



89th Legislature (2025) Tips for Navigating the Legislative Session

DURING LEGISLATION

KNOW THE PROCESS

- It's important to understand the legislative process and how bills flow through the legislature from introduction to final passage. (See *attached process map for more information.*)

STAY INFORMED

- During legislative season it's vitally important to stay informed of ongoing legislative updates:
 - Texas Municipal League (TML) provides a weekly "Legislative Update" that is highly informative to Texas cities that is sent via email and posted on the TML website every Friday year-round to highlight important city-related bills as they move through the legislative process. TML additionally hosts a series of webinars during the legislative session to brief members on key bills impacting Texas cities.
 - Communicate with other cities and their officials to determine mutual interests, oppositions, and any potential coordination needed in response to bills that will have an impact on cities throughout the state.

DEDICATED STAFF

- Assign staff to the specific task of reviewing legislative updates and alerts and the coordination of timely responses from your city.
 - This person may be the Building Official, City Manager, City Attorney, or other designated person who is knowledgeable of the potential impact's legislation may have on your city.
 - It is beneficial to have additional staff who are knowledgeable of your processes and are capable of analyzing how bills may affect those processes in order to inform city management, etc. on what impacts the proposed bill may have upon passage.

BE PREPARED TO ACT QUICKLY

- New bills or significant amendments to proposed bills are often introduced "on the floor" are require immediate response from your city. Be prepared to quickly take action to provide your city's response to legislators.

WRITE TO YOUR LEGISLATORS

- Writing to legislators can be an effective tool in educating on your city's perspective and can potentially influence their vote on an issue of concern. Written testimony's can be submitted through an electronic portal provided by the committee hearing the bill. A few tips to consider:
 - Always use the city's letterhead when communicating the city's position on a bill.
 - Be courteous, informative, and indicate which bill you're addressing by its bill number.
 - Express your support/opposition to the bill, and provide concrete, credible information on the impact the proposed legislation would have on your city.
 - Be as concise as possible; keeping the letter to one page and restating your request at the end of the letter.
 - Ensure the correct salutation is used; i.e. Senator/Representative/Chairman/Chairwoman, etc, and be sure to thank your legislator if they vote they way that's being asked.

POST LEGISLATION

CITY COORDINATION

- Post legislation is a good time to contact other city officials to gather information and brainstorm ideas on how different cities are tackling an impactful bill. Working with other cities to discuss bill's that have passed can be beneficial when determining the best course of action for your city to ensure it remains in compliance with state law.

PASSED/FINAL BILLS

- Work with other officials in your city to understand the scope of the bill's impact and what changes, if any, may be needed to facilitate your city's compliance with the bill after its passage:
 - Establish what's being impacted, such as a process, or fee, etc.
 - Determine what will be required to comply with bill; is a change to city regulation or ordinance necessary, or can compliance be obtained through a simple process change?
 - Determine the resources that will be required to initiate any changes to fees, processes, etc. caused by the bill's passage.
- For state code adoptions, such as the recent ISPSC adoption in 2019, it's important to remember that an adopting ordinance may be needed in order to enforce the code within your jurisdiction:
 - Be ready to engage appropriate city officials to prepare an update to city ordinance or regulation to adopt the code for enforcement within your jurisdiction and establish whether local amendments to the code may be necessary for enforcement.
 - Ensure that resources are available for the enforcement of the code. Jurisdictions with limited resources that may be incapable of enforcement of a new state adopted code should engage with their city management on how to proceed.
 - TML has advised its member cities lacking the resources to enforce building codes that: (1) no action is required on their part; or (2) they may adopt the codes but may usually delete provisions that require the city to issue a permit or perform an inspection. This arrangement appears to comply with the requirements of state law and places the burden of compliance on the builder. Additionally, TML offers member cities assistance and resources that can be found on their website.

HELPFUL LINKS

[Texas Municipal League \(TML\)](#)

[Legislative Updates](#)

[Legislative Resources](#)

[TML City Resources](#)

[Texas Legislature](#)

THE TEXAS LEGISLATIVE PROCESS FOR HOUSE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

This diagram displays the sequential flow of a bill from the time it is introduced in the house of representatives to final passage and transmittal to the governor.



