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Summarizing state legislative and regulatory developments affecting housing and the building industry.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- [HB 2295 - TRCC Sunset Bill - Hearing on MONDAY, March 23](#)
- [81st Legislative Session Update](#)
- [Bills of Interest](#)
- [Important Upcoming Hearings](#)
- [The 2009 Star Awards Call for Entries is Open!](#)
- [HOMEPAC](#)

HB 2295 - TRCC Sunset Bill - Hearing on MONDAY, March 23

The House Business and Industry Committee will hear HB 2295, the Sunset bill that continues the TRCC, on Monday at 2:00 p.m. or upon adjournment of the House in room E2.026. This hearing is crucial and your participation is needed. Please take action and login to TAB's [Grassroots Action Center](#) to send a prepared form letter.

For your convenience, the members of the Business and Industry Committee are:

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E-mails or faxed letters will need to be sent ASAP. Thank you for your continued support and participation. If you have any questions please contact the TAB Governmental Relations Staff at 512-476-6346.

[Top](#)

81st Legislative Session Update

GOVERNOR – On Wednesday, Governor Rick Perry announced that Texas has been ranked number one in online transparency out of all 50 states, according to a study conducted as part of the annual Sunshine Week campaign. Sunshine Week is a national initiative by journalism organizations to focus on open government and access to information. The only state they found to provide information online in all 20 categories was Texas. Surveyors rated each section based on user experience and friendliness, considering factors such as whether information was clearly linked, if full reports or only summaries were available, whether the site offered free viewing and/or downloading, and if the data was current. Governor Perry said, “It is encouraging to see Texas’ concerted efforts of greater budget transparency recognized at this level. I am a longtime supporter of transparency and the accountability that comes with it. I hope that Texas will continue to build on these successes by calling for even more transparency, including from our institutions of higher education and municipalities all across the state.”

SENATE – On Monday, the Senate was expected to take up SB 362 by Troy Fraser (R-Horseshoe Bay), the voter ID bill, but a clerical error involving not listing the bill in the Texas Senate Agenda booklet caused debate to be postponed until Tuesday. On Tuesday after two hours of debate, the Senate gave preliminary approval to SB 362 by a vote of 19 ayes to 12 nays along party lines. SB 362 would require registered voters to show one government issued photo identification or two non-photo IDs before casting a vote. After the vote, Lt. Governor David Dewhurst said, “The overwhelming majority of Texans want our voting system more secure from fraud by simply requiring voters to show their identification when they cast a ballot. By ensuring every vote cast is legal we will strengthen our democratic process, Texans will have confidence that their vote counts, and voter turnout will increase.” The bill received final approval on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, the Senate passed several bills including SB 52 by

Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) which would raise the fine for illegally parking in a handicapped space for first time offenders from a maximum of \$500 to a maximum of \$750, would increase the fine for subsequent offenses, and would add community service for multiple offenders. The Senate also gave preliminary approval to a bill that would create a needle-exchange program for syringes used for illegal drugs. SB 188 by Bob Deuell (R-Greenville) would permit organizations to operate needle-exchange programs and to provide education on prevention of communicable diseases and substance-abuse treatment. Senator Deuell, who is a practicing family physician, argued that Texas is the only state that prohibits such programs and that these programs have been proven to reduce transmission of diseases such as HIV and hepatitis. It finally passed on Thursday by a vote of 23-7. Also on Thursday, the Senate had its first Local and Uncontested calendar for the session.

The Senate is a little bit behind the pace from last session for bills making it through the process. As of Wednesday, Day 65 out of 140, the Senate had reported 103 bills out of committee, compared to 135 at the same time last session. In 2007, the Senate had passed 70 bills, compared to 9 this session (although the Senate narrowed the gap by passing 64 bills on Thursday).

