATION—An authorization by the legislature for the expenditure of money for a public purpose. In most instances, money cannot be withdrawn from the state treasury except through a specific appropriation made in the General Appropriations Act.

AS FILED—Used to refer to the text of a bill as it appeared when first filed with the chief administrative officer of the originating chamber.

AUTHOR—The legislator who files a bill and guides it through the legislative process (also called the primary author). The senate allows multiple primary authors for each bill or resolution. The house of representatives allows only one primary author, the house member whose signature appears on the original measure and on the copies filed with the chief clerk. Both chambers also have coauthors, and the house of representatives has joint authors.

B

BICAMERAL—Used to refer to a legislature consisting of two chambers, such as the house of representatives and the senate.

BIENNIAL REVENUE ESTIMATE (BRE)—A statement prepared by the comptroller of public accounts showing the financial condition of the state treasury at the close of the last fiscal period and an estimate of the probable receipts and disbursements for the current year as well as an itemized estimate of the anticipated revenue to be credited during the succeeding biennium. The Texas Constitution requires this document be submitted to the governor and the legislature in advance of each regular session. See [CERTIFICATION ESTIMATE](#).

BIENNIUM—A two-year period. In Texas, the state biennium runs from September 1 of an odd-numbered year through August 31 of the next odd-numbered year.

BILL—A type of legislative measure that requires passage by both chambers of the legislature and action by the governor in order to become effective. A bill is the primary means used to create and change the laws of the state. The term “bill” is also used generically in TLIS on the legislative intranet and in TLO on the Internet to refer to the various types of legislative measures that may be introduced during a legislative session. On these sites, “bill” types include senate and house bills, senate and house joint resolutions, senate and house concurrent resolutions, and senate and house resolutions.

BILL ANALYSIS—A document prepared for all bills and joint resolutions reported out of committee. A bill analysis may include background information on the measure, a statement of purpose or intent, and an analysis of the content of the measure.

BILL NUMBER—A unique number assigned to each bill filed with the secretary of the senate or the chief clerk of the house. A bill’s number remains the same throughout the legislative process.

BRACKET BILL—A legislative measure intended to apply only to a particular class of political subdivisions or geographic areas described by characteristics that relate to the purpose of the law.

BUDGET EXECUTION—The authority granted to the governor and the Legislative Budget Board to shift state funds between agencies or agency programs within the adopted budget.

C

CALENDAR—A list of bills or resolutions that are scheduled or eligible for consideration by the members of a chamber on a specified date.

CALENDAR CLERK—A non-legislator officer elected by the members of the senate who is the custodian of all legislative documents awaiting senate action.

CALENDAR DAY—A day of the year on which the legislature may be in session. See [LEGISLATIVE DAY](#).

CALENDAR SYSTEM, HOUSE—The system of calendars established in house rules that controls the legislative business of the chamber and includes the emergency calendar, the major state

calendar, the constitutional amendments calendar, the general state calendar, the local, consent, and resolutions calendar, the resolutions calendar, and the congratulatory and memorial resolutions calendar.

CALENDARS COMMITTEE—*See* [COMMITTEE ON CALENDARS, HOUSE](#).

CALL OF THE SENATE; CALL OF THE HOUSE—A motion used to compel the attendance of legislators who are absent from the chamber and to compel those members already in attendance to remain in the chamber.

CALLED SESSION—A special session. *See* [SESSION](#).

CAPTION—A statement that gives the legislature and the public reasonable notice of the subject of a bill or resolution. For bills and joint resolutions, the caption consists of the first sentence of the text that summarizes the contents of the bill or resolution. For other types of resolutions, the caption consists of a brief description of the contents of the resolution.

CAUCUS—A closed meeting of a group of members within a legislative body.

CERTIFICATION ESTIMATE—A document produced by the comptroller of public accounts certifying that the funds appropriated in the General Appropriations Act are less than or equal to the estimated available amount. The certification estimate helps fulfill the requirement in the Texas Constitution that the state not spend more money than it has. *See* [BIENNIAL REVENUE ESTIMATE](#).

CHAIR—A legislator appointed to preside over a legislative committee.

CHAMBER—The place in which the senate or house of representatives meets; also, a generic way to refer to a house of the legislature.

