Research
SPOTLIGHT
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# LEGISLATIVE LEXICON

**The Texas Legislature, like most organizations, has a specialized vocabulary and that vocabulary may prove to be confusing to those unfamiliar with the legislative process. The ability to understand and clearly communicate within the halls of the Capitol, its chambers, and its committee rooms can be crucial in determining a participant's success in the legislative realm. The Senate Research Center offers this *Legislative Lexicon* to provide users with clear definitions of many of the words, terms, and phrases used in the legislature.**

**act** — Once legislation (a bill) is approved by both houses of the legislature and the governor, it takes effect as an act of the legislature. It is a permanent measure, having the force of law until repealed.

**action** — A step that a bill undergoes as it moves through the legislative process.

**actuarial impact statement** — A document prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that states the actuarial impact of any bill or joint resolution that proposes to change benefits or participation in benefits of a public retirement system.

**adjournment** — The termination of a meeting or session. Adjournment occurs at the close of each legislative day, with the day and hour of the next meeting set before adjournment.

**adjournment *sine die*** — See *sine die*.

**adoption** — Approval or acceptance of a resolution or of an amendment to a bill.

**advise and consent** — Process by which the senate gives approval to (confirms) the appointments made by the governor to state offices, boards, and commissions. The house of representatives plays no role in the confirmation of gubernatorial appointments.

**Affordable Care Act (ACA)** — A federal statute enacted by Congress in 2010 with the stated goals of decreasing the number of uninsured Americans, reducing the overall cost of health care, improving health care outcomes, and streamlining the delivery of health care.

**agency** — A statutorily or constitutionally established entity which is authorized to act on behalf of and as an agent of the state and which is usually funded by the General Appropriations Act.

**agency goals** — The general ends toward which an agency directs its efforts. A goal addresses issues by stating policy intention. Goals are both qualitative and quantifiable, but specific goals are not quantified.

**agency mission** — The reason for an agency's existence. An agency mission succinctly identifies what the agency does, why it does it, and for whom it does it.

**agenda, senate** — An official daily publication prepared during a legislative session that contains: (1) the intent calendar; (2) a list of senate bills returned from the house of representatives with amendments; (3) the status of bills in conference committee; (4) the local and uncontested calendar; (5) gubernatorial appointments reported favorably from the Senate Committee on Nominations; (6) committee hearings scheduled, with a list of measures to be considered by the committees; (7) the regular order of business, listing bills that have been reported favorably from committee; (8) senate floor action from the previous day; and (9) senate committee action from the previous day.

**amendment** — Any alteration made or proposed to be made to a bill or section thereof, by adding, deleting, substituting, or omitting.

**American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)** — A federal statute enacted by Congress in 2009 with three stated goals: create new jobs and save existing ones; spur economic activity and invest in long-term growth; and foster accountability and transparency in government spending.

**apportionment** — The proportionate distribution of elected representatives.

**appropriated** — Refers to the dollars or associated full-time equivalent positions authorized for specific fiscal years, and to the provisions for spending authority.

**appropriated receipts** — Fees and other revenue usually collected for services performed by a state agency and reappropriated to the agency to help recover the agency's costs for performing the services.

**appropriations bill** — A bill that allocates funds for various departments of the government. (*See also* General Appropriations Act.)

**Appropriations, House Committe on** — The house committee with jurisdiction over all appropriations, allocations, and diversions of money from the state treasury.

**archives** — *See* Library and Archives Commission, Texas State.

**article** — A major division of a bill or statute. Used in the general appropriations bill to group agencies with similar functions.

**as filed** — The original version of a bill, as filed in the originating chamber.

**assessment of agency performance** — Semi-annual and annual evaluations derived from analysis and interpretation of data submitted by agencies and institutions. Assessments are intended to aid in monitoring the extent to which specific performance objectives are being achieved and in denoting significant trends, patterns, and emerging conditions.

**author** — The legislator who carries a bill in the chamber in which the bill originates is designated as the author; if the bill passes that chamber and goes to the other chamber, it is carried in the second chamber by a sponsor.

**Available School Fund** — A constitutionally created fund consisting of the distributions made to it from the total return on all investment assets of the Permanent School Fund, the taxes authorized by the Texas Constitution or general law to be part of the Available School Fund (ASF), and appropriations made to the ASF by the legislature. A portion of the ASF is transferred to the State Instructional Materials Fund to provide instructional materials for children attending public schools and the balance of the ASF is allocated to school districts. (*See also* Permanent School Fund.)

**base of reference budget** — A budgetary forecast sometimes produced by the Legislative Budget Board that projects the budgetary needs of Texas state government for succeeding fiscal years based on current law.

**base period** — The fiscal year, biennium, or other period that is the basis for budget or performance projections.

**biannual** — Occurring twice a year. (Sometimes confused with biennial.)

**bicameral** — A legislature consisting of two houses, such as a house of representatives and a senate. In the United States, Nebraska is the only state without a bicameral legislature. (*See also* unicameral.)

**biennial** — Occurring once every two years; the Texas Legislature has a biennial regular session.

**biennial revenue estimate (BRE)** — Article III, Section 49a, of the Texas Constitution requires the comptroller of public accounts to submit to the governor and the legislature upon its convening a statement showing the financial condition of the state treasury at the close of the 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.

**biennium** — A two-year period; in Texas the state biennium runs from September 1 of an odd-numbered year until August 31 of the next odd-numbered year.

**bill** — A document set forth by a legislator that proposes to add to, delete, or change existing law or create entirely new law. Any bill may originate in either house of the legislature, with the exception of revenue (i.e., tax) bills, which must originate in the house of representatives.

**bill analysis** — A document prepared by the Senate Research Center that accompanies each bill filed in the senate and any house bill considered in the senate, presenting in nonlegal language the bill's background, purpose, and rulemaking authority and a synopsis of the legislation.

**bill book** — A binder that holds copies of senate committee reports placed on the senate chamber desk of each senator.

**bill number** — A unique number assigned to each bill filed with the secretary of the senate or the chief clerk of the house. Bills are numbered chronologically and a bill retains its number throughout the legislative process. For example, the 12th bill filed in the senate would be numbered as S.B. 12 and retain that designation when moving through the house of representatives.

**bipartisan** — A term used to refer to an effort endorsed by both major political parties or a group composed of members of both major political parties. (*See also* nonpartisan.)

**bracketing** — (1) Language in a bill that is being deleted from existing law is bracketed and stricken through. (2) Language in a bill that restricts the applicability of the legislation to one entity or unit of government.

**briefing document** — A document occasionally produced prior to the beginning of a legislative session that provides legislators with an overview of functional areas and the major agencies within each function. Included are current funding and performance data, the impact of major legislative changes, significant appropriations request items, interstate comparisons, and selected issues by function.

**budget document (Legislative Budget Estimates)** — A biennial document prepared by Legislative Budget Board (LBB) staff that contains funding and performance data for previous years, budgeted data for the current year, agency-requested data for the next biennium, and LBB appropriation recommendations for state agencies and institutions. The document is introduced into the legislature at the start of each regular session.

**budget execution** — Authority granted to the governor and the Legislative Budget Board to make transfers of appropriations between agencies and items within the adopted budget.

**budgeted** — Refers to the planned level of expenditures, performance, or number of positions for a particular fiscal year.

**calendar** — A printed list of proposed legislation that may be considered by the full house of representatives or senate. (*See also* daily house calendar.)

**calendar clerk** — A non-legislator officer elected by the members of the senate. All senate bills and resolutions are filed with the calendar clerk, who is the custodian of all legislative documents awaiting action in the senate.

**Calendar Committee** — *See* Committee on Calendars.

**calendar day** — A day of the year on which the legislature is in session. (*See also* legislative day.)

**call of the senate; call of the house** — A procedure 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 meeting of the legislature other than at the constitutionally mandated time; called by the governor. During a called session, which may last a maximum of 30 days, the legislature may consider only those subjects designated by the governor.

**capital budget** — That portion of an agency's appropriation that is restricted to expenditures for designated capital construction projects or capital acquisitions.

**capital improvements** — Building or infrastructure projects that will be owned by the state and built with direct appropriations or with the proceeds of state-issued bonds.

**caption** — A statement that gives the legislature and public reasonable notice of the subject of a bill or resolution. On a bill it is the first sentence of text.