Total number of bills reported out of Senate Committees this week: 39
Total number of bills passed by the Senate this week: 72
Total number of bills passed on the Local and Uncontested Calendar: 59

HOUSE – On Thursday, they passed resolutions on the Congratulatory and Memorial resolutions calendar. The House honored the life of the late Representative Buddy West (R-Odessa) and welcomed his widow and family on the House floor. The House is also lagging behind in moving bills this session. As of Wednesday, 56 bills had been reported from House committees, compared to 253 last session. And, by this point in 2007, the House had passed 19 bills, and they have not yet passed any bills this session.

Total number of bills reported out of House Committees this week: 20
Total number of bills passed by the House this week: 0

STIMULUS FUNDS – The House Select Committee on Federal Economic Stabilization Funding held its first public hearing outside of Austin last Saturday, March 14th. Approximately 300 people turned out for the hearing, which was held at the University of Texas – Arlington campus. Comments from those witnesses invited to testify addressed the need for a permanent fix to the state’s public school funding challenges and the need for more funding for Medicaid coverage for children and for the Children’s Health Insurance Program. Among the public testimony, Governor Perry’s rejection of federal stimulus money for unemployment compensation last week was both praised and

criticized. This week, the Committee resumed hearings at the Capitol on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday by inviting public testimony on the issues of public and higher education, transportation and criminal justice. On Saturday, the Committee will hold its second public hearing out of Austin in San Antonio at the City Council Chambers.

ENERGY/ELECTRIC UTILITY –

Senate Natural Resources Committee: SB 16 by Kip Averitt (R-Waco) would provide incentives for new, point source-oriented air quality technologies and modify and enhance existing state air quality programs. *It was left pending.*

House Business and Industry: HB 25 by David Leibowitz (D-San Antonio) would prohibit a property owners' association from restricting a property owner from installing a solar energy device unless the device threatens the public health or safety or violates the law. *It was reported favorably from the Committee.*

HUMAN RESOURCES/EMPLOYMENT – In response to Governor Rick Perry's announcement last week that Texas should decline federal unemployment aid, several Democratic Senators blasted the governor's decision to reject \$555 million in aid to unemployed Texans offered by the Economic Recovery Act. The press release said, "While Texas does not yet face double digit unemployment—like Michigan, California, Rhode Island and South Carolina—the economic forecast is not rosy. According to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and the U.S. Federal Reserve, the Texas economy will lose between 180,000 to 300,000 jobs in 2009, and the unemployment rate is expected to rise from 6% to 8.2%." Senator Rodney Ellis said, "Governor Perry's decision is simply deplorable. Texas families are hurting and are worried about how they are going to keep their homes and pay their bills. If the Governor won't do his job, we'll have to go around him, and I am prepared to do just that." Senator Eliot Shapleigh said, "By October, more than 300,000 Texans will be out of work. Unemployment will be at 8%. To reject funds targeted to families in tough times is profoundly irresponsible. We will fight hard to get a Senate resolution passed to make sure Texas puts families back to work." Senator Leticia Van de Putte said, "Governor Perry's decision will harm Texas families. With 26,000 Texans filing new unemployment claims each week, Texans need help now. The unemployment fund is already running low and will reach zero by October 1st. Why would Governor Perry place the burden on already stressed employers to make up the shortfall? I am amazed that Governor Perry would put partisan interests above the interest of already unemployed Texans and those who will unfortunately lose their jobs due to this economy." Senators Zaffirini concluded, "These federal stimulus funds would assist Texans who are unemployed through no fault of their own. The economic outlook is dire, and any measure that would qualify deserving persons for unemployment insurance benefits is the right and moral approach. That is why I filed SB 945, which

would expand eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits as defined by the Labor Code, allow for an alternative base period to be used when determining eligibility so that any of four of the last five quarters would be used in determining eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits, allow persons seeking part-time work to qualify for partial benefits and permit persons who are unemployed due to spouse relocation unrelated to military service to receive benefits.”

