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Lieutenant Governor of Texas
President of the Senate

2019 Interim Legislative Charges:

Business & Commerce Committee
Criminal Justice Committee
Education Committee
Finance Committee
Health and Human Services Committee
Higher Education Committee
Intergovernmental Relations Committee
Natural Resources Committee
Property Tax Committee
State Affairs Committee
Transportation Committee
Water & Rural Affairs Committee
Veterans and Border Security Committee

October 30, 2019

Business and Commerce Committee

- **Information Technology:** Review the state's major information technology infrastructure. Examine cybersecurity preparedness and reporting requirements for state and local governments and political subdivisions. Identify opportunities for expanded partnership and coordination between state and local officials. Compare state and local government prevention and response efforts with those of private businesses facing similar threats. Make recommendations for cost-effective ways to strengthen and protect consumer data and personal information against privacy breaches and ransomware threats.
- **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles:** Examine current state and local laws regulating unmanned aerial vehicles. Identify any legislative changes needed to streamline regulation in a manner that promotes commerce and innovation while protecting public safety and the privacy and property rights of Texans.
- **Electricity:** Assess the electricity market in Texas. Examine changes in customer demand, such as on-site storage, distributed generation, and electric vehicles. Study the usage of "non-wires alternatives," including energy storage, and recommend legislative changes if needed. Identify barriers to the electric market at the state or local level. Make recommendations to maintain grid reliability and encourage the continued success of the electric market.
- **Health Care Costs:** Study the cost of health care in Texas. Make recommendations to increase access to affordable quality health care. Explore potential opportunities and recommend best practices to continue to curb rising health care costs. Study and report on ways to increase consumer health care options, provide flexibility in the market, and decrease the uninsured rate in Texas, including 1115 and 1332 waivers.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Business and Commerce passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bill 14, relating to broadband service or facilities provided by an electric cooperative;
 - Senate Bill 1264, relating to consumer protections against certain medical and health care billing by certain out-of-network providers;
 - House Bill 2536, relating to transparency related to drug costs; and
 - Senate Bill 1004 (85th Legislature), relating to the deployment of network nodes in public right-of-way.

Criminal Justice Committee

- **Supporting Crime Victims:** Examine expenditures and revenue sources for state-funded programs and services supporting victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. Report on existing programs, individuals and communities served, and future needs. Identify where state agencies that receive state appropriations for these services are coordinating and make recommendations to eliminate duplication and achieve optimal service delivery.
- **Keeping Vaping Devices/E-Cigarettes Out of the Hands of Children:** Consider the emerging public safety concerns from the rise in “vaping” and e-cigarette use by minors. Study whether current criminal penalties are sufficient to deter individuals from selling these devices and substances used to fill these devices to minors.
- **Combating Gang Violence:** Study current interdiction methods utilized by law enforcement and governmental entities to reduce the number of juveniles who join gangs. Make recommendations for statutory changes to reduce gang violence in schools and communities.
- **Crimes Against Students with Disabilities:** Examine whether current laws are effectively protecting students with disabilities. Make recommendations to improve student safety, while also protecting educators’ abilities to maintain order and safety for everyone in the classroom.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bill 38, relating to the offense of hazing;
 - Senate Bill 719, relating to increasing the punishment for certain conduct constituting the offense of capital murder; and
 - House Bill 3582, relating to the eligibility for deferred adjudication community supervision of defendants who committed certain intoxication offenses.

Education Committee

- **Teacher Workforce:** Examine best practice models to recruit, prepare, and retain highly effective teachers. Review teacher professional development, continuing education, and training for teachers, and recommend improved training methods to improve student academic outcomes.
- **Alternative Education Students:** Study current local, state, and national policies and programs for alternative education student populations. Make recommendations to strengthen existing programs and encourage the development of new innovative models.
- **Adult Education:** Identify and evaluate current innovative programs that assist non-traditional students (first-time adult learners, re-enrolling students, working adults, and educationally disadvantaged students) in completing a high school diploma, GED, post-secondary degree, or workforce credential, including a review of adult education charter schools and their performance framework. Make recommendations to help successful expansion with partnered business and education entities.
- **Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs:** Review disciplinary alternative education programs, including lengths of placement, quality of instruction, and the physical conditions of these facilities. Make recommendations to support and promote the academic success of these programs and enhance the ability of public schools to meet the needs of these students through innovative school models.
- **Digital Learning:** Assess the Texas Virtual School Network and recommend model legislation that improves digital learning for students, families, and educators in a 21st Century classroom.
- **Special Education Services:** Evaluate ongoing strategies to continuously improve special education services for students in public schools including, but not limited, to the Texas Education Agency's corrective action plan.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Education passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bill 11, relating to policies, procedures, and measures for school safety and mental health promotion in public schools and the creation of the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium;
 - House Bill 3, relating to public school finance and public education; and

- House Bill 3906, relating to the assessment of public school students, including the development and administration of assessment instruments, and technology permitted for use by students.

