

# THE GOVERNOR

As required by Government Code, §2002.011(4), the *Texas Register* publishes executive orders issued by the Governor of Texas. Appointments and proclamations are also published. Appointments are published in chronological order. Additional information on documents submitted for publication by the Governor's Office can be obtained by calling (512) 463-1828.

Proclamation 41-4188

## TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

WHEREAS, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of the State of Texas, do hereby certify that the heavy rainfall and flooding event that began on July 2, 2025, and that included heavy rainfall and flash flooding, is causing widespread and severe property damage, injury, or loss of life in Bandera, Coke, Comal, Concho, Gillespie, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, Llano, Mason, McCulloch, Menard, Reeves, San Saba, and Tom Green counties;

NOW, THEREFORE, in accordance with the authority vested in me by Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code, I do hereby declare a state of disaster in the previously listed counties.

Pursuant to Section 418.017 of the Texas Government Code, I authorize the use of all available resources of state government and of political subdivisions that are reasonably necessary to cope with this disaster.

Pursuant to Section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code, any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business or any order or rule of a state agency that would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with this disaster shall be suspended upon written approval of the Office of the Governor. However, to the extent that the enforcement of any state statute or administrative rule regarding contracting or procurement would impede any state agency's emergency response that is necessary to protect life or property threatened by this declared disaster, I hereby authorize the suspension of such statutes and rules for the duration of this declared disaster.

In accordance with the statutory requirements, copies of this proclamation shall be filed with the applicable authorities.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and have officially caused the Seal of State to be affixed at my office in the City of Austin, Texas, this the 4th day of July, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502273



Proclamation 41-4189

## TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

WHEREAS, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of the State of Texas, issued a disaster proclamation on July 4, 2025, certifying that the heavy rainfall and flooding event that began on July 2, 2025, that included heavy rainfall and flash flooding, caused widespread and severe property damage, injury, or loss of life in several counties;

NOW, THEREFORE, in accordance with the authority vested in me by Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code, I do hereby amend and renew the aforementioned proclamation and declare a disaster in Bandera, Bexar, Burnet, Caldwell, Coke, Comal, Concho, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, Llano, Mason, McCul-

loch, Menard, Reeves, San Saba, Tom Green, Travis, and Williamson counties;

Pursuant to Section 418.017 of the Texas Government Code, I authorize the use of all available resources of state government and of political subdivisions that are reasonably necessary to cope with this disaster.

Pursuant to Section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code, any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business or any order or rule of a state agency that would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with this disaster shall be suspended upon written approval of the Office of the Governor. Any statutes that might prevent the transfer of bodies to families as soon as possible are hereby suspended, including Sections 264.514 and 264.515 of the Texas Family Code and Articles 49.04, 49.05, 49.10, and 49.25 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. Further, to the extent that the enforcement of any state statute or administrative rule regarding contracting or procurement would impede any state agency's emergency response that is necessary to protect life or property threatened by this declared disaster, I hereby authorize the suspension of such statutes and rules for the duration of this declared disaster.

In accordance with the statutory requirements, copies of this proclamation shall be filed with the applicable authorities.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and have officially caused the Seal of State to be affixed at my office in the City of Austin, Texas, this the 5th day of July, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502274



Proclamation 41-4190

## TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

WHEREAS, the Texas Hill Country and the entire Central Texas region sustained an unprecedented tropical rain event this past week that resulted in massive flash flooding that led to the tragic loss of life; and

WHEREAS, our hearts as a people are collectively aching for the families of loved ones who are still missing or who perished in the floods, and for the first responders who are putting their lives on the line to rescue and recover the lost; and

WHEREAS, even while the waters raged, Texans waded into the flood waters to help fellow Texans, some to rescue and others to comfort, but all wanting to find hope; and

WHEREAS, throughout our history, Texans have been strengthened, assured, and lifted up through prayer; and

WHEREAS, it is right and fitting that the people of Texas should join with others from across the country and around the world to seek God's wisdom for ourselves and our leaders, to pray for God's peace and comfort upon those who have experienced devastating loss, and to ask for His merciful intervention and healing in this time of crisis;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of Texas, pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Statutes of the State of Texas, do hereby proclaim Sunday, July 6, 2025, to be a

#### Day of Prayer

I urge Texans of all faiths and religious traditions and backgrounds to offer prayers on that day for the healing of individuals, safety of our first responders and public safety officers, rebuilding of communities, and restoration of the region struck by this disaster.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and have officially caused the Seal of State to be affixed at my office in the City of Austin, Texas, this the 5th day of July, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502285



Proclamation 41-4191

#### TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 305 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

House Bill No. 305 laudably seeks to promote the timely resolution of criminal cases following a defendant's restoration to competency but does so by imposing a rigid procedural mandate that could create legal problems. Requiring that counsel raise within 14 days "any" evidentiary or procedural issue necessary for the case to proceed to trial could result in forfeiture or waiver of numerous issues by either side. It may prove impossible to wrangle the entire universe of trial-related issues in this artificially compressed timeline. I therefore disapprove of this bill because it would inadvertently transform a provision obligating courts to resume proceedings into a rule with new pitfalls that could harm both the state and the defense. I look forward to working with the bill authors to develop a more careful approach in the future.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502287