CHIEF CLERK—The head administrative officer of the house of representatives who supervises the house legislative departments. The chief clerk is the custodian of all bills and resolutions in the possession of the house and is responsible for keeping a complete record of their introduction and all subsequent house actions taken on them throughout the legislative process.

COAUTHOR—A legislator authorized by the primary author of a bill or resolution to join in the authorship of the measure. Both the senate and the house of representatives allow an unlimited number of coauthors on a bill or resolution. A coauthor must be a member of the chamber in which the bill was filed.

CODIFIED LAW—A law that has been assigned a topical code (e.g., Business & Commerce Code or Health and Safety Code).

COMMITTEE—A group of legislators appointed by the presiding officer of the house or the senate to which proposed legislation is referred or a specific task is assigned.

COMMITTEE CLERK—An employee of a legislative committee appointed to handle its parliamentary and administrative functions.

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR, HOUSE—A legislative employee within the office of the speaker of the house responsible for scheduling and posting committee hearings during sessions and

interims as well as retaining the official minutes and witness affirmation statements produced in each committee of the house of representatives.

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR, SENATE—A legislative employee within the office of the secretary of the senate responsible for scheduling and posting committee hearings during sessions and interims.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE—A device in which all members of the house or all members of the senate and the president of the senate are considered a committee and may therefore function under chamber rules relating to committees.

COMMITTEE ON CALENDARS, HOUSE—A committee in the house of representatives that schedules or declines to schedule bills for hearing by the full house. There is no equivalent committee in the senate.

COMMITTEE REPORT—A document consisting of the text of a bill or resolution and its required attachments that is prepared when the measure is reported from a committee for further consideration by the members of the chamber. The committee report includes the committee's recommendations to the full house or senate regarding action on the measure and must typically be completed before a measure can proceed through the legislative process.

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE—A new bill or resolution recommended by a committee in lieu of the original measure. A committee may report a committee substitute rather than a bill with proposed amendments. The committee substitute must contain the same subject matter as the original measure.

COMPANION BILL—A bill filed in one chamber that is identical or very similar to a bill filed in the opposite chamber. Companion bills are used to expedite passage, as they provide a means for committee consideration of a measure to occur in both chambers simultaneously. A companion bill that has passed one chamber can then be substituted for the companion bill in the opposite chamber.

CONCURRENCE—A motion in the originating chamber to accept the amendments made by the opposite chamber.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION—A type of legislative measure that requires adoption by both chambers of the legislature and generally requires action by the governor. A concurrent resolution is used to convey the sentiment of the legislature and may offer a commendation, a memorial, a statement of congratulations, a welcome, or a request for action by another governmental entity. Concurrent resolutions are also used to memorialize (petition) the U.S. Congress, express the views of the legislature, designate official state symbols, and adopt official place or date designations. Additionally, concurrent resolutions are used for administrative matters that require the approval of both chambers, such as providing for adjournment or a joint session, but these types of concurrent resolutions do not require action by the governor.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE—A committee composed of five members from each chamber appointed by the respective presiding officers to resolve the differences between the house and senate versions of a measure when the originating chamber refuses to concur in the changes made by the opposite chamber.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT—A document consisting of the text of a bill and its required attachments that is issued when a conference committee has completed its work in resolving the differences between the house and senate versions of a measure. The finalized conference committee report is then considered for approval by both chambers.

CONGRATULATORY AND MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS CALENDAR, HOUSE—A legislative calendar established in the house rules that lists congratulatory and memorial resolutions whose sole intent is to congratulate, memorialize, or otherwise express concern or commendation. The calendar must be distributed to the members at least 24 hours in advance of the hour set for consideration.

CONSENT CALENDAR—*See* [LOCAL AND UNCONTESTED CALENDAR, SENATE](#) and [LOCAL, CONSENT, AND RESOLUTIONS CALENDAR, HOUSE](#).

CONSTITUENT—A citizen residing in the district of an elected representative.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT—A change to the state constitution. A constitutional amendment is proposed by the legislature in the form of a joint resolution that must be adopted by both chambers of the legislature by a two-thirds vote and be approved by a majority of the voters to become effective.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS CALENDAR, HOUSE—A legislative calendar established in the house rules that lists scheduled joint resolutions proposing amendments to the Texas Constitution, joint resolutions proposing the ratification of amendments to the Constitution of the United States, and joint resolutions applying to Congress for a convention to amend the Constitution of the United States.