**caucus** — A closed meeting of members within a legislative body.

**certification estimate** — A document certifying that the amount appropriated in the General Appropriations Act is less than or equal to the amount estimated to be available. This document is produced by the comptroller of public accounts to help fulfill the requirement in the Texas Constitution that the state not spend more money than it has.

**chair** — A legislator appointed to preside over a legislative committee. The lieutenant governor appoints the chairs of senate committees; the speaker of the house appoints the chairs of house committees.

**chamber** — (1) An official hall for the meeting of a legislative body. (2) A legislative body. There are two chambers in the Texas Legislature: the senate and the house of representatives.

**chief clerk** — The chief clerical officer of the house of representatives. Custodian of all bills and resolutions in the house and responsible for keeping a complete record of their introduction and all subsequent actions taken on them.

**classification plan** — Schedule of position titles, job descriptions, and pay levels that all state agencies, with the exception of higher education and legislative agencies, must use in establishing and filling non-exempt positions.

**classified positions** — Those positions identified in the General Provisions of the General Appropriations Act that are established in accordance with the State Classification Act of 1961.

**coauthor** — A legislator authorized by the primary author to join in the authorship of a bill or resolution. A coauthor must be a member of the chamber in which the bill or resolution was filed.

**code** — A compilation of laws and their revisions according to subject matter, arranged by title, chapter, and section; the official publication of the statutes.

**committee** — A body of members appointed by the presiding officer (lieutenant governor or speaker) to consider, take testimony on, and make recommendations for the disposal of bills and resolutions. (*See also* conference committee *and* interim committee.)

**committee charges** — Topics or items which the lieutenant governor or speaker assigns to a legislative committee for study and recommendations.

**committee clerk** — A legislative employee appointed to handle parliamentary and administrative functions of a legislative committee.

**committee coordinator, house** — A legislative employee responsible for scheduling and posting committee hearings and 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.

**committee of the whole** — Either house of the legislature sitting in its entirety as a committee.

**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. The lieutenant governor has sole discretion to determine which bills are considered by the senate.

**committee report** — Official release of a bill or resolution with a specific recommendation that the measure pass, pass as amended, pass as substituted, or not pass. In addition to the recommendation, the report contains a copy of the bill; a bill analysis; a fiscal note; a witness list; impact statements, as appropriate; and a record of the vote by which the bill was passed from the committee.

**committee substitute** — A bill reported by a committee in lieu of another bill that was originally referred to the committee for consideration.

**companion bill** — A bill filed in one chamber that is identical to a bill filed in the other chamber. Companion bills are used to expedite passage of legislation as they allow simultaneous committee consideration; a companion bill that has passed one house can then be substituted for the companion bill in the second chamber.

**comptroller of public accounts** — The comptroller of public accounts, or comptroller, is the chief fiscal officer of the state, elected in a statewide election to a four-year term. The comptroller provides the legislature with revenue estimates and certifies that the budget adopted by the legislature will balance.

**concurrence** — Agreement by the originating chamber with changes made to a bill or resolution by the other chamber.

**concurrent resolution** — A measure that requires passage by both legislative chambers and is used to convey legislative sentiment or to offer a commendation, memorial, welcome, or request for action by another governmental body.

**conference committee** — A committee composed of members from both legislative houses specifically appointed to reconcile the differences between the house and senate versions of a bill or bills.

**conference committee report** — A report to both houses of the legislature by the members of a conference committee appointed to resolve the differences between the house and senate versions of a bill. Each chamber then votes to accept or reject the conference committee report without further amendment.

**confirmation** — Senate approval of gubernatorial appointments to state agencies, commissions, and boards.

**congratulatory and memorial calendar** — A list of congratulatory and memorial resolutions scheduled by the House Committee on Rules and Resolutions for consideration by the house of representatives. The calendar is required to be printed and distributed to representatives 24 hours before the house convenes.

**consent calendar** — *See* local and uncontested calendar *and* local, consent, and resolutions calendar.

**constituent** — A citizen residing in the district of an elected official.

**constitutional amendment** — A change to the state constitution. A constitutional amendment is proposed in a joint resolution and requires a favorable vote from two-thirds of the voting members of each chamber and a majority vote of the voters in a constitutional election to be adopted. The governor may not veto a proposed constitutional amendment.

**constitutional limit** — Any of three constitutional provisions that restrict amounts which the legislature may appropriate for expenditure. Article III, Section 49a, of the Texas Constitution limits appropriations to those revenue amounts estimated by the comptroller to be available for the appropriations period. Article VIII, Section 22, limits the rate of growth of appropriations from non-dedicated state taxes. Article III, Section 51-a, limits the state's expenditures to needy disabled children and their caretakers, elderly people, and people with visual impairments.

**contingency appropriations** — Appropriations contingent upon passage of legislation or upon certain conditions being met. For example: Contingent upon its moving from its current location, the Department of Health is appropriated an additional $400,000 for relocation expenses.

**contingency clause** — A provision in a bill that makes the validity of the legislation contingent upon passage of accompanying legislation.

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

**cosponsor** — A legislator who joins the primary sponsor to guide a bill or resolution through the opposite chamber after it has passed the originating chamber. A cosponsor must be a member of the opposite chamber from the one in which the measure originated.

**council document number** — The unique number assigned to each bill or resolution prepared by the Texas Legislative Council; it appears in the lower left-hand corner of the page.

**criminal justice policy impact statement** — A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that estimates the policy impact of a bill

or joint resolution that authorizes or requires a change in the sanctions applicable to felony or certain misdemeanor crimes.

**current services** — An estimate of the anticipated costs and funding necessary to continue programs at their present service levels without changes of policy or legal requirements.

**Daily Floor Report** — A collection of bill analyses for bills scheduled on the house daily calendar for floor debate on a particular legislative day, prepared by the House Research Organization, consisting of a digest of each bill's provisions, background, arguments for and against, 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; it must be printed and distributed to the representatives 36 hours before the house convenes in a regular session and 24 hours before the house convenes during a special session.

**dean** — An informal term used to refer to the senator with the longest continuous service. The current dean of the senate is John Whitmire of Houston (in office since 1983; dean since 2003).

**declared an emergency** — A designation by the governor that allows legislation on the subject so declared to be considered within the first 30 days of a regular legislative session or to be filed after the 60th day of the regular session.

**dedicated funds** — Funds in the General Revenue Fund that hold revenue dedicated for a particular purpose. Funds can be dedicated either constitutionally or statutorily.

**died in committee** — The defeat of a bill by not returning it from the committee to which it was referred for consideration by the full house or senate.

**discretionary revenue** — Revenue not dedicated for specific purposes. Revenue falling into this category is generally deposited to the General Revenue Fund.

**district** — The geographic region represented by a member of the legislature. Each district contains a substantially equal population.

**division of a question** — When the main question is composed of more than one distinct proposition, it may be divided so as to enable legislators to vote on each proposition separately. Each proposition into which it is proposed to separate the question must be distinct and capable of standing by itself as a substantive proposition, so that either can be adopted alone without the other or others and still be an intelligible expression of the opinion of the chamber.

**doorkeeper** — A non-legislator 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. (*See also* companion bill.)

**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 and the extent to which a proposal, if enacted, will affect employment in the state, affect the construction, modification, alteration, or utilization of any asset in the state, result in changes in costs of goods and services in the state, result in changes in revenue and expenditures of state and local governments, or produce other economic impacts within the state.

**Economic Stabilization Fund** — A special fund within the state treasury to which certain excess oil

and gas production taxes are transferred. Money in the fund may be used by the comptroller to prevent or eliminate a temporary cash deficiency in general revenue, and may be appropriated by the legislature in certain circumstances. Commonly known as the "Rainy Day Fund."

**effective date** — A law generally becomes effective, or binding, either upon a date specified in the legislation itself or, in the absence of a specified date, a fixed number of days after the final adjournment of the session during which it was enacted or after signature by the governor.

**efficiency** — A criterion used to measure a program's inputs relative to its outputs. An efficient program is one which uses the least possible resources while achieving its intended outcomes.

**efficiency measure** — One of four types of performance measures used in strategic planning. An efficiency measure gauges resource cost in dollars, employee time, or equipment used per unit of product or service output. An efficiency measure relates agency efforts to agency outputs.