Proclamation 41-4192

#### TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 413 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

House Bill No. 413 is a common-sense reform that ensures pre-trial detention does not become a form of punishment and will save taxpayers money. However, the bill fails to specify that the method of release must provide sufficient sureties to ensure public safety and appearance

at trial. The protection of liberty must be balanced with clarity, accountability, and public safety. This bill fails to strike that balance and lacks critical safeguards against abuse. I look forward to considering these reforms in the future, with certain clarifications.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502288



Proclamation 41-4193

#### TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 449 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

The increased prevalence of sexually explicit deep fake media is alarming. However, the author of this bill requested it be vetoed because other, more comprehensive approaches to this issue were passed this session and signed into law, like Senate Bill No. 441.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502289



Proclamation 41-4194

#### TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 705 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

Enacting and enforcing laws are not just things that sovereign governments do; it is the very embodiment of sovereign power. *Sovereign Power*, BLACK'S LAW DICTIONARY (12th ed.). The "power to create and enforce a legal code" is the most easily identified example of a State's sovereign interest. *Alfred L. Snapp & Son, Inc. v. Puerto Rico*, 458 U.S. 592, 601 (1982). House Bill No. 705 would cede Texas's sovereign power by subjecting it to a Cosmetology Licensure Compact comprised of other States. Under this proposal, Texas could "enact and enforce laws" only if they are "not inconsistent with" the Compact. The Compact Commission, meanwhile, could pass rules that "shall have the force of law" in Texas, even though its Executive Committee might not include a Texan.

While I appreciate that the bill's authors added language that attempts to protect state sovereignty, there is no guarantee that the Compact Commission will respect that language, or that it will refrain from making changes in the future that hurt Texans. That, of course, is the problem with giving away Texas sovereignty to others today—no one knows what they will do tomorrow. This cession of state power is also unnecessary. Out-of-state cosmetology licensees may already seek reciprocal licensing here. This session, the Legislature made it even easier for many practitioners by granting provisional licenses in Senate Bill No. 1818. If more changes are needed to better align Texas practice with national standards, there is a way to do that without surrendering state power: Pick and choose which rules to put in state law.

Texans welcome good ideas, no matter where they come from. But in our republican form of government, Texas lawmakers must adopt the rules that will bind Texans. We should not ask some other sovereign—or a conglomerate of them—to do the lawmaking for us.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502290



#### Proclamation 41-4195

##### TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 1690 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

In a session focused on securing water resources, House Bill No. 1690 sends the opposite message. This bill would increase the regulatory hurdles to convey water resources. And it would do so needlessly. State law already authorizes groundwater conservation districts to adopt rules necessary to manage groundwater resources, including rules for public notice and hearings on groundwater permits. TEX. WATER CODE §§ 36.101, 36.114. This bill, however, would *require* a groundwater district to adopt rules requiring that notice be given about all groundwater transfers outside of the district. The management of groundwater resources varies across the State. House Bill No. 1690 creates a one-size-fits-all approach, which may not be appropriate for all areas.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502291



#### Proclamation 41-4196

##### TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 2243 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

House Bill No. 2243 rightly seeks to address the issue of teacher satisfaction and retention and to build upon the valuable work of the Teacher Vacancy Task Force that I convened in 2022. However, the bill would allow a newly-created Commission to hire staff and legal counsel and procure goods and consulting services without adhering to competitive bidding rules or the Professional Services Procurement Act—both important safeguards for the use of taxpayer dollars.

To complicate matters, the bill would allow the Commission to do all this work in the executive branch while made up of members of the legislative branch. Our Constitution creates a government of "three distinct departments" with no overlap, except where expressly authorized. TEX. CONST. art. II, § 1. All executive power is vested in an Executive Department comprised of six officers. *Id.* art. IV, §§ 1, 16, 21, 22; *id.* art. III, § 49; *id.* art. XIV, § 1. As "Chief Executive Officer," the Governor may oversee other officers of the Executive Department, *Day Land & Cattle Co. v. State*, 4 S.W. 865, 867 (Tex. 1887), and must exercise the residuary of executive power not lodged with them, *Collins v. Yellen*, 594 U.S. 220, 250-256 (2021). That includes the duty to superintend the exercise of executive power by those who act as agents with delegated authority. *Abbott v. Harris County*, 672 S.W.3d 1, 18 (Tex. 2023).

It is unconstitutional for a different branch, by appointment or otherwise, to superintend the exercise of *executive* power. TEX. CONST. art. II, § 1; *cfid.* art. IV, § 12. The "notion that the Constitution allows one branch to install non-officer employees in another branch would come as a surprise to many." *Danziger v. United States*, 143 S. Ct. 868, 870 (2023) (Gorsuch, J., dissenting from denial of certiorari). It is also unconstitutional for an inferior executive to superintend agents of the *Chief* Executive. TEX. CONST. art. IV, § 1.