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) warned Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants to be aware of unscrupulous business operators who may try to charge as much as 30% of unemployment benefits to process unemployment insurance claims. UI filing through TWC is, and always has been, available at no cost to claimants. TWC Commissioner Ronny Congleton said, “TWC is concerned claimants may sign up for such services only to later discover unemployment claims were never filed on their behalf and that they may have given their Social Security numbers to these businesses believing they were dealing with state agencies. While the Texas Workforce Commission is very busy helping people navigate the filing process, there is no need to pay someone to file your claim. Unemployment benefits claim filing, job-search assistance and all the services TWC provides are always at no cost. We want to ensure that deceitful businesses do not take advantage of people during this difficult economic time.”

PROPERTY –

House Defense and Veteran’s Affairs Committee:

HB 761 by Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would increase the punishment for committing a property crime in a declared disaster area. *It was left pending.*

House Land and Resource Management Committee:

HB 28 by David Leibowitz (D-San Antonio) would require the seller of real property to give notice to a purchaser if the seller has received notice from a municipality that the property is included in the municipality’s annexation plan. *It was left pending.*

HB 45 by Frank Corte (R-San Antonio) would require municipalities wishing to exercise zoning regulations to publish notice on the municipality’s official website. *It was left pending.*

HB 774 by Todd Smith (R-Bedford) would require notice of the adoption of a municipal zoning regulation or zoning district boundary to be sent to an adjacent municipality that is located within 200 feet of the property on which the change is proposed. *It was left pending.*

HB 1424 by David Leibowitz (D-San Antonio) would require a petition to disannex territory from a municipality to contain the signatures of at least 50% of the registered voters in the area. *It was left pending.*

HB 1445 by Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton) would require subdivisions to conduct and obtain the approval of the Land Commissioner of a coastal boundary survey before constructing a shore protection structure. *It was left pending.*

HB 2073 by Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton) would require local

governments to use historical erosion data and the coastal erosion response plan published by the Land Commissioner to prepare a local plan for reducing public expenditures for erosion and storm damage loss to public and private property. *It was left pending.*

HB 2074 by Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton) would require the Land Commissioner to determine which areas should be designated as critical coastal erosion areas and guide the allocation of resources. *It was left pending.*

HB 2387 by Dennis Bonnen (R-Angelton) would require the Land Commissioner to study the removal and relocation of structures from public beaches including the purchase of property located on a public beach and the acquisition by eminent domain of property necessary for the construction, reconstruction, maintenance, widening, or extension of an erosion response project; and would authorize the Land Commissioner to undertake at least one erosion response project each biennium without requiring a project partner to pay a portion of the shared project. *It was left pending.*

HB 2457 by Craig Eiland (D-Texas City) would require the General Land Office to clean, maintain, and clear debris from a public beach that is located in an area designated as a threatened area in a declaration of a state of disaster if the debris is related to the event that is the subject of the disaster declaration. *It was left pending.*

House Licensing and Administrative Procedures Committee:

HB 1406 by Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth) would allow the Real Estate Commission to charge reasonable licensing fees to cover the cost of administration of the licensing; and would dedicate \$50 of each real estate license fee to support the Texas Real Estate Research Center at Texas A&M University, \$50 to the foundation school fund, and \$100 (rather than \$150) to the general revenue fund; and would authorize real estate licenses to be suspended if the licensee commits fraud or discriminates against an owner, potential buyer, landlord or tenant on the basis of disability or familial status. *It was left pending.*

Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee:

SB 820 by Robert Duncan (R-Lubbock) would authorize the governing body of a municipality to establish a Model Codes Advisory Board to review and recommend the adoption of and an amendment and/or addition to national model codes to govern the construction, renovation, use, or maintenance of buildings and building systems in the municipality. *It was reported out as substituted and recommended for the Local and Uncontested calendar.*

SB 950 by Royce West (D-Dallas) would assess a \$10 filing fee for the filing of a real property record with the money going into the housing trust fund. *It was left pending.*

TAXATION – On Wednesday, Senator Dan Patrick (R-Houston) announced that 16 Republicans and 7 Democrats have signed on to his bill that eliminates or reduces the tax on 385,000 small businesses. SB 19 would eliminate the tax on businesses with less than \$1 million in

revenues. The only firms now exempt are ones with revenues of less than \$300,000. It also would reduce the tax rate from .575% to .4% for businesses between \$1 million and \$10 million in total revenues. Senator Patrick said, “Those businesses are the backbone of our economy in Texas. I will leave it up to Senate budget writers to figure out how to pay for the lost revenue.”

