

Written by Betsy Blevins
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May 19, 2011 - As of this writing, there are only 16 days left in the 82nd Legislative Session. Friday was the last day that the House could hear bills that originated in the House, with the exception of local bills. Next week, the House will focus on bills that have been passed by the Senate. This week, I will discuss a few bills that were passed by the House this week and have now been sent to the Senate for approval.

House Bill (HB) 12, relating to the prohibition of sanctuary cities and about which I wrote last week, passed the House on Tuesday. It has now been sent to the Senate for consideration.

About five years ago, the federal government banned the sale and manufacture of incandescent light bulbs to encourage people to use the more energy-efficient florescent bulbs. For many reasons, people may need or prefer incandescent bulbs. HB 2510 provides that an incandescent light bulb that is manufactured and sold within the state of Texas is not subject to interstate commerce laws nor the federal ban. The bill also provides that bulbs manufactured in Texas be stamped "Made in Texas" and for the entirety of the bulb to be produced in the state.

Recently, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) began using advanced imaging technology (AIT) in airports around the country. Concerned parties object that AIT scanners, commonly referred to as full-body scanner technology, are intrusive and violate a passenger's privacy. A traveler's only alternative to walking through the scanner is to allow a TSA employee to search the traveler's entire body. There have been allegations that travelers have been touched inappropriately by TSA employees, and that individuals with disabilities have had to remove prosthetics and have been detained while wheelchairs, crutches and other equipment are scrutinized. House Bill 1937 seeks to address these issues and traveler concerns by classifying certain invasive and inappropriate conduct used in certain searches as official oppression.

Feral hogs in Texas are responsible for approximately \$400 million in direct damages to Texas every year. There are an estimated two million feral hogs in Texas and feral hogs are found in nearly every county of the state. Helicopters are currently used in certain areas by landowners to hunt feral hogs in order to reduce hog populations. However, the hunters who are not the landowners are not allowed to hunt hogs from helicopters. House Bill 716 would allow landowners, with approval from Parks and Wildlife, to have hunters hunt feral hogs from helicopters on their property.

Capitol Watch: Phillips discusses several bills passed by the House of Representatives recently

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For more information on these bills or any other legislative matter, please contact my office by writing to P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768-2910 or by emailing me at larry.phillips@house.state.tx.us. My district office phone number is (903) 891-7297.