Finance Committee

- **Investment of State Funds:** Review the investment strategies and performance of funds invested through the Teacher Retirement System, the Permanent School Fund, and university funds. Make recommendations to better coordinate and leverage Texas' purchasing power to maximize investment income to the state.
- **Agency Technology:** Review current and prospective technology related purchases and upgrades in state agencies. Identify areas of overlap and make recommendations to eliminate duplication, improve efficiency, save costs, and improve performance.
- **Performance Based-Contracting:** Review and determine best practices for executing performance-based contracting across all health and human service agencies, and other selected agencies, as applicable. Identify which services utilize performance-based contracting, as well as their outcomes. Recommend specific strategies for improving and expanding performance-based contracting across all health and human service agencies, and other selected agencies, as applicable.
- **Spending Limit:** Examine options and make recommendations for strengthening restrictions on appropriations established in Article VIII, Section 22, of the Texas Constitution, including related procedures defined in statute. Consider options for ensuring available revenues above spending limit are reserved for tax relief.
- **Higher Education Research Programs:** Create a comprehensive list of research projects conducted by higher education institutions that are funded by state expenditures, including an inventory of funding streams and programs supporting identified research projects. Identify best practice methods to improve efficiency and coordination of research among university systems, eliminate duplication, and align research projects with the goals of the state.
- **Business Personal Property Tax:** Study the economic dynamics of the current business personal property tax. Consider the economic and fiscal effects of increased exemptions to the business personal property tax, versus its elimination. Following such study, make recommended changes to law.

- **Natural Disaster Funding:** Review federal, state, and local eligibility and receipt of disaster funds from Community Development Block Grants - Disaster Relief and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Identify any barriers to the effective utilization of those funds and recommend any changes to statute, rule, or practice to promote the efficient deployment of those funds and expedite recovery by affected citizens, businesses, and communities.

- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Finance passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bill 12, relating to the contributions to and benefits under the Teacher Retirement System;
 - House Bill 1525, relating to the administration and collection of sales and use taxes applicable to sales involving marketplace providers;
 - House Bill 3384, relating to the authority of the comptroller to conduct a limited-scope review of an appraisal district located in an area declared by the governor to be a disaster area;
 - House Bill 4388, relating to the management of the permanent school fund by the School Land Board and the State Board of Education and a study regarding distributions from the permanent school fund to the available school fund;
 - House Bill 4611, relating to certain distributions to the available school fund;
 - Appropriations for behavioral health services, including funding for state hospital construction, the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium (Senate Bill 11), mental health waitlist reduction, and substance abuse and opioid addiction;
 - Contingent upon voter approval, study the implementation of House Bill 492 and House Joint Resolution 34, relating to a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of a portion of the appraised value of certain property damaged by a disaster;
 - District implementation of increases in teacher compensation provided by the 86th Legislature; and
 - Efficiencies in state-funded health care programs that reduce or contain costs and improve quality of care. Assess the quality and performance of health plans that contract with the state, including contract compliance, financial performance and stability, quality metrics, and consumer surveys, among other indicators. Monitor the implementation of Health and Human Services Commission Rider 19 and Article IX, Section 10.06.