**election** — The method of choosing government officials through a vote of the citizens.

**elements of cost** — Categories of appropriation and expenditure used for certain institutions of higher education.

**emergency clause** — A provision in legislation that allows a suspension of certain constitutional rules regarding consideration of the bill or that allows the bill to take immediate effect. As a result of constitutional revisions made in the 1990s, emergency clauses are no longer used in Texas.

**emergency order** — *See* declared an emergency.

**enabling legislation** — Legislation that gives appropriate officials the authority to implement or enforce a law.

**enact** — To pass a bill into law.

**enacting clause** — A section of a bill required by the Texas Constitution to precede the body of each bill, reading as follows: "Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:".

**engrossed** — A bill or resolution that has passed the chamber in which it originated is deemed to have been engrossed.

**engrossing and enrolling clerk (senate)** — A non-legislator officer elected by the members of the senate to oversee the Engrossing and Enrolling (E&E) Department. E&E 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.

**enrolled** — A bill or resolution that has passed both houses of the legislature is deemed to have been enrolled.

**equalized education funding impact statement** — A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that estimates the funding impact of a bill or joint resolution that authorizes or requires a change in the public school finance system.

**estimated** — In an agency's Legislative Appropriations Request, estimated refers to the estimated expenditures or number of full-time equivalent positions for the first fiscal year in the current biennium. Because these numbers are developed later in the fiscal year, they are considered to be more accurate than are "budgeted" numbers.

**estimated to be** — Used in conjunction with appropriations made in the General Appropriations Act, the spending limitation established by the appropriation amount is only an estimate and actual expenditures may exceed that amount.

**ethics** — The rules and standards governing the conduct of public officials.

**Ethics Commission** — *See* Texas Ethics Commission.

**executive order** — A gubernatorial directive that carries the force of law.

**executive session** — A session excluding from the chamber or committee room all persons other than members and essential personnel.

**exempt position** — A position that is exempted from the position classification plan. Generally listed in the General Appropriations Act, exempt positions are designated by the governor, under authority of the State Classification Act of 1961. Article IX of the General Appropriations Act establishes conditions for exempt positions. (*See also* schedule of exempt positions)

***ex officio*** — A member of a governmental body who holds his or her position as a result of holding another government position.

**expended** — Refers to the actual dollars or positions utilized by an agency or institution during a completed fiscal year and may refer to the total for an agency, a goal or strategy, an object of expense, or an amount from a particular method of finance.

**explanatory/input measures** — One of four types of performance measures used in strategic planning. An explanatory/input measure provides information to help users assess the significance of performance reported in other types of measures. An agency may have limited control or no control over factors addressed by explanatory/input measures, including environmental or demographic characteristics related to agency target populations. However, explanatory/input measures may also focus on variables over which an agency has significant control, such as staffing patterns for specific functions.

**filed** — The stage in a bill's legislative process when it is given a bill number and introduced in the legislature. House bills are filed with the chief clerk of the house; senate bills are filed with the secretary of the senate. (*See also* as filed.)

**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 the original version of a bill may be filed; set in the legislative rules as the 60th calendar day of a regular session, with exceptions.

**Finance, Senate Committee on** — The senate committee with jurisdiction over appropriations, allocations, and diversions of money from the state treasury and measures to raise revenue for the use of the government. These legislative functions are divided in the house of representatives between the House Committee on Appropriations and the House Committee on Ways and Means.

**first reading** — The first presentation of a bill for consideration, at which time it is referred to a committee. (*See also* second reading *and* third reading.)

**fiscal** — Of or relating to government expenditures, revenues, and debt.

**fiscal note** — A document prepared by the Legislative Budget Board staff that estimates the fiscal implication and probable revenue gain or loss from a bill or joint resolution for each year of the first five years of its implementation and states whether there will be an additional cost involved thereafter. A fiscal note is required to be attached to each bill or joint resolution considered by the legislature.

***Fiscal Size-up*** — A biennial document prepared by the Legislative Budget Board staff that describes state agency operations and summarizes the appropriations made during the preceding legislative session.

**fiscal year (FY)** — A 12-month period at the end of which accounts are reconciled. In Texas, the fiscal year runs from September 1 of one year until August 31 of the next year.

**floor** — That portion of the legislative chamber reserved for members and officers of the legislative chamber and their guests granted privileged access.

**floor action** — Action taken by the full house or full senate on a bill or resolution reported by a committee. Floor action may include debate, amendment, and a vote or votes on final passage (adoption).

**formal meeting** — A meeting of a house committee or subcommittee during which formal action may be taken on any measure before the

committee or subcommittee. Public testimony may not be heard during a formal meeting.

**Foundation School Fund** — A fund administered by the Texas Education Agency to pay for teacher salaries, administration, and educational resource expenses.

**full-time equivalents (FTEs)** — Units of measure that represent the monthly average number of state personnel working 40 hours a week.

**function** — A grouping of state agencies that provide related services; a function forms the basis of articles in the General Appropriations Act, e.g., General Government, Health and Human Services, or Education.

**functional goals** — The general ends toward which the state directs its efforts. Functional goals address the primary issues facing the state within broad groupings of interrelated state concerns. Functional goals are founded on the statewide vision and may involve coordination among several agencies with similar functions.

**fund** — A constitutionally or statutorily authorized repository of revenue that is used for financing appropriations and consists of either: (1) an independent fiscal entity with a self-balancing set of accounts such as the State Highway Fund; or (2) a category of revenues of receipts such as federal funds.

**gallery** — The balcony of the legislative chamber from which visitors may view the proceedings of the legislature.

**General Accounting Standards Board (GASB)** — An independent organization established in 1984 as a component of the Financial Accounting Foundation to establish and improve standards of accounting and financial reporting for state and local governments in the United States.

As an example, GASB recently established Rules 43 and 45, which require that all pension sponsors report the annual cost of "other post-employment benefits" (OPEBs) and that all pension funds report the sponsors' required contribution and funding progress.

A majority of public pension systems have been funding their OPEBs, which consist primarily of healthcare benefits, on a pay-as-you-go basis and were not calculating the total cost of these obligations over time, resulting in an eventual funding shortfall for their healthcare benefits. Under GASB Rules 43 and 45, public pension systems and plan sponsors must now calculate and disclose the future liability (or total cost) of their healthcare benefits so that these costs are known.

**General Appropriations Act** — The law that appropriates biennial funding to state agencies for specific fiscal years and sets provisions for spending authority.

**general appropriations bill** — The appropriations legislation as it moves through the legislative process and before it is approved and signed into law by the governor.

**General Revenue (GR) Fund** — The fund (No. 001) that receives state tax revenues and fees considered as available for general spending purposes and certified as such by the comptroller of public accounts.

**general revenue–consolidated** — Accounts that have lost their dedication of revenue and whose unexpended balances can be lapsed to the General Revenue Fund. These accounts have been merged with the General Revenue Fund.

**general revenue–dedicated** — Accounts that can be counted as general revenue but must be used for the purposes identified in general law to the extent such funds are appropriated in the General Appropriations Act.

**general revenue related funds** — The General Revenue Fund, the Available School Fund, the Foundation School Fund, and the State Instructional Materials Fund. Also referred to as "funds affecting certification."

**germane** — The technical term for "relevant." Amendments are said to be germane or non-

germane to a bill.

**gerrymander** — To divide a political subdivision into election districts in such a manner as to give an unnatural advantage to a person, political party, or ethnic group over its opponents. The word was coined in the early 19th century by combining the name of Elbridge Gerry, a Massachusetts practitioner of the art, with the salamander one of his districts was said to resemble.

**governor** — The chief executive of the state; elected statewide to a four-year term with no limits on the number of terms.

**higher education impact statement** — A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board, after consultation with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, that estimates the impact of a bill or joint resolution that authorizes or requires a change in the classification, mission, or governing structure of an institution of higher education or that would establish such an institution.

**historically underutilized business (HUB)** — A business in which at least 51 percent of ownership is by one or more persons who: (1) are socially disadvantaged because of their identification as African Americans, Hispanic Americans, women, Asian Pacific Americans, or Native Americans, and have suffered the effects of discriminatory practices; and (2) have a proportionate interest and participation in the control, operation, and management of the business.

**house of representatives** — One of two bodies, or chambers, in the Texas Legislature. The house of representatives is composed of 150 members elected to two-year terms; each member of the house represents approximately 171,000 Texans.

**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.

**inputs** — The resources that an agency uses to produce services, including human, financial, facility, or material resources.