Senate Economic Development Committee:

SB 576 by Wendy Davis (D-Fort Worth) would authorize the board of directors of a reinvestment zone and the governing body of the municipality or county that creates a reinvestment zone to enter into agreements to provide for the construction of a road, sidewalk, or other public infrastructure in or out of the zone including the cost of acquiring the real property necessary for the construction of the road, sidewalk, or other public infrastructure. In support were representatives of City of Fort Worth and Texas Municipal League. *It was reported out favorably and was on Wednesday’s Senate Intent Calendar.*

House Ways and Means Committee: The committee took up seven proposed constitutional amendments and their enabling bills to limit appraisal caps. They were all left pending. Other bills on their agenda:

HB 866 by Mike Villarreal (D-San Antonio) would require the comptroller to conduct a study on the feasibility of a circuit breaker program that limits the amount of ad valorem taxes on a residence homestead based on the owner’s annual income. *It was left pending.*

HB 1006 by Vicki Truitt (R-Southlake) would exempt revenue received by a property owner’s association used solely for the benefit of the residential subdivision from the franchise tax. *It was left pending.*

HB 1221 by Charlie Howard (R-Sugar Land) would require the chief appraiser to give written notice to each property owner in a taxing unit with a list of the taxing units other than school districts in which the property is taxable; the appraised value of the property for the current year and the kind and amount of each partial exemption approved for the current year; the amount of tax that would be imposed on the property on the basis of the effective tax rate and the rollback rate; a detailed explanation of the procedures by which a taxpayer may provide input on the adoption of the tax rate; and a brief explanation that the governing body of the taxing unit decides whether taxes on the property will increase and the appraisal district only determines the value of the property. *It was left pending.*

WORKERS’ COMPENSATION – On Monday, the **House Business and Industry Committee** took up:

HB 1657 by Helen Giddings (D-DeSoto) would change the definitions of “general contractor” and “subcontractor” under the workers’ compensation statute. Under this bill, property owners could no longer be considered the general contractor and cover subcontractors under the property owner’s workers’ compensation coverage. This bill is commonly referred to as the “Entergy bill” after the Texas Supreme

Court case where an injured Entergy employee who received benefits under the company's worker's compensation policy could not sue the company for further damages. In support were representatives of Texas Trial Lawyers Association, Texas AFL-CIO, Texans for Public Justice, TPLC-CWA Union, and four individuals. In opposition were representatives of Texas Civil Justice League, Texans for Lawsuit Reform, Texas Association of Manufacturers, AGC Texas Building Branch, Shell Oil, Texas Association of Business, Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas, Dow Chemical Company, American Insurance Association, Valero Energy Corporation, Huntsman Corporation, Texas Apartment Association, National Federation of Independent Business, Texas Chemical Council, and Texas Oil and Gas Association. *It was left pending.*

To look up any bill, visit the [Texas Legislature Online](#).

[Top](#)

Bills of Interest

HB 1209 (Ruth Jones McClendon, D-San Antonio) Relating to the beneficiaries of construction payment trust funds. This bill addresses the construction trust fund accounts by adding that the beneficiaries of trust funds include "a property owner...in connection with a residential construction contract, including funds deposited into a construction account." The bill also adds that a fee payable to a contractor is not considered trust funds if the fee is "earned as provided by the contract and paid to the contractor or disbursed from a construction account."

HB 1635 (Todd Smith, R-Eules) Relating to the abolition of the Texas Residential Construction Commission. This bill repeals the Texas Residential Construction Commission Act as well as all RCLA changes from HB 730 (2003) as well as the changes to the act made by HB 1038 (2007).

