



Dan Patrick

Lieutenant Governor of Texas
President of the Senate

Interim Charges

Finance

- **Property Tax Process:** Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities. **(Charge to a select subcommittee on Property Tax Reform and Relief)**
- **Reduce Tax Burden:** Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners. **(Charge to a select subcommittee on Property Tax Reform and Relief)**
- **Franchise Tax:** Study the benefits, including the dynamic effects, of continuing to phase out the franchise tax. Consider alternate approaches to funding the Property Tax Relief Fund.
- **Spending Limit:** Examine options and make recommendations for strengthening restriction on appropriations established in Article VIII Section 22 of the state constitution, including related procedures defined in statute. Consider options for ensuring available revenues above spending limit are reserved for tax relief.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Review the budgeting format of other states, such as whether they use strategy-based budgeting, program-based budgeting, or some other approach and discuss the level of transparency with each approach. Review and make recommendations to reduce state debt liabilities, including state pension liability. Consider how to incentivize state agencies, boards, and commissions to identify and realize savings to taxpayers.
- **Coordinating Behavioral Health Services and Expenditures:** Monitor the state's progress in coordinating behavioral health services and expenditures across state government, pursuant to Article IX Sec. 10.04. Identify ways state agencies that provide mental health services are collaborating and taking steps to eliminate redundancy, create efficiency, utilize best practices, ensure optimal service delivery, and demonstrate expenditures are coordinated and in furtherance of a behavioral health statewide strategic plan. Identify barriers that prevent the coordination of behavioral health services. Make recommendations to maximize use of state funding for mental health.
- **Sales Tax Holiday:** Review the state's current sales tax holiday structure and determine its economic benefit to the state. Evaluate and consider the merits of any

potential expansion of the tax holiday either in the application of the sales tax exemption or the timing of the holiday.

- **Monitoring Charge:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Finance Committee during the 84th Legislature, Regular Session and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following: **1)** Tax relief provided to property owners; **2)** The gradual phase out of the franchise tax; **3)** Support for and the enhancement of graduate medical education; **4)** Efforts of the Department of Information Resources (DIR) to modernize the technology of state agencies; **5)** The implementation of required changes to state agency contracting, purchasing, and accounting procedures; and **6)** Monitor the implementation of Health and Human Services Commission Rider 50.

Business and Commerce

- **Occupational Licensing:** Review all occupations licensed under Texas law to determine the extent to which continued state regulation and licensure is required to protect public health and safety. Examine methods to ensure greater legislative oversight of new regulations, scope, and necessity of certain licenses and make recommendations for state licenses that should be repealed or transitioned to private-sector enforcement.
- **Hail Storm:** Monitor the number of lawsuits related to property claims filed as a result of multiple hail storms and weather related events across Texas. Examine negative consumer trends that may result in market disruption such as higher premiums and deductibles, less coverage, non-renewals, and inability to secure coverage due to insurance carrier withdrawal from the state and make recommendations on legislative action needed.
- **Texas Prompt Pay Law:** Study the impact of the penalty calculations under the current prompt payment of health care claim laws and regulations, including comparing penalties in other states and late payment penalties in Texas for other lines of insurance. Evaluate whether unregulated billed charges is the appropriate basis for determining penalty amounts and make recommendations for statutory changes, if needed.
- **Cyber-security/Storage:** Examine cyber-security efforts undertaken by state entities and study the legal, policy, and privacy implications of the trend toward storage of personal, private, and business confidential information in network attached storage, cloud storage, and other developing data storage options rather than on local devices. Make recommendations on how to best protect Texans' financial and personal information.
- **Elder Financial Abuse:** Study elder financial abuse and determine what steps the State of Texas should take to help protect older Texans from financial exploitation.

- **Property Tax Liens:** Examine and make recommendations for necessary changes regarding the collection process of delinquent ad valorem property taxes, including an inquiry into the role that tax lien transfers play in forestalling foreclosure.
- **Monitoring Charge:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Business and Commerce during the 84th Legislature, Regular Session and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following: **1)** State agency participation in the federal electronic verification of employment authorization program; **2)** Implementation of legislation intended to further protect consumers from the balance billing process; **3)** Changes made to the operation of the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association; **4)** The regulation of public insurance adjusters; and **5)** The current consent policy for state disclosure of personal data.