**intent calendar** — A printed list of measures that may be taken up by a legislative body in a particular session. In the Texas Senate, a bill normally may not be brought up for consideration unless it is listed on the intent calendar.

**interim** — The interval between regular sessions of the legislature.

**interim committee** — A committee established to study or investigate certain matters between regular sessions of the legislature and report to the next legislature on its findings and recommendations for legislative action.

**introduced** — The version of a bill or resolution as it was originally filed in the house or senate.

**issue docket** — A document prepared for the conference committee on appropriations identifying the differences of line item amounts and rider language between the house and senate versions of the general appropriations bill.

**joint committee** — A committee composed of members appointed from both houses of the legislature.

**joint resolution** — A resolution that proposes to amend the Texas Constitution, ratify a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution, or request the creation of a constitutional convention to propose amendments to the United States Constitution.

**joint session** — A combined meeting of the senate and the house in the house chamber or elsewhere.

**journal** — The official chronological record of the actions taken in a session of the legislature; there is both a House Journal and a Senate Journal.

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

**key performance measure** — A measure that indicates the extent to which an agency is achieving its goals or objectives, identified in the General Appropriations Act, along with targeted performance objectives for each year of the biennium. These can be outcome, output, efficiency, or explanatory/input measures.

**lame duck** — An elected official who has been defeated for re-election or who has chosen not to run for re-election but whose current term of office has not yet expired.

**last action** — The most recent step a bill has gone through in the legislative process.

**legislation** — A proposed or enacted law or group of laws.

**legislative appropriations request (LAR)** — A formal request for funding made by each state agency and institution.

**Legislative Budget Board (LBB)** — A permanent joint committee of the Texas Legislature that develops recommendations for legislative appropriations for all agencies of state government. The LBB is composed of two co-chairs (the lieutenant governor and speaker of the house), 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 of the house).

**Legislative Council** — *See* Texas Legislative Council.

**legislative day** — The period from convening after an adjournment until the next adjournment. One calendar day may contain one or more legislative days; one legislative day may also span more than one calendar day.

**legislative intent** — The purpose for which a measure is passed.

**Legislative Reference Library (LRL)** — A legislative agency established to satisfy the reference and research needs of the legislature, its staff, and its committees. The LRL maintains a specialized collection of materials designed to support legislators in their work, including legislative bill files from the 63rd Legislature (1973) forward; books and reports on issues of interest to the legislature; documents published by Texas state agencies and universities; legislative interim reports and minutes from state agency meetings; and a state and federal legal collection which includes Texas reference books such as Gammel's Laws, Texas Statutes, General and Special Laws of Texas, House and Senate Journals, West's Texas Digest, Texas cases from the Southwestern Reporter, Texas Register, and the Texas Administrative Code. Federal holdings include statutes from all 50 states, United States Code Annotated, Federal Register, and Code of Federal Regulations. The LRL is located on the second floor of the Capitol Building, in the north wing.

**legislator** — An elected member of a legislative body.

**legislature** — The lawmaking body of the State of Texas, consisting of a senate and a house of representatives. (*See also* senate *and* house of representatives.)

**Library and Archives Commission, Texas State** — An agency established to preserve the record of government for public scrutiny, to secure and make accessible historically significant records and other valuable resources, to meet the reading needs of Texans with disabilities, to build and sustain statewide partnerships to improve library programs and services, and to enhance the capacity for achievement of individuals and institutions. The Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building is located on Brazos Street to the east of the Capitol Building.

**lieutenant governor** — The presiding officer of the Texas Senate. A member of the executive branch, the lieutenant governor is elected statewide to a four-year term; the governor and lieutenant governor do not run on a ticket together and may be from opposing parties. When presiding over the senate, the lieutenant governor is the president of the senate and is addressed as Mr. or Madam President; when not presiding, is commonly addressed as "governor."

**line item** — An element of spending authority granted to an agency or institution in an appropriations bill. Literally, a line in the General Appropriations Act specifying an agency's appropriations for a specific designated use. In Texas, the governor may veto a line item.

**line-item veto** — The governor's authority to veto spending on a line-item basis. Allows the governor to veto spending for a particular item without eliminating total agency funding.

**list of items eligible for consideration** — Prepared by the chief clerk of the house of representatives, upon request of the speaker, when the volume of legislation warrants (normally during the last few weeks of a regular session). The list must be distributed six hours before it may be considered and contains: (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.

**lobby** — The act of a person or group of persons seeking to influence members of the legislature for or against proposed legislation. (*See also* third house.)

**lobbyist** — A person who lobbies.

**local and uncontested calendar** — A list of bills that are noncontroversial or that apply only to a local area scheduled by the Senate Committee on Administration for consideration by the senate. The local and uncontested calendar is generally heard early on Thursday mornings during a regular session, and the calendar must be distributed to senators by noon the previous day.

**local bill** — Legislation that applies only to a discrete community or area rather than to the entire state.

**local, consent, and resolutions calendar** — A list of noncontroversial bills and local bills scheduled by the House Committee on Local and Consent Calendars for consideration by the house. The calendar is required to be distributed to representatives 48 hours before the house convenes to consider bills on the calendar.

**major fund revenue** — State revenue within the funds affecting revenue (i.e., general revenue related funds). Also known as "available revenue."

**majority** — A number of members that is greater than one-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 majorities that may be required for legislative approval of bills and other actions — a simple majority and an absolute majority. A simple majority consists of more than one-half of those members present

and voting. An absolute majority consists of more than one-half of those members entitled to vote, whether present or absent.

**markup** — The period of time during which the Senate Finance Committee or the House Appropriations Committee makes changes to the general appropriations bill.

**master list of classifications** — A detailed listing of all authorized classified position titles which appears in the general provisions of the General Appropriations Act, including job class numbers, titles, and salary groups.

**measure** — A general term for a bill or resolution.

**method of finance** — The term usually appears as a heading for a table which lists the sources and amounts authorized for financing certain expenditures or appropriations made in the General Appropriations Act. A source is either a "fund," an "account" established by the comptroller, or a category of revenues or receipts (e.g., federal funds).

**minority report** — A committee report issued by one or more members that disagrees with the report adopted by the majority of the committee.

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

**mission** — An element of an agency's strategic plan that describes the reason for the agency's existence.

**motion** — A formal suggestion presented to a legislative body for action by one of its members while the body is meeting.

**non-budgetary elements** — Strategic planning goals, objectives, or strategies created to convey an agency activity or service that is not separately and directly costed or funded. Non-budgetary elements are not included as a distinct and separate item in the agency's appropriations request and may have measures which remain internal to the agency and are not reported on a routine basis to oversight entities.

**nonpartisan** — Free from party affiliation.

**number of positions (FTEs)** — The total number of full-time equivalent positions shown for a strategy, goal, or agency. It includes full-time exempt positions, full-time classified positions, and full-time hourly and seasonal positions. In addition, it includes those positions which are not full-time regular positions, but are converted to full-time equivalents.

**object of expense** — An expense category used in an agency's legislative appropriations request covering payments for a certain persiod of time or class of items. For example, "personnel" covers payments for the services of agency employees, i.e., salaries and benefits.

**objectives** — Clear targets for specific actions. These mark interim steps toward achieving an agency's long-range mission and goals. Linked directly to agency goals, objectives are measurable, time-based statements of intent.

**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 changes in a bill or resolution on public access to government information or to the transaction of public business.

**open meetings law** — A law requiring government meetings and proceedings to be open to and accessible by the public, with limited exceptions.

**open records law** — A law requiring that all books, papers, maps, photographs, cards, tapes, discs, diskettes, software, recordings or other documentation, regardless of physical form or characteristics, that are prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by a public agency be available to the public, with limited exceptions.

**order of business** — The defined routine of procedure in the legislative body each day.

**other funds** — Any funds not included in the other methods of finance (General Revenue funds, General Revenue-dedicated funds, and federal funds). Other funds include the State Highway Fund, trust funds, bond proceeds, interagency contracts, certain revenue held in higher education "local" accounts, and constitutional funds, with the exception of the Available School Fund.

**outcome measures** — One of four types of performance measures used in strategic planning. An outcome measure indicates the actual effect upon a stated condition or problem. These measures are tools to assess the effectiveness of an agency's performance and the public benefit derived.

**outcomes** — Quantified results or impacts of government actions.

**output measures** — One of four types of performance measures used in strategic planning. An output measure is a tool or indicator used to count the services and accomplishments produced by an agency. The number of people receiving a service or the number of services delivered are often used as measures of output.