HB 2095 (Jessica Farrar, D-Houston) Relating to the regulation of and claims against residential home builders. This is an omnibus TRCC bill.

- Makes all improvements to a home, regardless of cost, subject to TRCC.
- Prohibits SIRP fees.
- Allows TRCC to institute higher registration fees.
- Requires proof of financial responsibility through mandatory GL policies of at least \$500,000.
- Requires surety bonds for each construction project.
- Makes Star Builder program mandatory.

- Adds 6 new grounds for disciplinary action.
- Prohibits the builder from requesting a SIRP.
- Deletes requirement of homeowner to show any evidence that depicts the nature and cause of a defect when requesting a SIRP.
- Increases workmanship warranty to two years.
- Requires certain notice by the builder, including associated costs of arbitration, and risks and hazards of the home.
- Makes third party warranty companies liable for the warranty of habitability.
- Makes conforming changes to RCLA.

HB 2223 (Tan Parker, R-Flower Mound) Relating to notice to certain homeowners regarding residential construction warranties.

Requires TRCC to send out notice regarding applicable warranty periods and their expiration to new homeowners. The notice includes language that a SIRP must be requested before civil action may be taken.

HB 2243 (David Leibowitz, D-San Antonio) Relating to the licensing and regulation of residential construction contractors and the abolition of the Texas Residential Construction Commission.

Provides licensing for builders under TDLR and abolishes the TRCC. Licensing requirements include:

- An exam,
- Three years experience,
- A GL policy with a limit of at least \$500,000,
- A surety bond for each home in the amount of at least the market value of the home, and
- Includes a Class A criminal penalty for failure to register.

HB 2295 (Ruth McClendon, D-San Antonio)/SB 1015 (Glenn Hegar, R-Katy) Relating to the continuation and function of the Texas Residential Construction Commission. This is the TRCC Sunset Bill. Contains all Sunset recommendations except the code study recommendation.

HB 2699 (Ruth Jones McClendon, D-San Antonio) Relating to the licensing and regulation of certain builders. Amends the TRCC Act to require the licensure of builders. Would require examination requirements, and security and insurance requirements. The exam would not be required of current registrants.

HB 2808 (Senfronia Thompson, D-Houston)/SB 224 (Royce West, D-Dallas) Relating to the power of a licensing authority to revoke, suspend or deny a license on the basis of certain criminal proceedings. Currently, a licensing authority may revoke or suspend a license if the holder has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor that directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the licensed occupation. Additionally, a license holder's license shall be revoked on the license holder's imprisonment following a felony conviction, felony

community supervision revocation, revocation of parole, or revocation of mandatory supervision. This bill amends Section 53.021 of the Occupations Code to provide that the above does not apply to persons who enter pleas of guilty or nolo contendere, or deferred judgment was completed. Provides an exception if the licensing authority determines that the person is a continued threat or if there is an opportunity to repeat the conduct should the person hold the license.

HB 2896 (David Liebowitz, D-San Antonio) Relating to requiring the Texas Residential Construction Commission to adopt forms to be used by builders for contracts for the sale or construction of a new home. Requires the TRCC to create standard construction contracts for use in new home construction. Prohibits the TRCC from including binding arbitration clauses in the standard contracts. Prohibits the TRCC from prohibiting a builder from using a contract prepared by the purchaser. Adds the failure to use such contracts as a ground for disciplinary action.

HB 3871 (Marc Veasey, D-Fort Worth) Relating to the operation of the Texas Residential Construction Commission; providing an administrative penalty. Amends the TRCC Act to get rid of the TRCC executive director and create a TRCC Commissioner to act as executive director and presiding officer of the Commission. Removes one builder member from the TRCC Board. Creates a recovery fund funded by all fines and half the fees and other income collected by the TRCC in order for homeowners to obtain repairs of a construction defect or other damages resulting from a defect. Allows the TRCC to require builders to make repairs or pay for repairs if a defect is found. Allows the TRCC to adopt rules under which a low income homeowner may qualify for legal assistance to file action against a builder for the non-repair of defects.