Health and Human Services Committee

- **Health Care Costs:** Examine the state health and human services finance system including, but not limited to, the following programs and methods of finance: Local Provider Participation Funds, the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Program, Medicaid 1115 waivers and Section 1332 State Innovation waivers, Pay for Quality programs, the Quality Incentive Payment Program, and other state and local funding used to finance health care systems in Texas. Identify ways to streamline functions and reduce unnecessarily burdensome and costly requirements in the Texas Medicaid program. Provide recommendations to ensure the sustainability of the state's health and human services system and judicious use of taxpayer dollars.
- **Heart Health:** Analyze the prevalence and cost impact of heart disease to state health care programs. Provide recommendations to increase program collaboration and reduce the long-term costs associated with heart disease, stroke, and related risk factors. Identify and recommend ways to address the impact of heart disease on women's health.
- **Public Health:** Examine the emerging public health concerns from the rise in e-cigarette use and "vaping," especially among minors. Determine if additional policies or laws are needed to protect the public's health.
- **Rural Health:** Examine and determine ways to improve health care delivery in rural and medically underserved areas of the state. Determine whether additional funding provided during the 86th Legislative Session has helped to ensure more accessible and quality health care in rural areas.
- **Strengthening Families:** Examine Department of Family Protective Services procedures and grounds for placing a child into the child welfare system and the termination of parental rights. Make recommendations on ways to protect children who are involved with the child welfare system while preserving families under state law. Identify ways faith-based and other community organizations can assist in preserving or reunifying families involved with the child welfare system.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - The continued implementation of Senate Bill 11 (85th Legislature) and Community-Based Care by the Department of Family and Protective Services;

- Behavioral health programs, including implementation of the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium (Senate Bill 11), state hospitals, and strategies to address substance abuse and opioid addiction;
- Child care quality and safety;
- Medicaid medical transportation program relating to House Bill 1576;
- Senate Bill 21, including strategies to address tobacco and nicotine use, including e-cigarettes and vaping, by adolescents;
- Maternal mortality and infant health initiatives, including the women's health programs administered by the Health and Human Services Commission;
- Initiatives to reduce Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse, as well as other cost containment strategies; and
- Medicaid managed care oversight and accountability.

Higher Education Committee

- **Community College Service Areas:** Review the capacity of Texas community colleges to meet the goals of 60X30TX. Determine whether community college taxing districts, service areas, and geographic areas are aligned to meet the needs of students and communities throughout the state. Consider the fiscal impact of and recommend effective funding strategies for dual credit, and distance and online learning for community college districts.
- **Data Transparency:** Explore methods to improve data sharing and transparency among state agencies, school districts and charter schools, and higher education institutions. Consider best practices to increase the ability of high schools and higher education institutions to support student post-secondary access and degree completion and how to provide policymakers with data on each. Recommend methods of integrating existing data systems at the K-12 and higher education levels to provide real-time support and direction for students.
- **Facility Needs:** Review the infrastructure formula for general academic institutions, evaluating the current facility needs, as well as the projected needs based upon anticipated enrollment growth. Consider methods of how state funds can be best used in partnership with funds of university systems and private and local government funds. Recommend whether a rolling review of higher education facilities and funding would provide the state with a better method of addressing facility issues.
- **Adult Learner Students:** Examine existing innovative programs in higher education institutions that assist non-traditional students in completing a degree or credential, including first-time adult learners, re-enrolling students, first generation students, working adults, and at-risk students. Provide recommendations on methods the state can use to partner with higher education institutions to expand successful programs throughout the state.
- **Formula Funding Review:** Review funding formulas for general academic institutions to ensure formulas support the individual mission of institutions and their students. Consider and make recommendations on potential improvements to the formulas to better meet the needs of students and institutions.
- **Health Institution Formula Funding Review:** Review the mission-specific formulas created by the 86th Legislature for The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, and The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, and make recommendations on whether the mission-specific formulas should be expanded.

- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Higher Education passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bill 16, relating to a student loan repayment assistance program for certain full-time peace officers in this state;
 - Senate Bill 25, relating to measures to facilitate the transfer, academic progress, and timely graduation of students in higher education;
 - Senate Bill 1757, relating to student loan repayment assistance under the math and science scholars loan repayment program. Examine other methods and make recommendations to promote and expand teaching as a profession in Texas;
 - House Bill 3808, relating to measures to facilitate the timely graduation of an attainment of marketable skills by students in public higher education. Consider and recommend methods to increase work-study and apprenticeship programs throughout the state; and
 - Senate Bill 810 (85th Legislature), relating to open educational resources. Report on the effectiveness of the Open Educational Resource Grant Program on college textbook affordability.