**override** — *See* veto override.

**pairing** — A procedure for voting whereby, under a formal agreement between two members of a legislative body, a member who will be present for a vote agrees with a member who will be absent for a vote that the member who is present will not vote but will be "present, not voting." 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 with guidance on the rules of the house or senate.

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

**passage** — Approval of a measure by the full body of the senate or house.

**per diem** — Literally, per day; daily expense money paid to legislators in an amount set by the Texas Ethics Commission.

**Performance Report** — A biennial document prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that compiles selected performance evaluations. The document is submitted to the legislature at the start of each regular session.

**performance target** — Quantitative performance standards set by the legislature in the General Appropriations Act.

**Permanent School Fund** (PSF) — The PSF was created in 1854 expressly for the benefit of the public schools of Texas. The Constitution of 1876 stipulated that certain lands and all proceeds from the sale of those lands should also constitute the PSF. Additional Acts later gave more public domain land and rights to the PSF. All of the proceeds from the sale or rental of

those lands, including lease rentals, bonuses, and royalty payments, become the corpus of the PSF. Currently, most of the principle assets of the PSF are in securities. (*See also* Available School Fund.)

**personal privilege speech** — A statement by a legislator that is not relevant to pending legislative business and that is in response to an event or statement that either impugns the integrity of the institution or of a member of the institution in his or her legislative capacity.

**pocket veto** — An indirect veto of legislation achieved by waiting until after the legislature adjourns to veto it, which prevents the legislature from voting to override the veto.

**point of order** — A question by a legislator to the presiding officer calling attention to a breach of order or breach of the legislative rules.

**prefiling** — Filing of proposed legislation by members of the legislature prior to the convening of a session of the legislature.

**president of the senate** — The lieutenant governor of Texas is the president of the senate and is addressed as Mr. or Madam President. Any person presiding in the absence of the lieutenant governor during a legislative session is said to be "occupying the chair" or to be "in the chair" and is likewise addressed as Mr. or Madam President.

**president pro tempore (pro tem)** — A member of the senate designated to act in the absence of the lieutenant governor; the president pro tem is that member of the senate who has served the longest without having previously been president pro tem.

**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.

**printing** — Senate rules require that every committee report be printed. After printing, the senate committee report is placed in the bill book on each senator's desk in the senate chamber.

**privilege of the floor** — Permission to view legislative proceedings from the floor of the chamber rather than from the public gallery.

**prospective clause** — A provision that defers enforcement of a bill or of a provision of a bill to a future date.

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

**quarterly/annual report on performance (performance measures report)** — Quarterly and annual reports submitted by state agencies and institutions showing planned and actual performance in terms of outcome and explanatory measures (reported annually) and output and efficiency measures (reported quarterly).

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

**Race to the Top Fund** — A competitive grant fund enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to provide additional money to states for education innovation and reform.

**Rainy Day Fund** — *See* Economic Stabilization Fund.

**reading** — The presentation of a bill before either chamber by reading the bill, its title, or its number. A formal procedure required by the Texas Constitution and legislative rules, the bill must receive three readings on three separate days in each legislative body.

**reallocation** — A change in the salary group pertaining to a particular classified position.

**recapitulation** — A concise summary appearing at the end of General Appropriations Act articles and the Legislative Budget Estimates, and the beginning of the General Appropriations Act, which summarizes the appropriations for all agencies for the biennium by general revenue funds, general revenue–consolidated funds, federal funds, other funds, and all funds.

**recommended** — Refers to the dollar amounts of state agency/institution appropriations or number of positions recommended by Legislative Budget Board staff for the subsequent biennium.

**recess** — A temporary termination of a meeting. Recesses are called for short breaks (e.g., for a meal) or occasionally at the close of a daily session to allow the legislative day to continue into the next calendar day.

**reclassification** — A change in the salary group pertaining to a particular classified position.

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

**record vote** — A listing of the individual vote of each member of a committee or of the full house or senate on a particular motion or measure.

**redesignation** — Sections or subsections of existing law are redesignated (i.e., renumbered or relettered) if additional sections or subsections are inserted into the law.

**redistricting** — A geographical division of the state into congressional, state representative, senatorial, or other legislative districts on the basis of the relative distribution of the state's total population. District boundaries are redrawn every 10 years following the publication of the United States census to ensure an appropriate number of districts of approximately equal population. Also called reapportionment. (*See* glossary of redistricting terms on pp. 22-25.)

**refer/referral/referred** — To send a filed bill to the appropriate 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** — The constitutionally mandated period during which the legislature meets to consider legislation. The Texas Legislature convenes in regular session on the second Tuesday in January of odd-numbered years and for 139 calendar days after that date.

**repealer** — A clause in a bill revoking previously enacted legislation.

**representative** — A member of the Texas House of Representatives. A representative is elected to a two-year term and represents approximately 171,000 Texans.

**requested** — Refers to the dollars or positions sought by an agency for appropriation by the legislature for use during the subsequent biennium.

**resolution** — A legislative document that proposes a constitutional amendment; sets forth a set of instructions to a state agency; expresses legislative intent; or contains a message of congratulations or memorial. (*See also* concurrent resolution *and* joint resolution.)

**revenue dedication** — Cash that is appropriated by law or statute to a specified agency or for a particular use.

**revenue estimate** — An official forecast by the comptroller of the amount of money that will be available for expenditure by the legislature. Because Texas law requires a balanced budget, the legislature may appropriate only that amount the comptroller estimates will be available in the coming budget period.

**rider** — A legislative directive, inserted in the General Appropriations Act following appropriation line items for an agency, that provides either 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.

**rider appropriation** — An appropriation in the General Appropriations Act that is in either the addenda following the line item appropriations for an agency, in the special provisions of the Act, or in the general provisions of the Act. Such appropriation is to be distinguished from a regular appropriation (i.e., line items in the General Appropriations Act), and a special appropriation (i.e., legislation other than the General Appropriations Act).

**rulemaking authority** — The authority of a state officer, institution, or agency to devise the details of implementation and enforcement of a statute. Rulemaking authority is granted by the legislature within a bill and is noted in the bill analysis.

**salary group** — Each classified position has a related salary level. Salary groups range from Group 02 through Group 21. Each grouping designates a salary range from Step 1 through Step 8.

**schedule of classified positions** — Schedule of personnel employed on a regular basis who are included in the position class of the General Appropriations Act.

**schedule of exempt positions** — Schedule of personnel employed on a regular basis who are exempted from the position classification plan by the General Appropriations Act or by the governor.

**SCOM (Senate Committee Systems) —** A computer application created and operated by the Texas Legislative Council with seven components designed to assist senate committee clerks in performing specific tasks and duties.

**second reading** — The first point in the legislative process when the entire membership of a chamber has the opportunity to debate a bill and amend it by majority vote. Second reading comes after the bill has been approved by the committee to which it was referred. (*See also* first reading *and* third reading.)

**secretary of the senate** — A non-legislator officer elected by the members of the senate to serve both parliamentary and administrative functions; the chief administrative officer of the Texas Senate. Since June, 2001, the position has been filled by Patsy Spaw.

**senate** — One of two bodies, or chambers, in the Texas Legislature; also known as the upper chamber. The senate is composed of 31 members, elected to four-year terms, with one-half of the membership elected every two years. Each senator represents approximately 828,000 Texans.

**senator** — A member of the Texas Senate. A senator is elected to a four-year term and represents approximately 828,000 Texans.

**sergeant-at-arms** — A non-legislator officer of the senate or house elected by the members of the senate or the house who is charged with maintaining order and carrying out the directives of the presiding officer and the members.

**session** — (1) The period during which the legislature meets. (2) The daily meeting of the senate or house of representatives.

**session law** — A collection of laws passed in a particular legislative session.

**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 two or more bills on the same subject. (*See also* issue docket.)

**simple resolution** — A type of legislative measure that is considered only within the chamber in which it is filed. It can offer a commendation, a memorial, a statement of congratulations, a welcome, or another statement of legislative sentiment.

***sine die*** — A Latin phrase meaning literally "without a day," *sine die* is the last day of a legislative session and is a reference to the fact that the legislature is adjourning without a day set for a future session. [Texas colloquial pronunciation: sign-ee dye]

**speaker** — The speaker of the house of representatives is the presiding officer of the house. Unlike the lieutenant governor, who is elected statewide in a general election in November, the speaker is elected on the first day of a regular legislative session in a vote of the 150-member house of representatives. Addressed as Mr. or Madam Speaker.