CONVENE—To assemble or call to order the members of a legislative body.

COSPONSOR—A legislator who joins with the primary sponsor to guide a bill or resolution through the legislative process in the opposite chamber. A cosponsor must be a member of the opposite chamber from the one in which the measure was filed.

COUNCIL DOCUMENT NUMBER—The unique number assigned to a draft prepared by the Texas Legislative Council. If a filed bill or resolution has been prepared by the council, the number will appear in the lower left corner of the document.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY IMPACT STATEMENT—A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that estimates the effects on state corrections agencies of a bill or joint resolution authorizing or requiring a change in sanctions applicable to felony or certain misdemeanor crimes.

D

DAILY FLOOR REPORT—A collection of analyses prepared by the House Research Organization for the bills scheduled for floor debate on the daily house calendar during a particular legislative day, consisting of a digest of each bill's provisions as well as background information, arguments for and against the measure, and additional pertinent information.

DAILY HOUSE CALENDAR—A list of new bills and resolutions scheduled by the House Committee on Calendars for consideration by the house that must be distributed to the members 36 hours

before the house convenes during a regular session and 24 hours before the house convenes during a special or called session.

DECLARED AN EMERGENCY—See [EMERGENCY MATTERS](#).

DISTRICT—A geographic division of the state made on the basis of population and in accordance with conditions dictated by state and federal law for the purpose of equitable representation.

DIVISION OF A QUESTION—A procedure used to separate a motion into two or more questions. When the main question is composed of more than one distinct proposition, it may be divided to enable legislators to vote on each proposition separately. Each proposition resulting from dividing the question must be distinct and capable of standing by itself as a substantive proposition so that it can be adopted alone and still be an intelligible expression of the opinion of the chamber.

DIVISION VOTE—A vote by any method other than a voice vote that will give the presiding officer an indication of the members' preference without calling the roll.

DOORKEEPER—An officer of the senate or house of representatives whose duties include controlling access to the floor of the chamber.

DUPLICATE BILL—A bill that is identical to another bill filed in the same chamber.

E

ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT—A statement prepared by a state agency, at the request of the lieutenant governor or the speaker of the house and in coordination with the Legislative Budget Board, that details the manner in and the extent to which a proposal, if enacted, will affect employment in the state, will affect the construction, modification, alteration, or utilization of any asset in the state, will result in changes in costs of goods and services in the state, will result in changes in revenue and expenditures of state and local governments, or will otherwise affect the economic interests of the state.

EFFECTIVE DATE—The date a law becomes binding. A law generally becomes effective on a date specified in the legislation itself or, in the absence of a specified date, after a fixed number of days following final adjournment of the session during which it was enacted or following signature of the governor.

EMERGENCY CALENDAR, HOUSE—A legislative calendar established in the house rules and composed of bills considered to be of such pressing and imperative import as to demand immediate action, bills to raise revenue and levy taxes, and the general appropriations bill. A bill submitted as an emergency matter by the governor may also be placed on this calendar.

EMERGENCY MATTERS—Matters designated by and submitted to the legislature in special messages from the governor. Legislation relating to emergency matters is not subject to house and senate rules imposing deadlines on introduction and may be filed and considered at any time during the legislative session.

ENABLING LEGISLATION—Legislation that provides details describing how a joint resolution would be implemented if the resolution were adopted by voters. Enabling legislation may

be passed during the legislative session in which the related joint resolution is considered or during a session after a constitutional amendment is adopted.

ENACTING CLAUSE—A clause required by the Texas Constitution to precede the body of each bill. The enacting clause follows the caption and must read as follows: “BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:”.

ENACTMENT—A bill passed in identical form by both chambers of the legislature, often used to refer specifically to a bill that has become law.

ENGROSSMENT—The stage in a bill’s legislative progress when it has been passed by the chamber in which it was filed and all amendments to the bill have been incorporated into the text of the bill, which is then forwarded to the opposite chamber for consideration.

