



86th Texas Legislative Session Review

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The 86th Texas Legislative session ended on Monday, May 27th and, after 7,541 bills being filed and 1,434 bills being sent to the Governor, there weren't any that advanced that were adverse to TMRA member companies. Governor Gregg Abbott, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, and Speaker of the House Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton) for the majority of the session seemed in speak in unison on the needs of the state. This session the chambers' focused on property tax reform, school finance reform, Hurricane Harvey relief assistance, and taking care of the "core" issues of the state.

Another part of our legislative watch was reviewing the activities of our regulators. The leadership and actions of the PUC, Railroad Commission, and TCEQ were being observed from the start of the session. With the Railroad Commission going through Sunset last session, TMRA supported a continued continuity with the other agencies of jurisdiction and supported the confirmation of the (3) PUC Commissioners and increased funding for the agency. Also, TMRA supported TCEQ receiving \$10 million in exceptional items.

TMRA's Government Affairs team met twice a month during the session and strategized positions on bills that impacted its' members. Many thanks to our partners at Lloyd Gosselink for once again graciously hosting our meetings at their office. Several bills that TMRA supported included:

SB 698 by Senator Bryan Birdwell (R-Granbury) & Representative J.M. Lozano (R-Corpus Christi) which related to the expedited processing of certain applications for permits under the Texas Clean Air Act. This bill will allow companies to not be burdened with unnecessary red tape in the processing of their permit renewals, revision, or extensions. The bill passed and will become effective on 9/1/19. **(Sen. Birdwell was last year's TMRA Senate Legislator of the Year)**

SB 1587 by Senator Bryan Hughes & Rep. Trent Ashby – relating to the delegation to the Railroad Commission of purchasing functions regarding the reclamation of certain abandoned mines. This action placed this function in the correct authority code. The bill passed and will be effective on 9/1/19. **(Both of these members are past TMRA Legislator of the Year award recipients).**

HB 1 by Rep. John Zerwas – Our team successfully lobbied Appropriations Committee members for TCEQ budget dollars relating to air quality planning activities. These dollars will be used to reduce ozone in areas not designated as non-attainment during the biennium. Thanks to the efforts of Rep. Toni Rose (D-Dallas) and Rep. Armando Walle (D-Houston) \$4.5 million was allocated in the final budget for this activity. This bill passed and is now under the Governor's review.

There were several bills that may end up being interim study items and reintroduced next session including:

SB 1088 by Senator Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) related to the procedure for acting on an application for a permit for a surface coal mining and reclamation operation. TMRA supported this bill because it would have clarified an "affected person" status in a contested case hearing and tightened the "burden of proof" rules in those proceedings. The bill was not voted out of committee.

SB 978 by Senator Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) which related to the conversion of surface mine pits and quarries to water storage reservoirs in order to enhance the states' water supply. This was a bill that TMRA supported but it was not voted out of committee.

There were over 215 bills filed relating to climate change studies, aggregate production regulation, setback limitations, greenhouse gas rules, solid waste disposal, cumulative effects limits, etc...that the TMRA Government Affairs team tracked, monitored, provided briefings, and filed targeted opposition affidavits in opposing these measures. The aggregate production operation regulation bill filings saw a tremendous rise in activity and TMRA successfully partnered with TACA in defeating these bills.

Next, I would like to say that TMRA had a very successful session. For an organization that was not outwardly trying to pass major legislation the defense displayed on our main issues was outstanding. We saw some items (above) pass and the ones that did not are issues that could be vetted during the interim and potentially refiled next session.

In closing, on May 27th TMRA hosted our most successful Sine Die Party ever at the Long Center in Austin! With the challenge of increased costs the TMRA Government Affairs team started in 2018 with sponsor solicitations and worked to eliminate alternate parties. I'm pleased to report that we raised the most money this organization has ever raised for this event! We stretched ourselves in making the event better by engaging "LC Rocks" as a opening band and they were well worth the investment! The "Spazmatics" again were our headline act and they "rocked the house!" Kudos to the entire TMRA staff, Government Affairs team, and most importantly - TMRA members who stepped up and again made our event the place to be on Sine Die night!