SB 627 (John Carona, R-Dallas) Relating to a rebuttable presumption regarding liability of an in-home service company or residential delivery company for negligent hiring. Amends Sec. 145.003 of the Civil Practices and Remedies Code to provide a rebuttable presumption to in-home service companies and residential delivery companies that they are not negligent in obtaining criminal history background checks as currently required, if an officer or employee is required by law to be licensed/registered and the licensing process requires the overseeing agency to obtain the officer's or employee's criminal history. In-home service company is defined as a person who employs a person to enter another's residence and, for a fee, repair an appliance, heating/air-conditioning, plumbing, or electrical systems. Residential delivery company is a person who employs a person to, for a fee, deliver an item to another's residence and enter the residence to place, assemble, or install the item.

To look up any bill, visit the [Texas Legislature Online](#).

Important Upcoming Hearings

****House Business and Industry:** Monday, March 23 at 2:00 p.m. or upon adjournment in room E2.026. **HB 2295 (Ruth McClendon, D-San Antonio) Relating to the continuation and function of the Texas Residential Construction Commission.**

House Business and Industry Subcommittee on Worker's Compensation and HOA: Monday, March 23 upon adjournment of the Business and Industry Committee in room E2.026. TAB is tracking: **HB 32 (David Leibowitz, D-San Antonio) Relating to prohibiting discrimination against certain employees who sustain an injury in the course and scope of employment.**

HB 33 (David Leibowitz, D- San Antonio) Relating to certain requirements for employers not covered by worker's compensation insurance.

House Border and Intergovernmental Affairs: Monday, March 23 at 2:00 p.m. or upon adjournment in room E1.010. TAB is tracking: **HB 2275 (Richard Raymond, D- Laredo) Relating to creating a task force to develop uniform standards for subdivisions in the unincorporated areas of counties near the international border and in economically distressed counties.**

HB 3313 (Veronica Gonzales, McAllen) Relating to the authority of a county to obtain a lien against property of a landowner to secure payment of a fee for the installation, operation, and maintenance of street lights.

House County Affairs: Monday, March 23 at 2:00 or upon adjournment in room E2.016. TAB is tracking:

HB 1115 (Armando Walle, D-Houston) Relating to the authority of certain counties to enact noise regulations.

HB 2301 (Marisa Marquez, D-El Paso) Relating to the creation of a county ethics commission in certain counties.

HB 2833 (Marissa Marquez, D- El Paso) Relating to authorizing certain counties and municipalities to regulate land development; providing a penalty.

House Business and Industry Subcommittee on TRCC, Landlord and Tenant Issues: Tuesday, March 24 at 10:00 a.m. or upon adjournment in room E2.030. TAB is tracking: **HB 570 (Ruth Jones McClendon, D-San Antonio) Relating to requiring the disclosure of certain information to purchasers and renters of residential property.**
HB 899 (Harold Dutton, D-Houston) Relating to the foreclosure of certain liens on real property.

HB 1513 (Wayne Smith, R –Baytown)/SB 1137 (Mike Jackson, R-La Porte) Relating to the amount of the annual water quality fee imposed on holders of wastewater discharge permits and on users of water.

HB 1760 (Senfronia Thompson, D-Houston) *Relating to the filing of an action in connection with foreclosure of a lien on residential real property.*

HB 2257 (Helen Giddings, D-De Soto) *Relating to mandatory sales price disclosure in certain real property.*

HB 2392 (Kirk England, D-Grand Prairie) *Relating to the persons entitled to redeem property after the foreclosure of a property owners' association's assessment lien.*

HB 2461 (Joe Deshotel, D-Beaumont) *Relating to publishing certain images of private property on the Internet.*

HB 2595 (Senfronia Thompson, D-Houston) *Relating to liens on and foreclosure sales of real property.*

HB 2601 (Senfronia Thompson, D-Houston) *Relating to notice of a foreclosure sale of real property.*