ENROLLING CLERK (SENATE)—A non-legislator officer elected by the members of the senate to oversee the Engrossing and Enrolling (E&E) Department, which produces the official senate committee printing and the engrossed and enrolled versions of legislation that passes out of the senate, drafts and produces senate bills and resolutions, and undertakes special research projects.

ENROLLMENT—The stage in a bill’s legislative progress when it has been passed by both chambers of the legislature in identical form and has been prepared for signature by the presiding officers of both chambers. After the presiding officers sign the bill, it is then forwarded to the office of the governor.

EQUALIZED EDUCATION FUNDING IMPACT STATEMENT—A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that estimates the effects on all state requirements and policies related to equalized funding of a bill or joint resolution authorizing or requiring a change in the public school finance system.

EX OFFICIO—Used to refer to a member of a governmental body who holds his or her position on that body as the result of holding another governmental position.

E

FILED—Used to refer to a measure that has been introduced into the legislative process and given a number. Members of the house of representatives file bills with the chief clerk of the house. Senators file bills with the secretary of the senate.

FILIBUSTER—The prolonged discussion of a bill to delay legislative action. Filibusters are permitted in the senate but not in the house.

FILING DEADLINE—The last date on which a bill may be introduced into the legislative process without rules suspension. The deadline is the 60th calendar day of a regular session, with exceptions.

FIRST READING—See [READING](#).

FISCAL NOTE—An estimate prepared by the Legislative Budget Board of the probable costs or savings or the probable revenue gains or losses that will be incurred as an effect of a bill or joint resolution.

FISCAL YEAR (FY)—A 12-month period at the end of which financial accounts are reconciled. The fiscal year for state agencies in Texas begins on September 1 of each calendar year and ends on August 31 of the following year.

FLOOR—A term traditionally used for the meeting chamber of either house.

FLOOR ACTION—An action taken by either chamber on a bill reported by a committee. Subject to rules adopted by each chamber, members may propose amendments, enter debate, seek to promote or prevent a bill’s passage, and vote on a bill’s passage in that chamber.

FORMAL MEETING—A meeting of a house committee or subcommittee during which official action may be taken on any measure or matter before the committee or subcommittee. No public testimony may be taken in a formal meeting.

G

GENERAL STATE CALENDAR, HOUSE—A legislative calendar established in the house rules that lists non-emergency bills of statewide effect applicable to all areas but limited in legal effect to less than that constituting major state policy by classification or other factors as well as non-emergency bills that are not included on the local, consent, and resolutions calendar.

GERMANE—Relevant. Amendments are said to be germane or non-germane to a bill.

H

HIGHER EDUCATION IMPACT STATEMENT—A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board, after consultation with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, that estimates the programmatic and economic impact of a bill or joint resolution authorizing or requiring a change in the classification, mission, or governing structure of an institution of higher education. If a bill or joint resolution would establish or expand an institution of higher education, the impact statement should address the need for the new or expanded institution.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—The lower chamber of the Texas Legislature, consisting of 150 members, all of whom are elected every two years for two-year terms from districts of roughly equal population.

I

IMPACT STATEMENT—*See* [ACTUARIAL IMPACT STATEMENT](#), [CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY IMPACT STATEMENT](#), [ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT](#), [EQUALIZED EDUCATION FUNDING IMPACT STATEMENT](#), [HIGHER EDUCATION IMPACT STATEMENT](#), [OPEN GOVERNMENT IMPACT STATEMENT](#), and [WATER DEVELOPMENT POLICY IMPACT STATEMENT](#).

INTENT CALENDAR, SENATE—A legislative calendar established in the senate rules that lists bills and resolutions for which senators have filed with the secretary of the senate written notice to bring them up for consideration out of their regular order. Normally, a bill may not be brought up for consideration by the full senate unless it is listed on the Intent Calendar.

INTERIM—The period between regular legislative sessions.

INTERIM COMMITTEE—A group of legislators appointed by the presiding officer of the house or senate to study a particular issue or group of issues during the interim for the purpose of making recommendations to the next legislature.

INTRODUCED—Used to refer to the version of a bill or resolution that was filed in the house or the senate.