Intergovernmental Relations Committee

- **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program:** Review existing regulations governing the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program and the Qualified Allocation Plan to determine whether regulations exist that unnecessarily increase the cost of developing and maintaining affordable housing. Make recommendations to provide regulatory relief and provide greater development of affordable housing in Texas.
- **Federal Housing Review:** Study all federal housing programs accessible to Texas. Make recommendations that ensure the state maximizes the use of those programs.
- **Infrastructure Resiliency:** Examine the authority special purpose districts have to generate natural disaster resilient infrastructure. Determine ways state government can work with special purpose districts to mitigate future flooding and promote more resilient infrastructure. Make recommendations on how special purpose districts may use their statutory authority to assist in mitigating damage from future natural disasters.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bill 1303, relating to landowner rights in a city's extraterritorial jurisdiction;
 - Senate Bill 1474, relating to private activity bonds; and
 - House Bill 2330, relating to simplifying disaster assistance.

Joint Charges for Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee and Water and Rural Affairs Committee

- **Local Economic Development Incentives:** Study the use of local tax abatements allowed under Chapter 313 of the Texas Tax Code. Make recommendations to promote transparency and enhance effectiveness of tax abatements, capital investment incentives, and similar programs.
- **Eminent Domain:** Examine current law regarding the balance of private property rights and continued improvement in oil and gas infrastructure. Make recommendations to ensure stability between private property owner protections and emergent oil and gas infrastructure.
- **Future Water Supply:** Examine current laws, processes, and water storage options and availability. Make recommendations promoting the state's water supply, storage, availability, valuation, movement, and development of new sources.
- **River Authority Infrastructure:** Examine the roles and responsibilities of river authorities in maintaining their managed assets including, but not limited to, dams. Evaluate the impact on the economy, water supply, and flood control due to deferred maintenance. Make recommendations to promote infrastructure stability and maintain the usability of these bodies of water.
- **Groundwater Regulatory Framework:** Study the state's groundwater regulatory framework and make recommendations to improve groundwater regulation, management, and permitting.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Economic Development and Water and Rural Affairs passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under each committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bills 6, 7, 8, and 500, relating to disaster response and recovery, disaster funds, state-wide flood planning, and dam maintenance;
 - Senate Bill 698, related to expedited permitting;
 - Senate Bill 700, relating to water utility ratemaking reform;
 - Senate Bill 2272, relating to certain amendment and revocation procedures;
 - House Bill 1325, relating to the production and regulation of hemp; and
 - House Bill 3557, relating to civil and criminal liability for engaging in certain conduct involving a critical infrastructure facility.

Property Tax Committee

- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of the following legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Property Tax passed by the 86th Legislature. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bill 2, relating to ad valorem taxation.

State Affairs Committee

- **Human Trafficking:** Examine opportunities and make recommendations to reduce the profitability of and demand for human trafficking in Texas. Determine ways to increase public awareness on the proliferation of human trafficking, as well as resources for victims and survivors. Review the interaction between local, state, and federal agencies in responding to and prosecuting human trafficking and sex trafficking offenses in Texas' five most populous counties. Make recommendations to ensure law enforcement agencies and prosecutors have the tools necessary to promptly and thoroughly respond to these crimes.
- **Elections:** Study the integrity and security of voter registration rolls, voting machines, and voter qualification procedures to reduce election fraud in Texas. Specifically, study and make recommendations to: 1) ensure counties are accurately verifying voter eligibility after voter registration; 2) improve training requirements for mail-in ballot signature verification committees; 3) ensure every voter has access to a polling station, particularly in counties that have adopted countywide polling; 4) allow the voter registrar, county clerk, and Secretary of State to suspend an unqualified voter's registration or remove an ineligible voter from a list of registered voters; and 5) ensure compliance with laws that prohibit school trustees and employees from improperly using public funds to advocate for or against any candidate, measure, or political party.
- **Conscience Protections for Professionals:** Assess current legal protections in Texas law for professionals and students studying to pursue a professional license that have an conscience-based objection that could interfere with a professional service. Evaluate any discrimination by state agencies against an applicant for or holder of an occupational license based on a sincerely held religious belief. Make recommendations to protect Texas professionals with conscience objections.
- **Private Personal Data:** Study how state agencies sell or otherwise distribute the personal data of Texas residents and recommend whether additional measures are needed to prevent the unwanted disclosure of personal information.
- **Taxpayer Lobbying:** Study how governmental entities use public funds for political lobbying purposes. Examine what types of governmental entities use public funds for lobbying purposes. Make recommendations to protect taxpayers from paying for lobbyists who may not represent the taxpayers' interests.

