

**YOUNG CONSERVATIVES OF TEXAS PRESENTS:
THE BEST AND THE WORST
UNDER-THE-RADAR BILLS OF EARLY FILING**

THE BEST

Property Rights
HB 44, Menendez

HB 44, if enacted, would protect the rights of property owners against encroachment by Home Owners Associations. If enacted, owners would be protected in constructing structures which are traditionally appurtenant to a home (garages, pools, patios, etc) on neighboring property which they own. This bill creates some small but important protections for property owners.

Abortion
HB85/HJR22, Simpson

This bill and amendment would guarantee that no taxpayer funds are spent on abortion. Abortion is the murder of an unborn child. No citizen should have their money confiscated to subsidize such an abhorrent procedure.

Voter Approval for Annexation
HB 107, Brown

Currently home-rule cities are allowed to annex adjacent property against the wishes of the people who live in that area. HB 107 would require that property owners in areas which cities wish to annex vote to approve such a measure. Citizens should not be subjected to the rule of a neighboring government without their consent through an election.

Elected Transportation Commissioner
HB 116, McClendon

As of today, the transportation commission and transportation commission are appointed and operate to the satisfaction of the governor. Rep. McClendon's bill would allow voters to directly elect a Commissioner of Transportation. In a state in which voters have a say in who their agriculture, land, and railroad commissioners are, voters should be given direct control over the leadership of our department of transportation.

THE WORST

Expansion of ETJ
HB 91, Cook

HB 91, if enacted, would expand the extraterritorial jurisdiction of municipalities with populations of 25,000-50,000 from two to three miles. No citizen should be subjected to the control of a municipality without their consent, whether through annexation or expansion of ETJ.

Abolishing the SBOE and THECB
HB 104, Brown

YCT considers HB 104 to be the most dangerous and destructive bill of early filing. If enacted, it would abolish the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and strip the elected State Board of Education down to a shell of its self. The powers of both boards would be transferred to the unelected bureaucrats at the Texas Education Agency. It is patently absurd that, after an historic election in which the people rose up to reject unresponsive government, we are considering removing the power to control education policy from the hands of voters in favor of putting that power in the hands of unelected bureaucrats. Furthermore, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is one of the few sources of honest statistics on higher education in Texas and regularly prescribes effective policy reforms for higher education.

Minority Cancer Awareness Month
HB 114, McClendon

HB 114, if enacted, would declare April to be "Minority Cancer Awareness Month." It is a comically absurd extension of multiculturalism which would have our state government give special recognition to minorities with cancer while disregarding all white Texans who are suffering. From affirmative action programs to our state's hate crimes law, we already do too much to divide and categorize our citizens by race.

THE BEST CONTINUED

Drug Testing Unemployment Benefits Recipients

HB 126, Legler

Modeled on a measure which nearly passed during the 81st session, HB 126, if enacted, would require that all unemployment recipients undergo drug testing. To receive unemployment benefits a person must be ready, willing, and able to work. Those who choose to do drugs while unemployed cannot pass a drug test, cannot be hired in many businesses, and therefore are not ready, willing, or able to work.

Election Ethics

HB 239, Parker

HB 239 would make it illegal to pay deputy voter registrars to register voters on a commission basis. Deputy voter registrars should facilitate registration for those who wish to registers. Paying per-registration will inevitably lead to fraud as deputy voter registrars attempt to artificially inflate their earnings.

Accurate Ballot Language

HB 360, Jackson, J

This bill would require that municipalities which propose bonds or tax increases clearly describe the effect of such measures in the ballot language. Too often municipalities seek to hide the effects of ballot measures from the voters in hopes that voters will be tricked out of their money. This is a common sense measure which protects the interests of voters.

Tuition Caps

HB 459, White

During the last budget deficit in 2003, the power to set tuition rates was transferred from the Texas Legislature to the universities and the unelected boards of regents. This “tuition deregulation” allowed universities to nearly double their student’s tuition over the following years. With the current budget deficit and likely cuts coming for higher education, it is important that those cuts be made from research and administrative spending. Without regulation, the universities would be free to make up any cuts on the backs of students. Representative White’s bill would prevent this by freezing already sufficient tuition rates at their current levels for the 2012 biennium.

THE WORST CONTINUED

Tuition Revenue Bonds

HB 134, Villareal / SB 272, Zaffirini

Both bills represent large packages of “tuition revenue bonds” for higher education. These bonds allow universities to go into debt, backed by the tuition of further students, in order to construct new buildings on campus. The problems facing higher education are not brick-and-mortar problems. They are systematic. The last thing our universities need is a credit card with which to construct expensive facilities, all at the expense of students.

Annual Budget Sessions

HB 162 / HJR 33, Raymond

This bill and amendment would call for the legislature to come back to Austin in even numbered years for a budget session. Texas’s practice of having our legislature meet only once every two years has been an effective one in keeping government interference with our economy to a minimum. Limited government starts with less government; adding a budget session in the even-numbered years would inevitably lead to more policy making, and more bad policy.

Transportation Reinvestment Zones

HB 204, Pickett

Pickett’s bill would create transportation reinvestment zones; a scheme to fund transportation through local property taxes. Property taxes are an antiquated way of gaining revenue, effectively taxing thousands of Texans out of their homes each year. Any expansion of property taxes should be opposed. Furthermore, transportation in Texas does not face a funding crisis, but rather a crisis of priorities. Diversions from the motor fuels tax must be ended and funding must be prioritized towards roads instead of wasteful mass transit projects before any tax increase should be considered.