J

JOINT AUTHOR—In the house of representatives, a member authorized by the primary author of a bill or resolution to join in the authorship of the measure and have his or her name shown following the primary author's name on official printings of the measure, on calendars, and in the journal. The primary author may authorize up to four joint authors.

JOINT COMMITTEE—A committee composed of members from each chamber of the legislature appointed by the respective presiding officers. Joint committees are normally created by a special proclamation issued by the speaker and lieutenant governor for the purpose of studying a particular issue or group of issues when the legislature is not in session. Joint committees are rarely, if ever, created during a session, and house and senate rules do not permit bills and resolutions to be referred to a joint committee.

JOINT RESOLUTION—A type of legislative measure that requires adoption by both chambers of the legislature but does not require action by the governor. A joint resolution is used to propose amendments to the Texas Constitution, ratify amendments to the U.S. Constitution, or request a constitutional convention to propose amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Before becoming effective, the provisions of joint resolutions proposing amendments to the Texas Constitution must be approved by the voters of Texas.

JOINT SESSION—A combined meeting of the senate and the house that is held for a specific purpose, such as a special address from the governor.

JOURNAL—The official publication that records the legislative proceedings of each chamber, including record vote information.

JOURNAL CLERK—A non-legislator officer elected by the house or the senate to prepare, produce, and maintain the journal for that legislative body.

L

LAST ACTION—The most recent step a bill has undergone in the legislative process.

LEGISLATION—A proposed or enacted law or group of laws.

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD—A permanent joint committee of the Texas Legislature that develops recommendations for legislative appropriations for all agencies of state government. The Legislative Budget Board is composed of two joint chairs (the lieutenant governor and house speaker), three automatic members (the chairs of the House Appropriations Committee, House Ways and Means Committee, and Senate Finance Committee), and five appointed members (three senators appointed by the lieutenant governor and two representatives appointed by the speaker).

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL—See [TEXAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL](#).

LEGISLATIVE DAY—The period between the convening of the legislature and the next adjournment. The house or the senate may convene for a daily session in the morning, recess for lunch, and adjourn that same evening, completing a legislative day on the same calendar day. However, if a chamber recesses at the end of the day, that particular legislative day continues until the next time the chamber adjourns. See [CALENDAR DAY](#).

LEGISLATIVE INTENT—The purpose for which a measure is passed.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY—A library housed in the State Capitol that supports the reference and research needs of Texas legislators, their staffs, and legislative committees. When possible, the library also assists the public and other state agencies with legislative research.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION—See [SESSION](#).

LEGISLATURE—The lawmaking body of the State of Texas, which consists of two chambers, the house of representatives and the senate.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR—The presiding officer or president of the Texas Senate. A member of the executive branch, the lieutenant governor is elected statewide to a four-year term.

LINE ITEM—An element of spending authority granted to an agency or institution in an appropriations bill; literally, an appropriation that appears on a separate line in a budget bill. In Texas, the governor may veto a line item.

LINE ITEM VETO—The authority of the governor to veto spending on a line item basis, which allows the governor to veto spending for a particular item without eliminating total agency funding.

LIST OF ITEMS ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION—A list prepared by the chief clerk of the house on request of the speaker when the volume of legislation warrants (normally during the last few weeks of a regular session) containing the following: (1) house bills with senate amendments eligible to be considered, (2) senate bills for which the senate has requested the appointment of a conference committee, and (3) conference committee reports eligible to be considered.

LOCAL AND UNCONTESTED CALENDAR, SENATE—A legislative calendar established in the senate rules that lists local and noncontroversial bills and resolutions scheduled by the Senate Committee on Administration for consideration by the senate.

LOCAL BILL—A bill to enact a law that applies only to a discrete community or area rather than to the entire state.

LOCAL, CONSENT, AND RESOLUTIONS CALENDAR, HOUSE—A legislative calendar established in the house rules that lists bills, house resolutions, and concurrent resolutions, not emergency in nature, regardless of extent and scope, on which there is general agreement concerning the measure's consideration and passage. To be eligible for the local, consent, and resolutions calendar, a measure must have been recommended by the appropriate standing committee for placement on the calendar by the Committee on Local and Consent Calendars.