**special funds** — Non-general revenue funds which have retained their revenue dedication and are exempt from funds consolidation.

**special order** — A matter taken up out of the regular order of business in a legislative session.

**special session** — *See* called session.

**sponsor** — The legislator who carries a bill in the second chamber after the bill has been approved in the originating chamber is denoted as the sponsor; in the chamber in which a bill is introduced, it is carried by its author.

**standing committee** — A committee created in the rules of either house that meets to consider and report on measures referred to it or tasks assigned to it by the respective presiding officers.

**statute** — A law enacted by the legislature. Most state statutes are grouped by subject matter and published as codes (e.g., Education Code or Health and Safety Code).

**statutory** — (1) Of or related to a statute. (2) Enacted, created, or regulated by statute.

**strategic plan** — A formal document that communicates an agency's mission, goals, objectives, strategies, and performance measures. Other elements of a strategic plan include an internal/external assessment and agency philosophy.

**strategic planning** — A long-term, future-oriented process of assessment, goal-setting, and decision-making that maps an explicit path between the present and a vision of the future. Strategic planning relies on careful consideration of an organization's capabilities and environment and leads to priority-based resource allocation.

**strategic planning and budgeting system** — The budgeting system for the State of Texas. Under this system, agencies request and receive appropriations related to elements of their strategic plans. Typically, legislative line item appropriations are made to agencies for specific strategies.

**strategy** — Formulated from goals and objectives, a strategy is the means for transforming inputs into outputs, and ultimately outcomes, with the best use of resources. A strategy describes a method to achieve goals and objectives. The legislature typically appropriates money to strategy line items.

**strike through** — Text within an existing law that is being deleted is bracketed and stricken through in a bill.

**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 by which state agencies, boards, and commissions are 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 make fundamental changes to an agency's mission or operations if needed. Agencies are typically reviewed every 12 years, with about 20 to 30 agencies undergoing the sunset process each legislative session.

**supplemental house calendar** — The primary agenda followed by the house during its deliberations. It is prepared by the House Committee on Calendars and 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

day; (2) measures on the Daily House Calendar from a previous day that were not reached for consideration; (3) measures on the Daily House Calendar for the current day; and (4) postponed business from a previous day.

**suspension of the rules** — A parliamentary procedure whereby actions can be taken that would otherwise be out of order.

**table** — To stop a bill from further progress in a committee or on the floor. A bill is tabled by a vote, after a non-debatable motion from a member.

**tax equity note** — A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that evaluates the effect of proposed tax law changes on individuals and businesses.

**Texas Ethics Commission** — The state agency responsible for administering and enforcing provisions of the Election Code concerning political contributions, political expenditures, and political advertising; provisions of the Government Code concerning the election of the speaker of the house, the governor for a day and speaker's day reunion ceremonies, lobbyist registration, reports, and activities, personal financial disclosures by state officers, the conduct of state officers and employees, and representation before state agencies; and provisions of the Local Government Code concerning judges of statutory county courts or statutory probate courts who elect to file a financial statement with the commission.

**Texas Legislative Council** — The legislative agency that drafts measures for consideration by the legislature. Known colloquially as the "lege council," it also provides computer support and other services for the legislature and legislative agencies.

**third house** — A colloquial term referring to lobbyists. (*See also* lobby *and* lobbyists.)

**third reading** — The final point in the legislative process when the entire membership of a chamber may debate a bill and the final opportunity the members of a chamber have to offer amendments to the bill. (*See also* first reading *and* second reading.)

**transferability** — The ability of an agency to transfer legislative appropriations from one agency to another, from one department to another, or from an agency's line item to another line item, that is generally authorized by a rider in the General Appropriations Act.

**underlining** — New text in a bill, i.e., text that is being proposed for addition to an existing law, is underlined within the bill.

**unexpended balance (U.B.)** — The term means the amount left in an item of appropriation at the end of an appropriation period and includes only that part of the appropriation, if any, which has not had an obligation or commitment made by the agency in charge of spending the appropriation. The term also refers to the amount of an appropriation, a fund, or a category of revenue which is brought forward (appropriated) in the succeeding fiscal year.

**unicameral** — A legislature consisting of a single chamber. Nebraska has the only unicameral legislature in the United States, which it calls a senate.

**unlimited (U.L.)** — The abbreviation "U.L." is used in schedules of classified positions and schedules of exempt positions to indicate that an unlimited number of positions is authorized. If used in the heading of the schedule, it means that all positions in the schedule are unlimited. If used beside a position name, it means that the particular position is unlimited.

**verification** — An action whereby a legislator requests that the results of a record vote be confirmed in a second vote.

**Vernon's** (***Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes*** **or V.T.C.S.)** — The laws of the State of Texas as gathered and printed by West Group, a private publishing company.

**veto** — Action by the governor to disapprove a measure. (*See also* pocket veto.)

**veto override** — A vote by the legislature to pass a bill over the governor's veto.

***viva voce*** — Latin for "by voice," a voice vote. (*See* voice vote.)

**voice vote** — The oral expression of the members when a question is submitted for their determination. When asked by the presiding officer, members respond "aye" or "nay." The presiding officer then decides which side prevailed.

**vote** — A formal expression of a preference for a proposed resolution of an issue. (For a list of required senate vote margins, *see* table on page 26.)

**water development policy impact statement** — A statement prepared by the Legislative Budget Board that provides an assessment of the impact on the state or another unit of government for a measure that proposes the creation of a water conservation and reclamation district.

**Ways and Means, House Committee on** — The house committee whose duties are to inquire into and propose to the house of representatives the "ways and means" to be adopted to raise revenue for the use of the government.

**withdraw** — To recall or remove a question or motion from consideration.

**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. (*See also* formal meeting.)

**yeas and nays** — The recorded vote of members for and against a measure or action.

**yield** — To relinquish the floor to another member to speak or to ask a question.

**zero-base budget system** — The budgeting system used by the State of Texas prior to the 1994-1995 biennium. In traditional incremental budgeting, the budget is developed based on the assumption that the "baseline" is automatically approved, with a need to justify only variances versus past years. By contrast, in zero-based budgeting, every line item of the budget must be approved, rather than only changes. Zero-based budgeting requires the budget request to be re-evaluated thoroughly, starting from the zero-base. The process is independent of whether the total budget or specific line items are increasing or decreasing.

# Redistricting Terminology

**alternative population base** — A population count other than the official census data that is used for redistricting.

**apportionment** — The number of representatives that a state is entitled to in the United States House of Representatives based on the decennial federal census. (*See* reapportionment *and* redistricting.)

**block boundary** — A census map feature, visible (e.g., street, road, stream, shoreline) or nonvisible (e.g., county line, city limit, property line), that delimits a census block. Two or more features usually delimit a block, but a single feature may delimit a block in the case of an island or a circular street. A boundary generally must include at least one feature that can have an address assigned to it. The boundary of a state or county is always a block boundary.

**Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS)** — An annual survey of all incorporated places and all counties conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau to determine the correct legal limits and related information as of January 1 of the survey year.

**census** — A complete enumeration of a population or the business and commercial establishments, farms, or governments in an area.

**census block** — The smallest unit of census geography for which population data are reported. Census blocks are designated by the United States Census Bureau and are generally bounded by physical features such as roads, creeks, or railroads, though in some cases they may be bounded by nonvisible features such as city limits.

**census block group** — A cluster of census blocks within a census tract designated by the United States Census Bureau as a subdivision of that census tract.

**census designated place (CDP)** — A statistical entity comprising a dense concentration of population that is not within an incorporated place but is locally identified by a name. CDPs are delineated cooperatively with state and local and tribal government officials based on United States Census Bureau guidelines.

**census geography** — A collective term referring to the geographic entities used by the United States Census Bureau for data collection and tabulation.

**census tract** — A unit of census geography defined by the United States Census Bureau for the purpose of presenting decennial census data. Census tracts are made up of block groups. Their boundaries generally follow visible features, though in some circumstances their boundaries may follow governmental unit boundaries or other nonvisible features. In general, census tracts must contain between 1,500 and 8,000 inhabitants.

**community of interest** — A grouping of people, such as in a city or a neighborhood, that has common political, social, or economic interests.