The stated purpose of this bill can be achieved without expending additional state funding, removing important contracting requirements, or transgressing the Texas Constitution's separation of powers. I will work with the author and sponsor to convene a task force this interim to streamline teachers' responsibilities and to repeal unnecessary administrative burdens.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502294



#### Proclamation 41-4197

##### TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House

Bill No. 2520 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

House Bill No. 2520 is framed as subjecting a TEA-appointed board of managers to the Open Meetings Act. But that is already the law. Boards of managers are directed to "exercise the powers and duties of a school district's board of trustees." TEX. EDUC. CODE § 39A.004. And one duty of a school district's board of trustees is to comply with the Open Meetings Act. TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.001(3)(E). If a board of managers is not doing its duty, the answer is not to duplicate laws already on the books.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor  
TRD-202502297



Proclamation 41-4198  
**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 3120 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

House Bill No. 3120 is a well-intentioned effort to make child detention facilities, and the communities around them, safer. To that end, the bill would direct facility owners to seek a Memorandum of Understanding with a local government that includes plans for reporting and preventing illness, conducting quarterly inspections, safely evacuating residents, and reporting periodically on occupancy and facility incidents. This all seems like good policy. If a fire breaks out, firefighters should know how many people they need to search for inside.

But these sorts of arrangements should be things of the past. While making the border more secure than ever before, President Trump has also reduced the trafficking of unaccompanied minors. Perhaps that is why the Department of Justice last month filed a motion in federal district court seeking to dissolve a 1997 settlement agreement governing child detention facilities. Given all this change, now is not the right time to adjust the rules governing such facilities. I look forward to revisiting this issue with a clearer picture of available options in the future.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor  
TRD-202502298



Proclamation 41-4199  
**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 4530 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

The Texas Water Development Board serves a vital purpose in overseeing our State's future water supply, including managing the Texas Water Trust to support environmental needs interconnected with surface water. House Bill No. 4530 would allow private individuals to dedicate their groundwater to the Trust. But it fails to explain *how* groundwater percolating below the surface of the Earth is to be transferred to a surface water trust focused on instream flows, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and bay and estuary inflows. It also fails to explain how to accurately measure the amount of groundwater added to the Trust. While I support individual liberty—including the liberty to alienate private property rights—this bill does not consider the means necessary to achieve its goal. Therefore, I disapprove of this bill.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor  
TRD-202502299



Proclamation 41-4200  
**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 4885 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

I veto this bill.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor  
TRD-202502300



Proclamation 41-4201  
**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 5671 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

This session I signed laws that secure water resources for generations of Texans to come so that our great State can continue to thrive. As with any government investment, we must make sure it is properly managed with sufficient oversight. House Bill No. 5671 does the opposite. This bill removes TCEQ approval of water and wastewater construction projects that the Johnson County Special Utility District funds with bond debt. It is fiscally inefficient for the District to increase local government debt to build infrastructure without any input from TCEQ, which is charged with ensuring those investments, once constructed, meet legal drinking water and wastewater standards. For these reasons, I disapprove of this bill.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502301



Proclamation 41-4202

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 268 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

In its attempt to streamline responses to health care complaints, this bill would inadvertently raise hurdles to protecting public health and safety. Senate Bill No. 268 aims to ensure a health care complaint is handled by the right regulatory board. It would require a board to forward a complaint about a licensee to the board that issued that individual's license. That's good. But it would also prohibit the original board from taking any disciplinary action for portions of a complaint within its jurisdiction. The Medical Board, for example, should not be prohibited from issuing a cease-and-desist order for unlicensed medical practice simply because the specific practice at issue is also regulated by another board. I look forward to working with the author in the future to craft a solution that accounts for regulatory overlap and ensures no gaps in enforcement.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502302



Proclamation 41-4203

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 614 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

As the Supreme Court of the United States recognized nearly two centuries ago, a final criminal judgment is "binding on all the world." *Ex parte Watkins*, 3 Pet. 193, 202-203 (1830). That is why efforts to reopen a state court judgment in habeas proceedings must be the rare exception—i.e., where the convicting court manifestly lacked jurisdiction over the defendant or his offense.

Senate Bill No. 614, however, encourages convicted criminals, defense attorneys, and state courts to embrace the notion that the writ of *habeas corpus ad subjiciendum* is merely a fifth, sixth, or seventh round of review—sometimes taken decades after defendants received the process due to them in a criminal trial and exhausted any direct appeals afforded by state law. This bill would encourage the Texas Forensic Science Commission to refer cases that have *already* been dismissed as lacking merit to the Office of Capital and Forensic Writs:

OCFW should not be seeking to assist convicted criminals with undoing final criminal judgments based on "the same subject matter" that TFSC already determined was baseless. That undercuts "the State's sovereign interest in its final judgment" and its "powerful and legitimate interest in punishing the guilty." *Brown v. Davenport*, 596 U.S. 118, 132-133 (2022). Our laws must separate "the meritorious needles from the growing haystack" of habeas claims, not stack it even higher. *Id.* at 132.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502303



Proclamation 41-4204

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 648 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

No one disputes that title theft and deed fraud are serious problems. That is why criminal offenses and civil penalties already prohibit it under Texas law. *E.g.*, TEX. PENAL CODE ch. 31, 32; TEX. CIV. PRAC. & REM. CODE ch. 12. That is also why county clerks are required to notify property owners when they have a good faith belief that a document purporting to create a lien or assert a property claim has been fraudulently filed. *See* TEX. Gov. CODE § 51.901.