M

MAJOR STATE CALENDAR, HOUSE—A legislative calendar established in the house rules that lists bills of statewide effect, not emergency in nature, that establish or change state policy in a major field of governmental activity and that will have a major impact in application throughout the state without regard to class, area, or other limiting factors.

MAJORITY—A number of members that is greater than half of the total membership of a group and that has the power to make decisions binding on the whole. There are two types of majority that may be required for legislative approval of bills and other actions. A simple majority consists of more than half of those members present and voting. An absolute majority consists of more than half of those members entitled to vote, whether present or absent.

MEASURE—A general term for a bill or resolution.

MINORITY REPORT—A committee report issued by one or more members of a committee that disagree with the report adopted by the majority of the committee.

MINUTES—A document prepared after each committee hearing that contains the order of committee business and lists the committee members present at the hearing, the votes taken on legislation, and the witnesses testifying for, against, or on legislation. The minutes are not a transcript and do not summarize testimony.

MOTION—A formal statement presented in committee or on the floor to a legislative body for action while the body is meeting.

MOTION TO TABLE—A motion to set aside consideration of a bill, resolution, amendment, or other immediate proposition to which the motion applies.

N

NONPARTISAN—A term used to refer to an effort or entity free from party affiliation or designation.

O

OMNIBUS BILL—A bill regarding a single subject that combines many different aspects of that subject.

OPEN GOVERNMENT IMPACT STATEMENT—A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that estimates the impact of proposed legislative changes on public access to government information or on the transaction of public business.

OVERRIDE—See [VETO OVERRIDE](#).

P

PAIRING—A procedure for voting whereby two members with opposite views on a matter make an informal agreement when one member will be present for a vote and the other will be absent that the present member will not vote but will be “present, not voting,” allowing the absent member’s intended vote to effectively cancel out the present member’s opposing vote.

When two members are paired, the journal reflects how each member would have voted. Two members may be paired only if one would have voted “aye” and one would have voted “nay” on a particular measure or motion.

PARLIAMENTARIAN—An officer of the house or senate appointed by the presiding officer to provide the presiding officer and all other members with guidance on the parliamentary rules of their respective chamber.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY—A question posed by a legislator to the presiding officer for clarification of the procedure or business before the legislative body.

PASSAGE—The approval of a measure by the full legislative body.

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE SPEECH—A statement by a legislator that is not directly related to pending legislative business.

POINT OF ORDER—A motion calling attention to a possible breach of the procedural rules of the house or the senate.

PREFILING—The filing of bills and other proposed legislation before the convening of a legislative session.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE—The presiding officer of the senate. The state constitution provides that the lieutenant governor serve as president of the senate.

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE (PRO TEM)—A member of the senate elected by the other members to act as president of the senate in the absence of the lieutenant governor.

PRESIDING OFFICER—The officer who presides over a deliberative assembly. The speaker of the house is the presiding officer of the Texas House of Representatives, and the lieutenant governor of Texas is the presiding officer of the Texas Senate.

PRIMARY AUTHOR—See [AUTHOR](#).

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR—The right to view the proceedings of the legislature from the floor of the chamber rather than from the public gallery.

PRO TEMPORE OR PRO TEM—See [PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE](#) and [SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE](#).

PUBLIC HEARING—A meeting of a house or senate committee or subcommittee during which public testimony may be heard and formal action may be taken on any measure or matter before the committee or subcommittee.

Q

QUORUM—The number of members required to conduct business. Two-thirds of the elected members constitutes a quorum in each chamber. A majority of the appointed members of a committee forms a quorum for the purpose of conducting committee business.

R

READING—The presentation of a bill before either chamber by the recital of the caption of the bill. The Texas Constitution requires that every bill be read in each chamber on three separate days. Until a bill is finally passed, it will be in the process of a first, second, or third reading. The first reading of a bill is the point in the legislative process when the bill is referred to committee by the appropriate presiding officer. The second reading of a bill is the first point in the process when the entire membership of a chamber has the opportunity to debate the bill and amend it by majority vote. The third reading of a bill is the next point in the process and provides a final opportunity for the entire membership of a chamber to debate a bill and for the members to offer amendments to the bill.