**compactness** — The degree to which the territory assigned to a district is close together. There are several mathematical ways to measure the elements of compactness, including area dispersion, perimeter, and population. No single measure of compactness is recognized as the "best" measure.

**contiguity** — Adjacency. For redistricting purposes, a district is considered to be contiguous if all parts of the district touch one another at more than a point, so that the entire district is within a continuous boundary. Legal standards governing redistricting for various governmental bodies often require all of the territory in each district to be contiguous.

**county election precincts** — Geographic units established by county commissioners courts for the purpose of election administration. The voters in an election precinct usually vote at a single polling place, so the votes cast in the precinct may be counted separately from other precincts.

**cracking** — A term used when the electoral strength of a particular group is divided by a redistricting plan.

**deviation** — The amount by which a district's population differs from the ideal district population for the particular type of redistricting plan.

**differential undercount** — The extent to

which one group of persons is more likely to be undercounted in the decennial census than other groups. For example, in the 1990 census, though almost 100 percent of white persons were counted, approximately five percent of black and Hispanic persons were not counted. (*See* undercount.)

**DistrictViewer** — A web application for viewing maps of current Texas legislative, congressional, and State Board of Education districts and public redistricting plans over the Internet, available at http://qis1.tlc.state.tx.us/.

**equal protection clause** — See Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

**feature** — Any part of the landscape, whether natural (such as a stream or ridge) or artificial (such as a road or power line). In geographic context, features are any part of the landscape portrayed on a map, including nonvisible boundaries of legal entities, such as city limits and county lines.

**Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution** — The provision of the United States Constitution stating that the right to vote may not be denied or abridged on account of race.

**Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution** — The provision of the United States Constitution that includes the Equal Protection Clause, which prohibits the states from denying persons equal protection of the law. The Equal Protection Clause is the primary basis of the one-person, one-vote principle. (*See* one person, one vote.)

**fragmentation** — Division of a geographically concentrated group, such as a racial or political group, among different districts for the purpose of minimizing the group's voting strength.

**Geographic Information System (GIS)** — A graphics-based computer system that relates geographic features (such as census tracts, roads, or counties) to data about those features (such as population, race, or income).

**gerrymander** — (noun) A district or set of districts with unusual boundaries that is drawn in that way to favor one or more interest groups over others. (verb) To draw a district or set of districts with unusual boundaries that favor one or more interest groups over others.

**ideal district population** — A measure calculated by dividing the total population of the state or other jurisdiction being redistricted by the number of districts in the type of redistricting plan being considered.

**method of equal proportions** — The mathematical formula used as provided by federal statute to reapportion congressional seats among the states after each decennial census.

**minority vote dilution** — The creation of districts that either (1) divide members of a racial or ethnic minority group among several districts, artificially reducing the group's opportunity to influence elections (*see* fragmentation) or (2) place extraordinarily high percentages of members of a racial or ethnic minority group in one or more districts, so that minority voting strength is artificially limited to those districts and is minimized in neighboring districts (*see* packing).

**one person, one vote** — The principle that each person's vote should count equally to every other person's vote, which is effected by the allocation of the same or substantially the same population to each district of a particular type, such as a congressional district. The courts derive the one-person, one-vote standard primarily from the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. For congressional districts, the one-person, one-vote requirement also derives from Section 2, Article I, and from Section 2 of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

**overcount** — The error in census data that results from counting some persons or housing units more than once in the decennial census.

**packing** — Creating a district with a very high concentration of a particular group of voters, such as a racial or political group, tending to result in the election of the group's candidate of choice in any election in that district and the dilution of the group's voting strength in neighboring districts.

**population estimates** — An approximation of the population of a geographic unit at a point in the past or present for which an actual population count is not available.

**population projections** — An approximation of

the population of a geographic unit at a point in the future based on specific assumptions regarding future demographic trends in the geographic unit.

**preclearance** — Approval of a redistricting plan or other change in election procedures by a special three-judge federal district court in Washington, D.C., or by the United States Department of Justice under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. (*See also* Voting Rights Act.)

**Public Law 94-171 (P.L. 94-171)** — The federal statute requiring the United States Census Bureau to provide selected decennial census data tabulations to the states by April 1 of the year following the census. These tabulations are used by the states to redefine the areas included in each congressional district and the other districts used for state and local elections, a process called redistricting.

**racially polarized voting** — A term used to describe circumstances in which the voting preferences of a racial or ethnic group consistently vary from those of other racial or ethnic groups, particularly when the different voting preferences are based on the race of the candidate. Also referred to as "racial bloc voting."

**reapportionment** — The reallocation of seats in the United States House of Representatives among several states on the basis of the most recent decennial census as required by Article 1, Section 2 of the United States Constitution.

**REDAPPL** — A computer program used by the Texas Legislative Council to draw redistricting plans. The program provides the ability to draw districts using predefined geographic units (e.g., counties, census tracts, block groups, and blocks); interactively updates population and election statistics as districts are drawn or modified; contains geographic features, such as cities and school districts; and provides the ability to print basic reports and some color maps.

**redistricting** — The process of revising the geographic boundaries of an area from which people elect representatives to the United States Congress, a state legislature, a county or city council, a school board, or other political subdivision.

**retrogression** — The term used to describe a reduction in the voting strength of a racial or ethnic group resulting from a redistricting plan or other change in election procedures. Retrogression is the primary test used for evaluating a change in election procedures under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act.

**section 2** — *See* Voting Rights Act.

**section 5** — *See* Voting Rights Act.

**standard deviation** — A measure of the dispersion of values in a frequency distribution from the average.

**statistical sampling** — The statistical method by which characteristics of a small group are measured and applied to the population as a whole.

**Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER)** — A map database, prepared by the United States Census Bureau, that contains a digital representation of all census-required map features (e.g., streets, roads, rivers, railroads, lakes), the related attributes for each, and the geographic identification codes for all entities used by the Census Bureau to tabulate data for the United States, Puerto Rico, and Island Areas.

**total range of deviation** — The range over which the populations of all districts in a redistricting plan deviate from the ideal district population.

**traditional districting principles** — A term often used to refer to criteria, such as compactness and contiguity, that have historically been considered in drawing election districts. Other principles that may be considered include respect for communities of interest, protection of incumbents, preservation of cores of prior districts, partisan fairness and electoral competiveness, equal population ("one person, one vote"), and compliance with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

**undercount** — The error in census data that results from the failure to count some persons or housing units in the decennial census. Historically, certain groups, such as members of racial or ethnic minorities, have been disproportionately undercounted by the federal census.

**voting age population (VAP)** — The number of persons in a geographic unit who are at least 18

years of age. Because some population groups, such as racial or ethnic minorities, tend to be younger on average than the population as a whole, the voting age populations are frequently compared in evaluating the potential voting strength of those groups.

**Voting Rights Act** — The federal law prohibiting discrimination in voting practices on the basis of race or language group, codified as 42 U.S.C. Section 1973 et seq. The official title of the Act is the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Sections 2 and 5 of the Act are important for redistricting.

- **Section 2**: Prohibits the adoption of voting standards or practices that abridge the right to vote on the basis of race or language group. This section applies to all states and other governmental units and may be used to challenge a redistricting plan that discriminates against a racial or language minority group.
- **Section 5**: Requires that changes in election procedures (including changes in district lines) be precleared by the U.S. Department of Justice or by a three-judge federal district court in the District of Columbia before the changes are put into effect. Preclearance is granted only if the change is determined not to have the purpose or effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on the basis of race or language group. Only certain states, including Texas, and certain other jurisdictions are subject to Section 5.

**voting tabulation district (VTD)** — The census geographic equivalent of a county election precinct, created for the purpose of relating election data to census data. These VTDs often differ from actual election precincts because election precincts do not always follow census geography. During the approximation process that creates VTDs, county election precinct boundaries that do not follow census geography are assigned to the nearest census block boundary.