Although Senate Bill No. 648 seeks to strengthen protections, it does so by imposing barriers that will burden low-income Texans, rural residents, and those handling family land without legal assistance. The bill would require property owners—but only those who have not retained an attorney or title agent—to jump through additional hoops, like producing every named heir to execute an affidavit of heirship. The ability to hire a professional may help individuals navigate legal rules more easily. But it should not entitle a person to *different rules* altogether.

I am adding this issue to a special session call so that legislators may tackle title theft and deed fraud without creating separate rules for the haves and have-nots.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor  
TRD-202502304



Proclamation 41-4205

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 974 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

Appraisal review boards serve as arbiters in the local property tax imposition process. And it is imperative that board members are free from allegations that their profession colors their judgment, especially when one of the entities that could benefit from a board decision may be a board member's employer. While the intent of Senate Bill No. 974 is well taken, we must ensure members of appraisal review boards can exercise judgment without compromise.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor  
TRD-202502305



Proclamation 41-4206

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 1032 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

The Governor's University Research Initiative was primarily intended to aid public institutions of higher education in recruiting distinguished researchers from around the world to come to Texas public universities. Senate Bill No. 1032 would expand GURI program eligibility to private institutions. That may be a worthwhile cause. But the reality is that the Legislature did not fully fund the program. I would be happy to reconsider this legislation at a future time when GURI is fully funded.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof

by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor  
TRD-202502306



Proclamation 41-4207

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 1253 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

As originally proposed, Senate Bill No. 1253 tackled an important problem, encouraging conservation of water by authorizing political subdivisions to reduce impact fees for builders who include facilities that increase water conservation and efficiency. On third reading in the House, however, the bill changed dramatically. It now singles out property owners in one groundwater conservation district and subjects them to new burdens for exercising private property rights, like new fees that increase every year and entry onto property without the owner's permission. We can and should pursue strategies that protect "property rights from government intrusion and control." *Texas v. DHS*, 123 F.4th 186, 213 (5th Cir. 2024).

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor  
TRD-202502307



Proclamation 41-4208

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 1278 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

No State has done more to both protect and advance the future of victims of human trafficking. Our commitment to supporting those victims will remain steadfast.

That said, Senate Bill No. 1278 does more than aid and support victims of human trafficking. It goes beyond that and creates an affirmative defense that could excuse a crime if a defendant claims to be a victim of human trafficking or compelled prostitution and claims to have acted in response to coercion or threats. The bill's approach, however, severs the link between culpability and conduct. If the person is a qualifying victim, the bill holds out "an affirmative defense to prosecution"—any prosecution.

That means a person could be immune not only for acts of prostitution that are linked to their own prior victimization, but also for raping a child, murdering a law enforcement officer, or engaging in acts of terrorism. We can and should recognize that victimization begets more victimization. But legal responsibility cannot always be passed off to someone else. Some who started off as victims later make a choice to perpetrate similar crimes against others. As for those who act out of genuine fear of reprisal, existing law recognizes the legitimate defense of duress—narrowly drawn and equally applicable to all. *See* TEX. PENAL CODE § 8.05.

For these reasons, I find it necessary to veto this draft. I look forward to working with the authors during a special session on a more narrowly tailored piece of legislation.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502308



Proclamation 41-4209

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 1838 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

Senate Bill No. 1838 invites attorneys appointed ad litem to argue with the courts that appointed them—at taxpayer expense—about how much money they are owed. This not only expands the existing cottage industry of post-judgment fee disputes, it also incentivizes court-appointed attorneys to inflate their fees in anticipation of later contesting any downward modification. It also requires the presiding judges of the administrative judicial regions to decide what constitutes reasonable compensation, even though those judges have no connection to the underlying case and no knowledge of how much an attorney worked. Better to trust the district courts to make that call.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502309



Proclamation 41-4210

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate

Bill No. 1937 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

Senate Bill No. 1937 would impose a rigid mandate requiring nuclear DNA testing in every capital case, even where that method is not scientifically appropriate for the biological material at issue. DNA evidence varies in quantity, quality, and form; no single testing method is suitable in all circumstances. Federal courts, for example, recognize that mitochondrial DNA "has some advantages over nuclear DNA." *United States v. Beverly*, 369 F.3d 516, 528-529 (6th Cir. 2004).