RECAPITULATION—A concise summary appearing at the beginning of the General Appropriations Act and at the end of each General Appropriations Act article and the Legislative Budget Estimates that summarizes the appropriations for all agencies for the biennium by general revenue funds, general revenue–dedicated funds, federal funds, other funds, and all funds.

RECESS—A temporary termination of a meeting. Recesses are called for short breaks (e.g., for lunch or dinner) or occasionally at the close of a daily session to allow the legislative day to continue into the next calendar day. See [ADJOURNMENT](#).

RECONSIDERATION—A procedure by which the house, the senate, or one of its committees may, after approval by majority vote, repeat the vote on an action to either annul or reaffirm the previous vote.

RECORD VOTE—A list recorded in the journal of the individual vote of each member of a committee or full chamber on a particular motion or measure.

REDISTRICTING—The process by which the geographical divisions of the state into congressional, state representative, state senator, and State Board of Education electoral districts are periodically revised. District boundaries are redrawn every 10 years following the publication of the U.S. Census to maintain approximately equal populations across all electoral districts in the state.

REFER/REFERRAL/REFERRED—To send a filed bill to a committee for consideration. The Texas Constitution prohibits any bill from being considered on the floor unless it has first been referred to and considered by a committee.

REGULAR ORDER—The daily order of business in a legislative session.

REGULAR SESSION—See [SESSION](#).

REPEALER—A clause in a bill revoking previously enacted legislation.

RESOLUTION—A formal expression of recognition, opinion, or decision, other than a proposed law, that may be offered for approval to one or both chambers of the legislature by a member of the house or senate.

RESOLUTIONS CALENDAR, HOUSE—A legislative calendar established in the house rules that lists house resolutions and concurrent resolutions that are not emergency in nature and are not privileged.

REVENUE ESTIMATE—See [BIENNIAL REVENUE ESTIMATE](#).

RIDER—A legislative directive, inserted in the General Appropriations Act following appropriation line items for an agency, that provides direction, expansion, restriction, legislative intent, or an appropriation. The term also applies to special provisions at the end of each article and general provisions in the General Appropriations Act.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY—The authority granted by the legislature to a state officer, department, agency, or institution to devise the details of implementation and enforcement of a statute. Rulemaking authority is imparted through a bill.

S

SECOND READING—See [READING](#).

SECRETARY OF THE SENATE—The chief administrative officer of the senate, who is elected by the senate and responsible for the day-to-day operations of the senate and its departments.

SENATE—The upper chamber of the Texas Legislature, consisting of 31 members serving four-year terms, half of whom are elected every two years from districts of roughly equal population.

SENATE AGENDA—The document prepared daily for the senators and the public that contains the following information: (1) the Intent Calendar; (2) a list of senate bills returned from the house with amendments; (3) the status of bills in conference committees; (4) the Local and Uncontested Calendar; (5) gubernatorial appointments reported favorably from the Senate Committee on Nominations and awaiting confirmation by the senate; (6) committee hearings scheduled, with a list of measures to be considered by the committees; (7) the regular order of business, listing bills and resolutions that have been reported favorably from committee; (8) miscellaneous announcements; (9) senate floor action from the previous legislative day; (10) senate committee action from the previous day; and (11) morning call items of business.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS—An officer of the house or senate charged with maintaining order and carrying out the directives of the presiding officers and the members.

SESSION—The period during which the legislature meets. The regular session convenes every odd-numbered year and may last no more than 140 days. A called session, commonly referred to as a special session, is so designated because it must be called by the governor. A called or special session may last no more than 30 days.

SESSION LAW—A collection of laws passed in a particular legislative session and published as the *General and Special Laws of the State of Texas*.

SEVERABILITY CLAUSE—A provision in legislation that allows one portion of a bill to become law even if another portion of the same bill is found to be unconstitutional or invalid.

SIDE-BY-SIDE ANALYSIS—A document that compares two or more versions of the same bill or joint resolution. Examples of side-by-side analyses include a senate or house amendment analysis that shows the differences between the final senate and house versions of a bill or joint resolution and a conference committee report analysis that depicts how the differences between the senate and house versions of a measure have been resolved by the conference committee.

A senate amendment analysis is required by house rule, and a conference committee report analysis is required by both senate rule and house rule.

