



April 14, 2023

Number 7

Texas Land & Water Conservation Fund Bills

On the House side of the Capitol, HB 3165 and HJR 138 (Holland), which would establish the Texas Land and Water Conservation Fund (TLWCF), would provide a significant, long-term state funding source for enhanced conservation efforts across the state. A large portion of the TLWCF would go towards providing grants for the acquisition, development, and renovation of both state and local parks. Over 50 of the state's leading parks and public land, land and water conservation, agricultural, wildlife, and sportsmans' organizations are working together to promote this landmark piece of legislation.

HB 3165 and HJR 138 were voted unanimously out of the House Natural Resources Committee and await a vote on the floor. SB 2485 (Kolkhorst) was referred to the Senate Water, Agriculture and Rural Affairs committee but has not yet been scheduled for a public hearing.

Centennial Parks Fund Bill

The Senate Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs Committee voted unanimously in support of SB 1684 and SJR 74 (Parker), which would establish a Centennial Parks Conservation Fund by investing at least \$500 million to acquire land and develop parks. The original version of this bill included language that would allow a portion of this fund to be utilized for "grants to political subdivisions for local parks as provided by Chapter 24," meaning that a portion of the funding would go towards the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Local Parks Grant program. In a committee substitute presented to the committee before their vote, the local park language was removed.

TRAPS testified at the committee hearing on April 13 on the bill and expressed concern for the removal of local parks within this historic funding opportunity.

Parkland Dedication Bills Advance

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. Although the bill was altered to exempt single-family housing and updated some of the language surrounding commercial parkland dedication ordinances, TRAPS still fully supports the ability of municipalities and counties to make decisions on how to fund their parks through parkland dedication ordinances.

After being voted through the Land & Resource Management Committee, HB 1526 was voted through the House by a vote of 119-24 and the Senate version now awaits a vote on the floor.

Cati's Act Advances to the House Floor

HB 59 (Goodwin) would require an organization, including a day camp, youth camp, school, preschool, kindergarten, nursery school, child-care facility, or any other facility providing child-care services to require that a child's parent has provided written affirmation that the child can swim or provide flotation devices to those who cannot when swimming in a public pool.

The bill was voted out of the House Public Health Committee and awaits a vote on the House floor.

Texas Municipal League Monitoring Important City-Related Bills

The Texas Municipal League is closely monitoring and working on bills that are related to cities, which number in the thousands every session. See their latest Legislative Update here:

<https://www.tml.org/579/Legislative-Update>

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.

TRAPS member cities may use the material herein for any purpose. No other person or entity may reproduce, duplicate, or distribute any part of this document without the written authorization of the Texas Recreation and Park Society.