Additionally, Senate Bill No. 1937 would require overworked laboratory experts to participate in pretrial discovery meetings and hearings, potentially diverting scarce resources away from essential testing in other cases. Rather than expedite justice, this bill may inadvertently delay it—or prevent it altogether by limiting the evidentiary tools available to hold murderers accountable.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502310



Proclamation 41-4211

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 2111 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

As the Supreme Court of the United States recognized nearly two centuries ago, a final criminal judgment is "binding on all the world." *Ex parte Watkins*, 3 Pet. 193, 202-203 (1830). That is why efforts to reopen a state court judgment in habeas proceedings must be the rare exception—i.e., where the convicting court manifestly lacked jurisdiction over the defendant or his offense.

Senate Bill No. 2111, however, encourages convicted criminals, defense attorneys, and state courts to embrace the myth that the writ of *habeas corpus ad subjiciendum* is merely a fifth, sixth, or seventh round of review—sometimes taken decades after defendants received the process due to them in a criminal trial and exhausted any direct appeals afforded by state law. This bill would require courts to appoint counsel in post-conviction habeas proceedings anytime a habeas petitioner has "a potentially meritorious claim."

Every petitioner claims he *may* be innocent or *may* have been convicted in violation of the law. But our legal system rests on the law, evidence, and authoritative judgments, not guesswork, surmise, and endless petitions. "[T]he final result of proceedings in courts of competent jurisdiction *establishes* what is correct 'in the eyes of the law,'" namely, that the prisoner is guilty. *Edwards v. Vannoy*, 593 U.S. 255, 290-291 (2021) (Gorsuch, J., concurring). Our laws must separate "the meritorious needles from the growing haystack" of habeas claims, not stack it even higher. *Brown v. Davenport*, 596 U.S. 118, 132 (2022).

I look forward to considering other parts of this criminal justice bill if legislators can agree to deny bail to repeat murderers, rapists, and human traffickers.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502311



Proclamation 41-4212

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 2501 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

Senate Bill No. 2501 seeks to give indigent parents greater freedom to select legal counsel for proceedings that affect the parent-child relationship. But it goes too far. Under this bill an attorney could be "selected by the parent" to be "compensated by the county," only for the parent to "substitute counsel" over and over again—for any reason or no reason at all. All of this must be allowed without "any action [by the court] that influences, directs, or interferes." That could invite some desperate or spiteful parents to select new counsel ad litem *ad infinitum*, in a stall tactic that harms children and burdens judicial efficiency.

Worse yet, the bill may create conflicts of interests. An attorney ad litem "represents a child during the course of a legal action" and owes "duties of undivided loyalty" to the child. *Attorney ad litem*, BLACK'S LAW DICTIONARY (12th ed.); TEX. FAM. CODE § 107.001(2). This bill, however, may tempt attorneys to divide their loyalties by deferring to the parents who appointed them, rather than seeking what is best for the client. I look forward to reviewing legislation in the future that includes reasonable safeguards against abuse.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502312



Proclamation 41-4213

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 2878 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

Senate Bill No. 2878—presented as a routine judicial omnibus, which has traditionally been noncontroversial—includes significant, stand-alone policy proposals that failed to receive adequate consideration during the legislative session. For example, the bill would allow unlimited automatic expunctions for completing any pretrial intervention program. While most of this bill should become law, parts of it should be excluded. The bill, in its current form, must be vetoed and will be placed on the special session agenda.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502314



Proclamation 41-4214

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Senate Bill No. 1, the General Appropriations Act, from the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, having been duly certified by the Comptroller of Public Accounts pursuant to Article III, Section 49a of the Texas Constitution, has been presented to me for action.

Today, I sign a two-year state budget that stays under all four constitutional spending limits and the statutory limit to spend less than the growth in population and inflation. The priorities funded in this budget include: \$51 billion in property relief funding; a historic \$2.6 billion investment in water infrastructure and additional ongoing revenues for water projects; \$5 billion for the Texas Energy Fund to create more dispatchable energy generation; funding to create the Texas Cyber Command to better protect Texas from cyber-attacks; financing for the newly established Texas Advanced Nuclear Energy Office to provide grants for nuclear energy development; and funding to improve the state's ability to respond to disasters. This budget also marks a historic increase in funding to our state's public education system and continues to keep our border secure. These ongoing commitments, along with strategic one-time investments, will keep this state the best place to live, work, and raise a family for generations to come.

However, I hereby object to and disapprove the following items from Senate Bill No. 1 and include a statement of my objections to each of those items.

**OBJECTIONS TO ITEMS OF APPROPRIATION**

**Article IX — General Provisions**

**Sec. 17.30. Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program.**

(a) In addition to amounts appropriated elsewhere in this Act, the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is appropriated \$60,000,000 out of the General Revenue Fund in fiscal year 2027 in Strategy I.1.1, Integrated Eligibility & Enrollment, to administer the implementation of the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) program for fiscal year 2027. HHSC shall operate as the lead agency to administer the program and, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture and the Texas Education Agency, work with and submit a plan to the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to administer Summer EBT.



