

# **TEXAS CASA PUBLIC POLICY**

## **AMPLIFYING ADVOCACY CONFERENCE PRESENTATION**



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# **GENERAL SESSION UPDATES**



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## GENERAL SESSION OVERVIEW



- 8,719 House and Senate Bills filed during the 89th Legislative Session
- Continued focus on parent's rights
- New focus on increasing oversight of Community-Based Care
- 366 Bills tracked by Texas CASA
- 280 Advocates at CASA Day at the Capitol
- 54 Local CASA Programs Represented at CASA Day at the Capitol



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## NEW FUNDING AND LAWS



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## NEW LAWS



### Supporting Older Youth:

- **HB 1211:** Changes the age requirement by which young adults who age out of foster care must access the tuition and fee waiver from 25 to 27
- **HB 4655:** Adds more instructional requirements under the Preparation for Adult Living program related to credit scores, balancing budgets, accessing potential benefits and the dangers of predatory lending



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## NEW LAWS



### Legal Changes:

- **HB 1151:** Prohibits removal of a child solely because the parent refuses to give their child psychotropic medications
- **HB 116:** Removes the "O" ground for involuntary termination of the parent-child relationship
- **HB 1106:** Changes the abuse definition to exclude parents not affirming their child's gender or sexual orientation

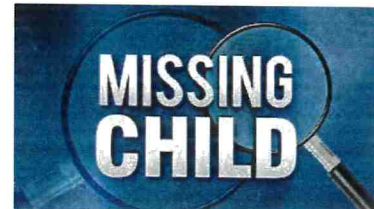
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## NEW LAWS



### Legal Changes:

- **HB 694:** Adds parents' attorneys to the list of notice of significant events, changes the notice of significant events from 10 days to 48 hours for the child's team and ensures parents receive notice of placement changes within 24 hours
- **SB 2165:** Prohibits courts from dismissing suits while a child in foster care is missing or has runaway



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## NEW LAWS



### Other Items:

- **HB 140:** Establishes a Child Protective Investigations Advisory Committee to improve the accuracy and standardization of investigative policies
- **HB 451:** Requires the DFPS and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department to screen children for the risk of commercial sexual exploitation



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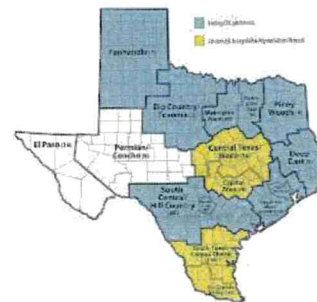


## COMMUNITY-BASED CARE BILLS & BUDGET ITEMS



### New Areas:

- SB 1: The Legislature included funding for sustained implementation of current Community-Based Care areas and funded expansion into the final 4 legacy regions in Texas: 7A, 7B, 11A, and 11B
- SB 513: Creates a rural Community-Based Care pilot program



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## COMMUNITY-BASED CARE BILLS & BUDGET ITEMS



### Increased Oversight:

- SB 1398: Strengthens DFPS oversight of Community-Based Care by adding performance metrics for SSCCs and requires community advisory committees in each region
- SB 1589: Allows DFPS to reclaim the case management authority over any or all of the cases in a catchment area from an SSCC or to transfer the case management authority over any or all of the cases in a catchment area from one SSCC to another SSCC

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## COMMUNITY-BASED CARE BILLS & BUDGET ITEMS



### Increased Oversight:

- **HB 4129:** Enables DFPS to implement performance remedies on Single Source Continuum Contractors (SSCC) before the 18-month mark, allowing for earlier intervention in cases of poor contract performance
- **SB 2034:** Allows DFPS to petition a court for receivership of an SSCC when there are serious performance issues or risks to child safety

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## WHAT'S COMING UP: THE SUNSET PROCESS



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## THE SUNSET PROCESS



- The Texas Sunset process is a legislative review system where a Sunset Advisory Commission evaluates state agencies every 12 years to determine if they are still needed, efficient, and effective in serving the public
- Agencies have a "sunset" date in their founding statute, and they are automatically abolished unless the Legislature passes a bill to continue them
- Agencies are often renewed after implementing the Sunset Commission's recommendations for improvement, modernization, or merger

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## THE SUNSET PROCESS



- The Sunset Commission is a 12-member commission that was created in 1977 to perform the reviews and make recommendations to the Legislature
- Legislative Members (3 vacancies in each chamber right now):
  - Representative Keith Bell
  - Representative Matt Shaheen
  - Senator Kevin Sparks
  - Senator Cesar Blanco

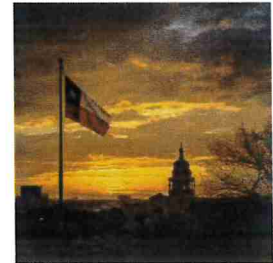
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# THE SUNSET PROCESS



## Part 1:

- Each agency under review submits a self-evaluation report
- Sunset Commission staff evaluates the report and gathers confidential stakeholder input to identify problems and develop recommendations
- The Sunset staff publish a staff report



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# THE SUNSET PROCESS



## Part 2:

- The Sunset Commission holds public hearings to take testimony on the staff report and the agency overall
- Public input is not confidential
- Each agency provides a formal response to the staff report
- The Sunset Commission considers and votes on formal recommendations for each agency



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## THE SUNSET PROCESS



### Part 3:

- The Sunset Commission's recommendations are filed as a bill
- Sunset bills go through the normal legislative process (substitutes, public hearings, etc.)
- If the bill passes, the agency will implement the recommended improvements OR if the agency is abolished, they have one year to transfer functions to another agency

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## THE SUNSET PROCESS-TEXAS CASA



- Public Policy team has already reached out to the assigned Sunset staff for DFPS
- The agency self-reports are already published and available; Texas CASA staff are reviewing
- Texas CASA staff will ensure local CASA programs can contribute during the confidential public input phase
- Texas CASA will testify and organize/provide formal feedback during public hearings (during the interim and during the 90th legislative session)

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## 2025 TOUR OF TEXAS SCHEDULE



- September 19 – Georgetown – CASA of Williamson County
- September 29 – Tyler – CASA for Kids of East Texas
- September 30 – Dallas – Dallas CASA
- October 1 – Amarillo – Amarillo Area CASA
- October 13 – San Antonio – Child Advocates San Antonio
- October 17 – Corpus Christi – CASA of the Coastal Bend
- October 24 – Abilene – Big Country CASA
- October 30 – Rosenberg – Child Advocates of Fort Bend

Email [publicpolicy@texascasa.org](mailto:publicpolicy@texascasa.org) to RSVP

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## HOW TO STAY INFORMED



- Join the Legislative Advocacy Team Facebook Group
  - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TXCASALATS/>
- The Public Policy Team posts updates on this page often during session and during the interim
- Sign-up to receive the LAT newsletters (email [publicpolicy@texascasa.org](mailto:publicpolicy@texascasa.org))
- Check out the full list of child welfare items that passed:
  - <https://texascasa.org/89th-legislative-session-outcomes/>

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**QUESTIONS?**

**REACH OUT ANYTIME:**

**[publicpolicy@texascasa.org](mailto:publicpolicy@texascasa.org)**