SIMPLE RESOLUTION—The type of legislative measure that is considered only within the chamber in which it is filed. A simple resolution can offer a commendation, a memorial, a statement of congratulations, a welcome, or the views of that chamber. This type of measure is also used to name a mascot, memorialize (petition) the U.S. Congress, adopt or change rules of procedure, initiate a study by a single chamber, and request action by another governmental entity.

SINE DIE—A Latin term meaning “without day” that is used to signify the final adjournment of a session of a legislative body. The body adjourns sine die when it adjourns without appointing a day on which to appear or assemble again.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE—The presiding officer of the house of representatives elected from and by the membership of the house at the beginning of each regular session.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE (PRO TEM)—A member of the house designated by the speaker of the house to perform the duties of the chair in the absence or inability of the speaker.

SPECIAL SESSION—See [SESSION](#).

SPONSOR—The legislator who guides a bill through the legislative process after the bill has passed the originating chamber. The sponsor is a member of the opposite chamber of the one in which the bill was filed.

STANDING COMMITTEE—A permanent committee established in the rules of either chamber that specializes in a particular subject area.

SUBCOMMITTEE—A group of committee members, appointed by the chair of a committee of the house or the senate, to which proposed legislation is referred or a specific task is assigned.

SUNSET—A process established in statute by which state agencies, boards, and commissions are regularly reviewed and reauthorized or eliminated.

SUNSET ADVISORY COMMISSION—A 12-member body of legislators and public members appointed by the lieutenant governor and the speaker of the house to review each state agency and recommend fundamental changes to an agency’s mission or operations if needed. Agencies are typically reviewed every 12 years.

SUPPLEMENTAL HOUSE CALENDAR—The primary agenda followed by the house during its deliberations. Prepared by the House Committee on Calendars, this calendar is required to be distributed two hours before the house convenes. The Supplemental House Calendar contains: (1) measures passed to third reading on the previous legislative day, (2) measures on the Daily House Calendar for a previous calendar day that were not reached for consideration, (3) measures on the Daily House Calendar for the current day, (4) postponed business from a previous calendar day, and (5) notice to call from the table a measure laid on the table subject to call on a previous legislative day.

I

TABLE—See [MOTION TO TABLE](#).

TAX EQUITY NOTE—A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that estimates the effect of proposed tax law changes on individuals and businesses.

TEXAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL—A nonpartisan legislative agency that provides bill and resolution drafting services to the legislature. The council also provides computer support, research, printing, and document distribution services to the legislature and legislative agencies.

THIRD READING—See [READING](#).

U

UNEXPENDED BALANCE (U.B.)—The amount left in an item of appropriation at the end of an appropriation period, excepting any part of the appropriation for which the agency in charge of spending it has made an obligation or commitment. The term also refers to the amount of an appropriation, a fund, or a category of revenue that is brought forward into the succeeding fiscal year.

V

VERNON'S (*VERNON'S TEXAS CIVIL STATUTES* or V.T.C.S. and *VERNON'S TEXAS CODES ANNOTATED* or V.T.C.A.)—The laws of the State of Texas, updated and printed following each legislative session.

VETO—The authority of the governor to reject an enrolled bill or concurrent resolution.

VETO OVERRIDE—The authority of the legislature to pass a bill over the governor's veto.

VIVA VOCE—See [VOICE VOTE](#).

VOICE VOTE—A vote during which the presiding officer will request the members who are voting in favor of a measure or motion to respond collectively by saying "yea" and those who are voting against the measure or motion to respond collectively by saying "nay."

VOTE VERIFICATION—The procedure in which the results of a record vote are confirmed by a second vote, as requested by a legislator.

W

WATER DEVELOPMENT POLICY IMPACT STATEMENT—A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that provides an assessment of the effects on the state or another unit of government of a measure proposing the creation of a water conservation and reclamation district.

WITNESS—A person who testifies before a legislative committee.

WORK SESSION—A meeting of a house committee or subcommittee during which the members may only discuss measures or matters before the committee or subcommittee. Public testimony cannot be heard and formal action cannot be taken during a work session.

Y

YEAS AND NAYS—The recorded vote of members for and against a measure or action.

YIELD—To relinquish the floor to allow another member to speak or ask a question.