

CITY OF EL PASO LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS UPDATE

Snapper Carr and Lynlie Hurd

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- El Paso Specific Issues Expected to Arise in the 89th Session
- Preparing for the 89th Legislative Session
 - Key Date Timeline
- El Paso Delegation
- Legislative Environment and Speaker's Race
- Statewide/City Issues Expected to Arise in the 89th Session
- Questions / Comments?



EL PASO SPECIFIC LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Workforce Development

- Economic development

Infrastructure

- TxDOT funding
- Land use issues
- DEAAG funding
- Ensuring equitable funding for El Paso (transportation, border response, parks, etc.)

Public Health and Safety

- Border Security
- Protecting local authority and defending against *preemption* in a variety of areas

**All of our El Paso specific issues will be debated and considered within the larger policy and legislative issues taken up during the 89th Legislature.



PREPARING FOR THE 89TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- The time to start advocating and educating the Legislature and public on City of El Paso issues is now. **El Paso's Strategic and Legislative Affairs Team is ahead of the curve.**
- Interim charges issued by Lt. Gov. and Speaker are seen as a list of priorities for each chamber. Committees are currently holding hearings to discuss and study the charges. Often these discussions turn into bills once Session begins. This is a great opportunity for us to engage – provide written testimony, communicate with delegation, work with coalition of cities, etc.
- Share city legislative agenda with legislative delegation and community partners.
- Execute advocacy plan – based on the issues in adopted agenda and anticipated issues.



89th LEGISLATIVE SESSION TIMELINE

- April 11, 2024: Senate Interim Charges Announced.
- May 8, 2024: House Interim Charges Announced.
- Interim hearings will continue through the end of 2024, with reports issued sometime thereafter.
- November 5, 2023: Election Day
- November 11, 2024: Bill Pre-Filing Begins**
- January 14, 2025: Session Convenes (Speaker elected in the first 2 days)**
- Late January / Early February 2025: Senate and House Committees are named.
- Mid to Late February 2025: Committees Begin to meet to consider legislation.
- March 14, 2025: Bill Filing Deadline**
- Early May Committee bill passage deadlines means committee process ends.
- June 2, 2025: Legislative Session Adjourns—Sine Die!**



EL PASO LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION



Senator Cesar Blanco

- Border Security
- Health and Human Services
- Natural Resources and Economic Development
- Veteran Affairs
- Water, Agriculture and Rural Affairs



Rep. Mary Gonzalez

- Appropriations, Vice Chair
- Higher Education



Rep. Joe Moody

- Criminal Jurisprudence, Chair
- House Administration
- Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
- Redistricting



Rep. Lina Ortega*

- Appropriations
- Land & Resource Management

*Rep. Ortega is retiring. new member, **Rep.-Elect Vince Perez.**



Rep. Claudia Ordaz

- International Relations and Economic Development, Vice Chair
- Resolutions Calendar
- Transportation



Rep. Eddie Morales

- Elections
- Energy Resources, Vice Chair
- Healthcare Reform



LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

- There are *19 Republicans and 12 Democrats* in the Texas Senate. There are no Democrats holding chairmanships.
- Currently, there are *86 Republicans and 64 Democrats* in the Texas House.
- However, 32 House incumbents are not returning in 2025 (24 Republican and 8 Democrat House members). This includes 9 committee chairs and one House Appropriations subcommittee chair.
- There are several contested races in November, so the partisan composition of the House is likely to change slightly.
- 2 new Senators will be selected in November. The partisan makeup of the Senate is not expected to change.



CITY ISSUES EXPECTED TO ARISE 89TH SESSION

Local Preemption

- Regulating state license holders
- City occupational licenses
- Commercial activity

Land Use

- Disannexation
- Minimum lot size and small lot preemption
- Accessory dwelling units by right
- HUD code manufactured housing by right
- Building height restrictions
- ETJ size, density in ETJ, required services and ordinance enforcement in ETJ
- STRs and residential amenity preemption
- Limiting “Squatter’s” rights
- Housing Facilities Corporation reform
- Zoning by Right (or elimination)

City Administration

- Community censorship (advocacy bans)
- Streaming services not considered video services for franchise fees

Debt

- Debt service fund use limitations
- Certificate of obligation restrictions
- November debt elections

Taxes and Fees

- Additional property tax reform (appraisal cap, homestead exemption increase)
- Changes to effective tax rate calculations
- Pay-go financing reform
- Destination sales tax sourcing
- Street maintenance sales tax reforms
- Street maintenance or environmental fees on utility bills



CITY ISSUES EXPECTED TO ARISE 89TH SESSION, CONT.

Elections

- Ballot language restrictions and liability
- Sale of parkland without election
- November city elections (partisan elections for local office)

Public Safety

- Emergency services district bills
- Mandatory homeless camping ban complaints and enforcement
- Firefighter investigation procedure

Open Government

- Online public notices
- Shortened timelines for open records compliance

Purchasing

- Increased competitive bidding threshold

Transportation

- Billboard relocation
- Lowered speed limit without traffic study



STATEWIDE ISSUES EXPECTED TO ARISE 89TH SESSION

Projected Budget Surplus (\$15-20 Billion)

Additional State Property Tax Relief

Education

- School choice

Electric Grid Reliability

- Expanding Texas Energy Fund
- Rate case reforms (move to “streamline”)
- City Rate Case Reimbursement

Border Security

- Additional investment in Operation Lone Star

Affordable Housing

- Proposals aimed at achieving affordable housing and housing availability

**THANK YOU
QUESTIONS?**

FOCUSED  **ADVOCACY**