(b) Implementation of this program and the appropriation identified above in subsection (a) is contingent upon federal laws and federal rules regarding the Summer EBT program maintaining the same match rates for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and program administration as approved as of May 30, 2025. If federal matching rates for the program or administration of the program are changed in a manner that result in a higher cost to Texas from the match rates in place on May 30, 2025, this appropriation is void.

(c) If the SNAP match rates for either benefits or program administration are revised from federal May 30, 2025, levels, HHSC must inform the Legislative Budget Board, House Appropriations Committee, Senate Finance Committee, and the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA) within 30 calendar days of the revision.

(d) In the event that rates for SNAP benefits or program administration are reduced as described in subsection (b), the Comptroller of Public Accounts shall reduce any remaining appropriation authority provided by the Act for this purpose within five business days of notification as described in subsection (c).

*As the contingency portions of this rider detail, there is significant uncertainty regarding federal matching rates for this and other similar programs. Once there is more clarity about the long-term fiscal ramifications for creating such a program, the Legislature can reconsider funding this item.*

**Sec. 18.30. Contingency for House Bill 5333.** Contingent on enactment of House Bill 5333 or similar legislation relating to the creation of the STEM Excellence Graduate Fellowship Program by the Eighty-ninth Legislature, Regular Session, the Higher Education Coordinating Board is appropriated \$2,000,000 from the General Revenue Fund in fiscal year 2026 to implement the provisions of the legislation. Any unexpended or unobligated balances remaining as of August 31, 2026, are appropriated for the same purposes for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2026.

*This veto deletes a contingency rider for legislation that did not pass.*

**Sec. 18.37. Contingency for Senate Bill 16.** Contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 16, House Bill 5337, or similar legislation relating to requiring proof of citizenship to register to vote, by the Eighty-ninth Legislature, Regular Session, the Secretary of State is appropriated \$741,080 in fiscal year 2026 and \$230,179 for fiscal year 2027 from the General Revenue Fund to Strategy B.1.1., Elections Administration, and the "Number of Full Time Equivalents (FTE)" in the agency's bill pattern is increased by 2.0 in each fiscal year to implement the provisions of the legislation. Capital budget authority is increased by \$503,931 for fiscal year 2026 and \$84,000 for fiscal year 2027.

*This veto deletes a contingency rider for legislation that did not pass.*

**Sec. 18.44. Contingency for Senate Bill 249.** Contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 249, or similar legislation relating to memorial markers for certain officers killed in the line of duty, by the Eighty-ninth Legislature, Regular Session 2025, the Department of Transportation is appropriated \$500,000 from the General Revenue Fund for the fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2025, to implement the provisions of the legislation.

*This veto deletes a contingency rider for legislation that did not pass.*

**Sec. 18.58. Contingency for Senate Bill 1361.** Contingent upon the enactment of Senate Bill 1361, or similar legislation relating to the consolidation of the small business disaster recovery loan program and the micro business disaster recovery loan program, by the Eighty-ninth Legislature, Regular Session, the Trusteed Programs Within the Office of the Governor is appropriated \$5,000,000 from the General Revenue Fund in fiscal year 2026 for transfer to the General Revenue Dedicated

Small and MicroBusiness Recovery Account No 5190 and for appropriation out of Account 5190 to implement the provisions of the bill.

*This veto deletes a contingency rider for legislation that did not pass.*

**Sec. 18.60. Contingency for Senate Bill 1413.** Contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 1413, or similar legislation relating to the procedure for amending or revoking certificates of public convenience and necessity issued to certain water utilities, by the Eighty-ninth Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, the Public Utility Commission of Texas is appropriated \$425,000 for fiscal year 2026 and \$425,000 for fiscal year 2027 in General Revenue Funds to implement the provisions of the legislation. In addition, the "Number of Full Time Equivalents" (FTEs) in the agency's bill pattern is increased by 3.0 FTE in fiscal year 2026 and 3.0 FTEs in fiscal year 2027.

*This veto deletes a contingency rider for legislation that did not pass.*

**Sec. 18.77. Contingency for Senate Bill 2487.** Contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 2487, or similar legislation relating to procedures for certain facilities providing crisis and mental health services, by the Eighty-ninth Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, the Health and Human Services Commission is appropriated \$2,500,000 from the General Revenue Fund in each fiscal year of the biennium in Strategy D.2.1, Community Mental Health Services, to implement the provisions of the legislation.

*This veto deletes a contingency rider for legislation that did not pass.*

## **SIGNING MESSAGE**

### **Article VI - Natural Resources**

#### Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

**36. Interbasin Transfer Permit Guidance.** Out of funds appropriated above, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality shall expend no staff time or resources of any type for the purpose of preparing, planning, or issuance of any permits related to an interbasin transfer of water from the Cypress Basin to any entity in or that services Regional Planning Group C as defined by the 2022 State Water Plan.