Framework for Homosexual Adoption

HB 415, Anchia

HB 415 would remove “Mother” and “Father” from the State’s adoption forms and replace those labels with gender neutral terms. This measure is clearly intended to accommodate homosexual marriage and adoption by homosexual couples.

THE BEST CONTINUED

Abolishing Business Subsidy Funds

HB 465, Burnam

YCT found ourselves surprised to be endorsing a bill sponsored by Representative Burnam, one of the most liberal members in the Texas House. HB 465, however, is a good bill which would do away with the Texas Enterprise Fund, Texas Emerging Technologies Fund, and others such funds intended to subsidize one business at the expense of others. While we're sure that Burnam intends the bill as an attack on conservative Gov. Rick Perry, we believe the governor's words explain why these funds should be done away with. Businesses choose to come to Texas because of our lower taxes, fair tort laws, and predictable regulatory climate ... not because they are paid. Texas should trust that the market will bring businesses to Texas

State Legislatures Repeal Amendment

HCR 17, Creighton

Since the enactment of the 17th amendment, states have not had a proper check against federal power. HCR 17 would call for a constitutional convention to propose an amendment which would allow for the repeal of any federal law or regulation upon the vote of 2/3 of the state legislatures. Honorable mention goes to Representative Truitt's HCR 19 which would call on Congress to submit an equivalent measure to the states for ratification.

Spending Limits at Population + Inflation

HJR 42, Callegari

The new 101 member Republican supermajority offers a unique opportunity for Republicans and conservatives to limit government spending for years to come. Representative Callegari's amendment would limit future spending growth to the increase in population and inflation, effectively capping per-person spending at current levels in real dollars. Such an amendment would forever ensure that Texas has limited government, regardless of Republican's political fortunes going forward.

THE WORST CONTINUED

Legislative Fellows Program

HB 216, Gallego

In HB 216, Representative Gallego proposes the creation of a Legislative Fellows Program in which students, selected by university presidents, would be placed in state legislative offices to work at taxpayer expense. This program would effectively be used by university presidents to award their lackeys in student government with paid positions each legislative session. For the taxpayers' investment, we would be rewarded with even more narcissistic aspiring politicians working in our halls of government. Dozens of YCT members get jobs at the capitol each session, and they do it the old fashioned way: they convince a representative that they will be a valuable staff member and they earn their keep. Programs like the "Legislative Fellows Program" make a mockery of all people who rightfully earn a job working at the Capitol.

Foreign Identification Acceptable for Drivers License

HB 277, Alonzo

This bill would guarantee that persons applying for a driver's license can use foreign identification to acquire a driver's license. Driver's licenses have, unfortunately, become defacto state IDs. Foreign ID cards cannot be trusted for their validity. Those applying for a driver's license should be required to present domestic identification or papers showing their legal residency in the United States.

Additional School Counselors

HB 285, Lucio

HB 285 would increase the number of school counselors required on-staff at a public school from one for every 500 students to one for every 300 students. The idea that a lack of counselors is amongst the great problems with public education is laughable. Students don't need more counseling, and in fact, many counselors serve an administrative role as it is. Regulations and spending on public education need to be aimed at the classroom, not at administrative programs.

THE WORST CONTINUED

DWI Checkpoints

HB 439, Smith, T

HB 439 would allow police in our state's metropolitan counties to set-up arbitrary DWI checkpoints. Texans should not be stopped and harassed by the police without probable cause.

Disclosure of Donors on Political Committee Advertisements

HB 306, Jackson, J

Representative Jackson's bill would require all political committees in this state to list on their advertisements all people who have contributed \$10,000 or more to their committee. This measure, if enacted, would create a logistical nightmare for many political committees who have many large donors. It would, in effect, either stifle speech or cap contributions, or both.

Cesar Chavez Memorial Highway

HB 468, Burnam

This bill would name a portion of I-35 W in Tarrant County "The Cesar Chavez Memorial Highway." Cesar Chavez has no special connection to Tarrant County or Texas and is merely a darling of leftists and the La Raza crowd. Texas should stick with naming its landmarks after notable and historic Texans, not just someone a state representative likes and respects.

All Election Days are State Holidays

SB 210, Ellis

Senator Ellis's bill would declare every election day a state holiday and allow all state employees the day off. Texas state employees have plenty of paid holidays and work short enough hours that they have more than enough time on Election Day in order to vote. This measure seems clearly aimed at freeing up state employees to campaign for Democrats and other grow-government candidates on Election Day.

Permanent Revocation of Drivers License upon 2nd DWI

SB 231, Nelson

This overly punitive measure would permanent revoke a person's drivers license upon their 2nd conviction for Driving While Intoxicated. While DWI is a serious offense that demands serious penalties, this measure goes too far. Those convicted of DWI should have the opportunity, at some point, to prove that they are no longer a danger behind the wheel. Limiting them from having a driver's license could limit them from having and keeping a job and participating fully in society.

*To learn more about Young Conservatives of Texas or for a copy of their legislative agenda,
please visit www.YCT.org.*