- **Protecting the Unborn:** Study and recommend ways Texas can further protect the lives of the unborn, including fetal heartbeat legislation and any other law or regulation that protects life.
- **Second Amendment:** Examine Second Amendment legislation passed since the 84th Legislative Session including open carry, campus carry, and lowering the license to carry fee. Determine the impact these laws have made on furthering and protecting Second Amendment rights. Make recommendations that may further protect and enhance Texans' Second Amendment right to bear arms.
- **Personal Property Protections:** Examine prosecution rates for thefts involving property valued under \$1,000. Make recommendations to ensure law enforcement agencies and prosecutors have the tools necessary to thoroughly protect Texans' personal property from theft.
- **Lobbying Loopholes:** Review current lobby laws and examine exceptions that allow certain individuals to avoid registration as lobbyists. Consider whether the exceptions are fair, transparent, and promote the public's trust in their elected officials and governmental institutions. Propose whether these exceptions should be limited or removed so that all people engaging in lobbying must report their lobbying activities.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on State Affairs passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - Senate Bill 22, relating to prohibiting certain transactions between a governmental entity and an abortion provider; and
 - Senate Bill 39, relating to the imposition of fines, fees, and court costs in criminal courts.

Transportation Committee

- **Safety:** Study the primary causes for traffic-related accidents and fatalities, including fatality rates as a result of intoxicated driving. Make recommendations for effective strategies to improve roadway safety.
- **Project Delivery:** Evaluate major roadway construction projects that have begun since voters approved new funding sources in 2014 and 2015. Make recommendations to ensure on-time project completion and improve cost efficiencies.
- **Texas Department of Transportation Flight Services:** Evaluate the current funding, maintenance procedures, and staffing levels at Texas Department of Transportation's Flight Services. Make recommendations to ensure the safest fleet and most efficient service.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Transportation passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - The Legislature's new funding for the driver's license program as funded in the General Appropriations Act;
 - The Legislature's funding for grants to counties to be used for repair of county roads as funded in the General Appropriations Act;
 - SB 198, relating to payment for the use of a highway toll project;
 - SB 616, as it relates to the analysis of the opportunities and challenges of transferring the driver license program to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles;
 - SB 1915, relating to the board of pilot commissioners for Harris County ports; and
 - SB 2223, as it relates to two-way directional routes.

Veteran Affairs and Border Security

- **Veteran Treatment Courts:** Review the effectiveness of diverting veterans from the traditional criminal justice system to veteran treatment courts. Make recommendations to strengthen veteran treatment court outcomes and expand access to locations not currently served by the courts.
- **Veteran Health Care:** Examine the adequacy of long-term health care services and support options for veterans in Texas. Identify under-served areas and barriers to accessing quality care for both institutional as well as home and community based settings. Discuss the potential impact of federal reforms, such as the implementation of the Veterans Affairs MISSION Act on care delivery. Make recommendations to best leverage federal assistance and create greater efficiencies in veteran health care delivery.
- **Veteran Mental Health:** Review suicide prevention strategies and programs identified by the federal Defense Suicide Prevention Office and make recommendations to connect at-risk individuals with available resources as they transition into veteran status.
- **Border Security Transnational Crime:** Review the different platforms used by fusion centers, Joint Operations Intelligence Centers, and the Texas Transnational Intelligence Center to share transnational crime intelligence. Study the ability of law enforcement to share information through existing communications networks and identify ways to promote collaboration and improve the flow of information.
- **Border Security Technology:** Study the Department of Public Safety camera detection program "Operation Drawbridge." Review the program and assess its performance, benefits, and challenges. Consider what role new technologies could play in preventing the northbound smuggling of drugs and people into Texas and the southbound smuggling into Mexico over the international bridges. Consider the cost and efficiencies of these technologies. Determine if any changes are needed and make recommendations on any additional technologies that could increase the level of border security.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Border Security passed by the 86th Legislature, as well as relevant agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction. Specifically, make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, or complete implementation of the following:
 - House Bill 11 (84th Legislature) - Review the ten-hour workday implemented from this legislation and consider its impact on 1) public safety along the Texas-Mexico border and throughout the state, by increasing the statewide patrol and investigative capacity of the

Department of Public Safety without the addition of new officers, 2) the recruitment and retention of officers, and 3) the overall impact on the morale of officers having to work the extended hours.