**Signing Message:** Rider 36 in the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality bill pattern is likely unconstitutional and unenforceable. This rider purports to prohibit Commission staff from expending time or resources preparing, planning, or issuing any permits related to a certain interbasin transfer of water. The Texas Water Code includes provisions governing interbasin transfers, and this attempt to make general law in the General Appropriations Act likely violates Article III, Section 35 of the Texas Constitution.

I have signed Senate Bill No. 1 together with this proclamation stating my objections in accordance with Article IV, Section 14 of the Texas Constitution.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502316

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Proclamation 41-4215

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

House Bill No. 500, from the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, having been duly certified by the Comptroller of Public Accounts pursuant to Article III, Section 49a of the Texas Constitution, has been presented to me for review and action.

I hereby object to and disapprove the following item from House Bill No. 500 and include a statement of my objections to this item.

**SECTION 1.14. TEXAS FACILITIES COMMISSION: SCIF CONSTRUCTION.**

(a) The amount of \$94,000,000 is appropriated from the general revenue fund to the Texas Facilities Commission for the two-year period beginning on the effective date of this Act for the commission to contract for the design and construction of two sensitive compartmentalized information facilities (SCIF) in a manner consistent with Strategy A.2.1, Facilities Design and Construction, as listed in Chapter 1170 (H.B. 1), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023 (the General Appropriations Act), including:

(1) \$44,000,000 to construct one SCIF in the Lubbock area, contingent upon federal sponsorship of facility clearance; and

(2) ~~\$50,000,000 to construct one SCIF in the San Antonio area, contingent upon federal sponsorship of facility clearance and consolidation of the Air Forces Cyber Command into a new headquarters at Port San Antonio.~~

(b) During the two-year period beginning on the effective date of this Act, in addition to the capital budget authority other law grants to the commission during that period, the Texas Facilities Commission may use \$94,000,000 in capital budget authority for the appropriation made by Subsection (a) of this section.

*Increasing our physical and cyber security is a priority for Texas. However, this funding is duplicative of other state initiatives including the Texas Cyber Command and would create an additional SCIF where others are currently operational. The Legislature can reconsider this item next session if the federal partner expresses direct support for such a project.*

I have signed House Bill No. 500 together with this proclamation stating my objections in accordance with Article IV, Section 14 of the Texas Constitution.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502317



Proclamation 41-4216

**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto Senate Bill No. 3 as passed by the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

Texans on each side of the Senate Bill 3 debate raise serious concerns. But one thing is clear—to ensure the highest level of safety for minors, as well as for adults, who obtain a product more dangerous than what they expected, Texas must strongly regulate hemp, and it must do so *immediately*.

Senate Bill 3 is well-intentioned. But it would never go into effect because of valid constitutional challenges. Litigation challenging the bill has already been filed, and the legal defects in the bill are undeniable. If I were to allow Senate Bill 3 to become law, its enforcement would be enjoined for years, leaving existing abuses unaddressed. Texas cannot afford to wait.

This conclusion is not speculative. The only other State to attempt a ban like Senate Bill 3 is Arkansas. In 2023, Arkansas enacted Senate Bill 358, which (like this bill) would have criminalized hemp products that Congress expressly legalized in the 2018 Farm Bill. That federal law converted hemp and hemp products from contraband to lawful commodities. The Arkansas law was challenged, and a federal court swiftly halted it in its entirety, finding it was likely preempted by federal statutes and that its criminal provisions were likely unconstitutionally vague. *See Bio Gen, LLC v. Sanders*, 690 F. Supp. 3d 927, 941 (E.D. Ark. 2023). The result in Arkansas? Their law has sat dormant, meaningless, having no effect for nearly *two years* while further legal proceedings play out. That result must be avoided in Texas.

As a former Supreme Court Justice and Attorney General of Texas, I know that Senate Bill 3 is vulnerable to the same legal attacks. At worst, Senate Bill 3 would be permanently invalidated by the courts; at best, its implementation would be delayed for years as the case winds its way through the legal system. We can do better.

What is the legal problem with Senate Bill 3? As passed, it would prohibit *anyone* from manufacturing, distributing, or possessing consumable hemp products that contain "any amount of a cannabinoid other than" CBD or CBG—regardless of whether those products fall under the federally-mandated THC threshold. It therefore criminalizes what Congress expressly legalized and puts federal and state law on a collision course: Today, federal law promises Texas farmers that they may grow hemp without fear of criminal liability. But under Senate Bill 3, the seeds used to grow those plants are "consumable products"—currently available in stores—and they naturally contain cannabinoids. What's a Texas farmer to do? Trust the federal government's promise, or fear criminal liability from the State?

Senate Bill 3 not only invites potential criminal entrapment for Texas farmers. It would also make felons of other innocent Texans, like pharmacists stocking health supplements, veterans treating PTSD, and parents caring for epileptic children with FDA-approved medications. Possessing "any amount"—even *trace* amounts—of THC results in criminal penalties, despite federal law saying "No State ... shall prohibit" the transportation of hemp products.