*Sources: Senate Research Center; Texas Legislative Council; Wyoming Legislature; National Conference of State Legislatures*

## Legislative Acronyms

B – bill

BRE – biennial revenue estimate

CR – concurrent resolution

CS – committee substitute

E&E – Senate Engrossing and Enrolling

ENG – engrossed

ENR – enrolled

GAA – General Appropriations Act

H – house

HB – house bill

HCP – house committee printing

HCR – house concurrent resolution

HJR – house joint resolution

HR – house resolution

HRO – House Research Organization

JR – joint resolution

LAR – legislative appropriations request

LBB – Legislative Budget Board

LRL - Legislative Reference Library

R – resolution

S – senate

SB – senate bill

SCOM – senate committee systems

SCP – senate committee printing

SCR – senate concurrent resolution

SJR – senate joint resolution

SR – senate resolution

SRC – Senate Research Center

TLC – Texas Legislative Council

TLIS – Texas Legislative Information System

TLO – Texas Legislature Online

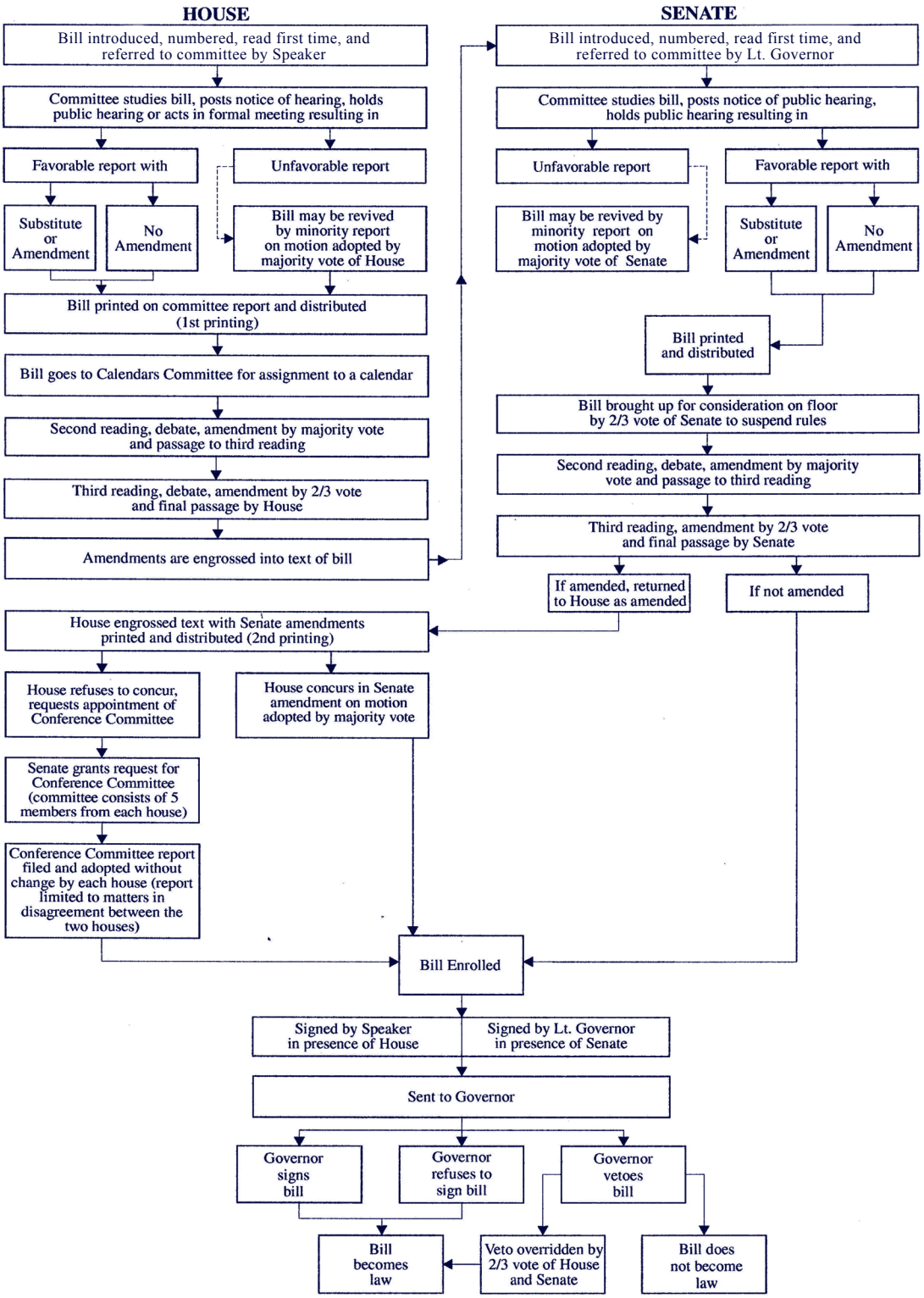
# SENATE VOTE REQUIREMENTS

| Senate Rule | Question | Vote |
|---|---|---|
| 5.02 | Quorum | 2/3 Membership (21) |
| 5.11 | Special Order | 2/3 Present |
| 5.14(c) | Suspend Intent Calendar | 4/5 Present |
| 6.10 | Reconsider | Majority Present |
| 10.02 | Final Passage, Constitutional Amendment | 2/3 Membership (21) |
| 6.20 | Vetoed House Bill | 2/3 Membership (21) |
| 6.20 | Vetoed Senate Bill | 2/3 Present |
| 7.19 | Adopt Amendment at Third Reading | 2/3 Present |
| 5.13 | Suspend Regular Order of Business | 2/3 Present |
| 22.01 | Rescind or Amend Senate Rule | Majority of Membership (16) |
| 22.01 | Suspend Senate Rule unless otherwise specified | 2/3 Present |
| 16.06(3) | Confirm Gubernatorial Appointment | 2/3 Present |
| 7.18 | Suspend Three Day Rule | 4/5 Present |
| 6.09 | Previous Question | 5 Seconds & Majority Present |
| 7.13 | Consider Bill during first 60 days | 4/5 Membership (25) |
| 7.07(b) | Introduce Bill after first 60 days | 4/5 Membership (25) |
| 6.08 | Re-referral | 2/3 Present |
| 6.08 | Commit | Majority of Membership (16) |

| Members Present & Voting | 31 | 30 | 29 | 28 | 27 | 26 | 25 | 24 | 23 | 22 | 21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Majority | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 11 |
| 2/3rds | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 14 |
| 4/5ths | 25 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 22 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 18 | 17 |

# Basic Steps in the Texas Legislative Process

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. A bill introduced in the senate would follow the same procedure in reverse.




Sources: Texas Senate, Citizen Handbook (www.senate.state.tx.us/CHBook/Chart.htm), Senate Research Center

## Officers of the Senate

Secretary of the Senate, Patsy Spaw . . . . . 512-463-0100
Calendar Clerk, Tracy Ortiz . . . . . 512-463-0060
Engrossing and Enrolling Clerk, Patience Worrel . . . . . 512-463-0321
Journal Clerk, Polly Emerson . . . . . 512-463-0050
Parliamentarian, Karina Davis . . . . . 512-463-0248
Sergeant-at-Arms, Rick DeLeon . . . . . 512-463-0200

## Officers of the House of Representatives

Chief Clerk of the House . . . . . 512-463-0845
Journal Clerk . . . . . 512-463-0855
Voting Clerk . . . . . 512-463-0855
Parliamentarian . . . . . 512-463-2003
Sergeant-at-Arms . . . . . 512-463-0910

## Helpful Numbers

Senate Committee Coordinator, Scott Caffey . . . . . 512-463-0070
House Committee Coordinator . . . . . 512-463-0850
Senate Research Center, David Mauzy . . . . . 512-463-0087
House Research Organization, Laura Hendrickson. . . . . 512-463-0752
Legislative Budget Board . . . . . 512-463-1200
Texas Legislative Council . . . . . 512-463-1151
Texas Legislative Council, Computer Help Desk . . . . . 512-463-1158
Legislative Reference Library . . . . . 512-463-1252
State Auditor's Office . . . . . 512-936-9500
Sunset Advisory Commission . . . . . 512-463-1300
Senate Bill Distribution . . . . . 512-463-0252

## Important Legislative Dates

**Tuesday, January 13, 2015** (1st day)
84th Legislature convenes at noon.

**Friday, March 13, 2015** (60th Day)
Deadline for filing bills and joint resolutions other than local bills, emergency appropriations, and bills that have been declared an emergency by the governor.

**Monday, June 1, 2015** (140th day)
Last day of 84th Regular Session.

**Sunday, June 21, 2015** (20th day following final adjournment)
Last day the governor can sign or veto bills passed during the regular legislative session.

**Monday, August 31, 2015** (91st day following final adjournment)
Date that bills without specific effective dates (that could not be effective immediately) or that cannot take immediate effect become law.

Research SPOTLIGHT
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