



March 27, 2023

Number 6

The 88th Legislature has officially reached the halfway point of the current session. A few key items related to the parks and recreation industry have been filed and even discussed in committee hearings.

Cities Testify Against Parkland Dedication Bill

Senate Bill 558 by Hughes and House Bill 1526 by Harris relate to parkland dedication ordinances by municipalities with a population of over 800,000. These bills would significantly hinder parkland dedication ordinances in these cities, which are vital funding sources for park expansion and development in Texas cities seeing historic population growth.

The cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and Austin each had officials and advocates testify in opposition to this bill at the House Land & Resource Management committee hearing on Wednesday, March 22. Ultimately, the bill was left pending in committee and a committee hearing on SB 558 is set for Wednesday, March 29.

Texas Land & Water Conservation Fund Bills

In January, TRAPS joined a coalition of over 50 of the state's leading land and water conservation, agricultural, wildlife, and sportsmans' organizations in support of the establishment of the Texas Land and Water Conservation Fund (TLWCF). HB 3165 and SB 2485 would establish and create a governing board for the TLWCF led by the General Land Office. With excess dollars in the Economic Stabilization Fund, HJR 138 would send a constitutional amendment to Texas voters that could dedicate \$2 billion to the TLWCF to either a trust fund or endowment, funding meaningful land and water conservation into the state's future.

More information on this initiative will be available soon so that TRAPS members can advocate for this game-changing piece of legislation.

Bill Watch

See the Bill Watch on the Legislation & Advocacy page of the TRAPS website. If there is a bill that your agency is interested in, please contact Jeff Achee at jachee@harkerheights.gov.

For our legislative efforts to succeed, we will need the entire parks and recreation community. That includes your staff, parks board members, council members, citizens, friends, family, and anyone else that loves their parks. For more information on the legislative process and how to get involved, visit the TRAPS Legislation and Advocacy page.

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