House Defense and Veteran's Affairs: Wednesday, March 25 at 8:00 a.m. in room E2.026. TAB is tracking: **HB 143 (Ruth McClendon, D-San Antonio)** *Relating to granting certain counties regulatory authority around military facilities in certain circumstances.*

HB 1013 (Frank Corte, Jr., R-San Antonio) *Relating to the authority of a county to regulate the installation and use of lighting in certain areas.*

HB 2056 (Pete Gallego, D-Alpine) *Relating to granting certain local governments general zoning authority around certain military facilities.*

HB 2919 (Susan King, R-Abilene) *Relating to the regulation of land use to ensure compatible development with military facilities.*

House Urban Affairs: Thursday, March 26 at 10:30 a.m. or upon adjournment in room E2.028. TAB is tracking:

HB 459 (David Leibowitz, D-San Antonio) *Relating to the county abatement of certain unsafe buildings that are a public nuisance.*

HB 554 (Jose Menendez, D-San Antonio) *Relating to the adoption and amendment of model building codes by municipalities.*

HB 722 (Donna Howard, D-Austin) *Relating to the authority of certain municipalities to regulate the location of facilities to supply drinking water.*

HB 1429 (Dwayne Bohac, R-Houston) *Relating to notification requirements for applicants for low income housing tax credits.*

HB 3065 (Dwayne Bohac, R-Houston) *Relating to municipal registration of vacant buildings.*

HB 3160 (Yvonne Davis, D-Dallas) *Relating to the urban land bank demonstration program in certain municipalities.*

House Licensing and Administrative Procedures: Wednesday, March 25 at 8:00 a.m. in room E2.016. TAB is tracking: **HB 2091 (Drew Darby, R- San Angelo)** *Relating to a license exemption for persons performing certain electrical work in unincorporated areas of this state.*

HB 2310 (Edmund Kuempel, R-Seguin) *Relating to the powers and duties of the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, including*

the power to issue emergency orders and temporary and emergency licenses.

HB 2763 (Edmund Kuempel, R-Seguin) *Relating to the regulation of industrialized housing and buildings.*

Senate Intergovernmental Relations: Wednesday, March 25 at 9:30 a.m. in room E1.028. TAB is tracking:

SB 874 (Eliot Shapleigh, D-El Paso) *Relating to the exemption of certain counties from the drainage charge imposed by a municipal drainage utility system.*

SB 1398 (Royce West, D-Dallas) *Relating to the requirement by a municipality of a license of permit to occupy or lease a residence.*

To review committee schedules and to further research a bill, visit the [Texas Legislature Online](#).

[Top](#)

The 2009 Star Awards Call for Entries is Open!

The Calls for Entries are now available for download at www.TexasBuilders.org. This year, we have separate Calls for Entries for the following: Custom Builder, Volume Builder, Remodeler, Developer, Green Building and Individual Achievement.

The Star Awards recognizes excellence in all areas of the home building industry. Both members of the Texas Association of Builders (TAB) and non-members may enter to win one of these prestigious awards that recognize the industry's best from the Southwest region of the United States: Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico and Oklahoma.

All home building, remodeling and promotional projects completed between January 1, 2008 and July 13, 2009 may be entered for consideration. If you meet our Early Bird submission deadline of 5 p.m., June 22, 2009, the entry fees are \$100 per entry for members, and \$200 per entry for non-members. The final deadline to receive entries is 5 p.m., Monday, July 13, 2009. The TAB member fee is \$125 per entry; the non-member fee is \$225 per entry.

The entries will be judged by a distinguished panel of industry experts. Finalists will be notified in September, and the 2009 Star Awards Gala will be held on Friday, October 30, at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine, Texas. The awards ceremony is held in conjunction with the annual Sunbelt Builders Show™ and Education Conference (www.SunbeltBuildersShow.com).

If you have questions or need additional information after you have downloaded the entries from www.TexasBuilders.org, please call TAB

at (800) 252-3625.

[Top](#)

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We need you to make a difference!

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Gold Key - \$1,000 Silver Star - \$500 Lone Star - \$250

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