In addition to the preemption issues that doomed the Arkansas law, Senate Bill 3 could also be an unconstitutional taking of private property. There are many bad actors who have abused the authority granted to them by both the federal government and the State of Texas. But there are also many Texans conducting business responsibly, who invested millions of dollars planting fields or opening up retail stores in reliance on laws making hemp a lawful product to "be sold at retail or otherwise introduced into commerce." TEX. HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 443.152(a). While States may restrict the use of dangerous contraband, it is a different thing entirely to change the rules in the middle of the game, thereby interfering with "distinct investment-backed expectations" in property. *Penn Cent. Transp. Co. v. City of New York*, 438 U.S. 104, 124 (1978).

Proponents of Senate Bill 3 have acknowledged this likelihood of litigation but may not have fully processed the consequences. Just two days ago, a group of plaintiffs filed a lawsuit in Travis County District Court arguing that Senate Bill 3 is preempted by federal law and would be an unconstitutional taking in violation of both the federal and state Constitutions. They assert that the bill will "turn farmers, business owners, and consumers into criminals, despite the protections for hemp products conferred by federal law." *See* Original Pet., *CBD Pros USA v. Texas*, No. \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_Dist. Ct., Travis County, Tex., filed June 20, 2025). They are right.

Allowing Senate Bill 3 to become law—knowing that it faces a lengthy battle that will render it dead on arrival in court—would hinder rather than help us solve the public safety issues this bill seeks to contain. The problem THC poses for our communities is real. Earlier this year, a 15-year-old in Houston took a large amount of hemp gummies. When he suffered a "bad reaction," he called 911, then shot his mother and his sister repeatedly. Just this month, two teens distributed hemp products at a graduation party in Prosper. The celebration ended early when seven high school students had to be rushed to a hospital.

How did we get here?

In 2019, after the federal government passed the Farm Bill, legislators passed House Bill 1325, fixating on the *cannabis sativa* plant. Any plant variant with more than 0.3% THC by dry weight was deemed (illegal) marijuana; any variant with less was deemed (legal) hemp available to anyone, regardless of age. As it turned out, the smaller amount of THC in hemp could be multiplied and modified to make products stronger and more addictive than marijuana. Bad actors did what bad actors do—they took advantage. They engineered products with dangerously high concentrations. And they marketed lollipops and other products designed to mimic candies popular with kids. The current market is dangerously under-regulated, and children are paying the price. If Senate Bill 3 is swiftly enjoined by a court, our children will be no safer than if no law was passed, and the problems will only grow.

That is why I am vetoing Senate Bill 3 and calling a Special Legislative Session in July to craft a law that does as much as possible to corral the problems while also being structured so that it can go into effect this year.

Texas must enact a regulatory framework that protects public safety, aligns with federal law, has a fully funded enforcement structure, and can take effect without delay. Legislators could consider a structure similar to the way alcohol is regulated, with strict enforcement by an agency like the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. A sample of potential regulations could include some of the following:

- Selling or providing a THC product to a minor must be punishable as a crime;
- Sales must be prohibited near schools, churches, parks, playgrounds, and other areas frequented by children;
- Packaging must be child-resistant, tamper-evident, and resealable;
- Products must not be made, packaged, or marketed in a manner attractive to children;
- Any store selling these products must have a permit and restrict access to anyone under the age of 21, with strict penalties for any retailer that fails to comply;
- Products containing THC may not contain other psychoactive substances (*e.g.*, alcohol, tobacco, kratom);

- Testing must be required at every phase of production and manufacturing, including for both plants and derivative consumable products;
- Manufacturing and processing facilities must be subject to permitting and food safety rules;
- Permit and registration fees must suffice to support robust enforcement and testing by the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, in partnership with other state agencies;
- An operator's permit and warning/danger signs must be posted at any store selling these products;
- Sales must be limited to the hours between 10:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., and prohibited on Sundays;
- The amount of THC permissible in each product must be restricted and an individual may make only a limited number of purchases in a given period of time;
- Labels must include a surgeon general-style warning, a clear disclosure of all ingredients, including the THC content, and a scannable barcode or QR code linking to test results;
- Fraudulently creating or displaying manifests or lab results must be punishable as felony offenses;
- Public consumption, consumption on the premises of any store that sells these products, and possession of an open container in a vehicle must be punishable as crimes;
- The Attorney General, district attorneys, and county attorneys must have authority to pursue violations under the Deceptive Trade Practices Act;
- Local governments must have the option to prohibit or limit stores selling these products;
- Excise taxes must be assessed on these products to fund oversight and enforcement; and
- Additional funding must be provided to ensure law enforcement have sufficient resources to vigorously enforce restrictions.

This list, of course, is not exhaustive. But it may provide items to consider in a regulatory system that is strict, fair, and legally sustainable.

Passing a law is not the same thing as actually solving a problem. Texas needs a bill that is enforceable and will make our communities safer *today*, rather than years from now. Next month, the Legislature will have the opportunity to address this serious issue. I look forward to working with them to ensure that we get it right.

Since the Eighty-Ninth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the secretary of state and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 22nd day of June, 2025.

Greg Abbott, Governor

TRD-202502318

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