

Texas Legislative Update February 15-26, 2021

**Legislature Adjourned until March 2, 2021

****Feb. 15-19 Ice storm** – Freezing weather ravaged Texas with power grid failures and millions of Texans without heat and water leaving billions of dollars in damage (including damage at many churches) and even worse were lives lost. ERCOT Board resigns as Texas legislature begins to investigate. Senator Bob Hall has tried for three legislative sessions to pass a grid security bill and hopefully they will secure and harden the grid this time not only protecting from severe temperatures, but from an EMP attack and other concerns. Legislative hearings started Feb. 25.

Read about the power outages and grid [Capitol Hall Report](#) & [The Texan](#)

****ACTION item** regarding recent ice storm and outages – You can relay your story and let the Texas Legislature hear from you - Public Comment Form: senate.texas.gov

NATIONAL ISSUES:

****Immediate Action Needed on National Issue** – As warned of many times before, the Equality Act (or Inequality Act as it should be called), is before us. It just passed the U.S. House and is on the way to the Senate. President Biden said this bill was a priority for him and he wanted to sign it in his first 100 days. We absolutely must call our U.S. Senator (you can find who represents you here - capitol.texas.gov) and flood their phone lines telling them to vote NO on this bill. This bill eliminates religious liberty, parental rights, faith-based adoption agencies and women's homeless shelters, faith-based businesses, freedom of conscience, women's rights, medical conscience, protections for the unborn, and so much more. EVERYONE should care about this, but ESPECIALLY Christians. We cannot neglect our God given freedom nor ignore this.

You can also see an action on this with our good friends at Eagle Forum - [Eagle Forum](#)

More reading and understanding on the “Equality Act”

1. [Heritage](#)
2. [Henry Institute](#)
3. [Family Research Council](#)
4. [Breitbart](#)
5. [American Family Association](#)

****On Thursday, February 25, 2021, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee** held a nomination hearing for Dr. Rachel Levine, a transgender who is President Joe Biden's pick for assistant secretary of health at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). [The National Pulse](#)

****Transgender Issue** - As you know, the transgender issue is trending in schools across the nation. Here is a resource guide for schools, parents, teachers, administrators and school boards childparentrights.org and information for parents (including opt-out forms) and educators at concernedparentsoftexas.com

A great children's book resource is “I Don't Have to Choose,” by Ellie Clip. It's humorous and warmhearted as it helps children to internalize the truth that God made them just the way they are, including as a boy or a girl, in a way that is simple.

****Understanding HRI National Election Bill** - [Heritage](#)

****Info on Current Immigration Issues** - [News Max](#)

President Trump and Joe Biden: Comparing Immigration Policies - [Heritage](#)

TWO TEXAS ISSUES of the week

****Texas Issue - HEARTBEAT BILL**

State Rep. Shelby Slawson (R-Stephenville) has authored HB 1165 known as the Heartbeat Bill (HB). This bill would make abortion illegal in Texas once a fetal heartbeat is detected. The Heartbeat bill was filed last session in 2019 and failed. Since then twelve states have passed a version of a heartbeat bill into law including Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Utah.

ACTION: Call your representative and ask them to co-sponsor this bill with Rep. Slawson and let them know Texas should not be found lagging behind on saving more lives!

****Texas Issue - GAMBLING**

Many pro-gambling bills have been filed this session, including two bills calling for the operation of Las Vegas-style casinos in Texas (SB 616 and HB 477), as well as a resolution for a constitutional amendment to authorize these casinos (SJR 36). Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick says these efforts don't have a chance this year, but we cannot take for granted that the gambling industry has hired 60 well-paid lobbyists to influence the Texas Legislature. We must act.

ACTION: Let your representatives know we are very much opposed to Texas becoming a gambling state, whether through casinos, sports betting, or other and ask them to oppose SB 616, HB 477, SJR 36 and any other bill that seeks to expand gambling in Texas.

****ACTION:** Please call, email, or visit with your representatives and make sure they have seen a copy of our legislative priorities. A sample note and what you can say is listed below. You can see our legislative priority statement here - [SBTC TERLC 87th LEG Statement](#)

To find out who represents you, go to capitol.texas.gov and find your U.S. senators, congressman, state senator, state representative and state board of education member.

Action Item: The legislative session needs your voice, so we must begin making ourselves heard. Government is run by those who show up.

You can call or email your representatives and senators regarding our priorities. We recommend making weekly or bi-weekly contact and asking for an updated status. It is important that they know we want to engage, as well as hold accountable, our elected government. Here is a sample letter, email, or phone call to make:

Dear Texas Senator/Representative _____,

Thank you for representing my district. Please tell me if you have read and will support and defend the SBTC/TERLC priorities.

You can read our priorities here (<https://sbtexas.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SBTC-TERLC-87th-LEG-Statement-.pdf>) and I would also be happy to email or send a copy to you if necessary.

Have you filed or co-authored any bills that are specific to any of these issues, and if so could you please give me the bill number so I can keep track of it? Are you committed to seeing them through to the end until they reach the Governor's desk?

These issues are important to me and my family. We will be watching, following the progress, and praying for success.

Sincerely,
Your Name

****Lt. Gov. Patrick lists his priorities** - [My High Plains](#)

****The Voice of the Martyrs** is having a free online event called Imprisoned for Christ sponsored by Lifeway featuring Petr Jasek, Dan Baumann and Andrew Brunson and their stories of being arrested, interrogated, and imprisoned. - [persecution.com](#)

****Resources** - [Rick Green](#)

Excerpt from Jordan Henry, Director of Research, Phyllis Schlafly Eagles on February 23, 2021 -

It is still possible to change hearts with research, reason, and rhetoric. If you have become disheartened by recent political events, know that we still have hope. Do not give up on the grassroots action promised to us by our Founding Fathers. Find a way that you can speak out on issues you care about.

Here are some ideas for you to consider:

- Testify at your state capitol on bills you care about. If you cannot do so in person, many states give you the opportunity to submit written testimony online.
- Visit your state legislator to find out where he stands on important bills. Do your research beforehand and speak firmly but respectfully. If time does not permit you to arrange an in-person visit either at the capitol or in your district, send an email and follow up with a call to ensure that your message made it to the legislator in question.

Spread the word about important bills to your friends and family. You can do this on social media, but don't fall in the trap of simply complaining about something you do not like. Call your fellow citizens to action by asking them to leave a comment to your post after they have contacted their legislator like you contacted yours.

- If your fact-based arguments fall on deaf ears when speaking to your legislator, do not be afraid to exert the ultimate power of the grassroots activist. Be willing to run against swampy politicians when next they come on the ballot. Nothing scares a politician into action like the threat of an electoral challenge! However, do not make this threat unless you are willing to see it through.

Grassroots activism is a rewarding and fruitful passion. If you want to make real change in your community, get started today. It might seem awkward and uncomfortable at first, but you will learn the ropes quickly. Get in touch with your legislator for clarification on procedural questions about visiting the capitol and testifying. The rules vary from state to state. The fate of our nation rests on the shoulders of concerned men and women like you who have the boldness to take action!