

# TML LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



June 3, 2022  
Number 22

## **Resolutions for 2022 Annual Conference**

Resolutions for consideration at the annual conference are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on **August 22, 2022**. The TML Constitution provides that resolutions must be submitted by any member city, TML region, or TML affiliate to the TML headquarters 45 calendar days prior to the first day of the Annual Conference.

The League's advocacy efforts are based on a legislative program that is developed by member city officials in two ways.

First, a member city, TML region, or TML affiliate may submit a resolution for consideration at the business meeting of each year's annual conference. Each city is asked to provide one delegate to serve as its liaison at the meeting. The representatives will be briefed on the content of the resolutions and given a chance to discuss and vote on whether they merit inclusion in the legislative program. The resolutions form the basis of a fixed legislative program, under which – each session – modifications to the program will be made only if needed.

Second, member city officials can participate in the League’s Municipal Policy Summit during the summer of 2022. The report of the Summit takes the form of a resolution that is submitted to the annual conference in interim years. The summit participants will be appointed by the TML President based on volunteers and others chosen to balance the demographics of the TML membership at large.

Details on the submission process can be found [here](#).

## **Governor Requests Special Committee**

Following the tragedy that occurred at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Governor Abbott [requested](#) that the Lt. Governor and Speaker of the House form a special legislative committees to make recommendations to the legislature and executive branch to prevent future school shootings. The governor requests the committee to review:

- School Safety
- Mental Health
- Social Media
- Police Training
- Firearm Safety

Lt. Governor Dan Patrick appointed Senator Robert Nichols (R – Jacksonville) as Chair and Senators Brandon Creighton (R – Conroe) and Lois Kolkhorst (R – Brenham) as Co-Vice Chairs. The full membership list of the Senate Special Committee to Protect All Texans can be found [here](#).

## **TWDB Program for Small Water and Wastewater Systems**

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is set to open applications for a new funding opportunity and program called Asset Management Program for Small Systems (AMPSS). The program will assist small water and wastewater utilities to create and implement asset management plans.

The TWDB will open the application period for interested systems starting June 6 through July 21. Systems participating in AMPSS may choose a pre-qualified contractor to work with to create an asset management plan, operations, maintenance, and compliance manuals, and other management tools.

There is no financial match required by the system but will be required to contribute at least 80 hours of the system’s staff time towards the project. AMPSS will help water and wastewater systems thoroughly inventory their assets, determine the condition and criticality of each asset, plan for short-, medium-, and long-term capital improvement projects, ensure adequate maintenance is planned for and conducted, and prepare the system for accessing the State Revolving Fund programs.

The application, along with more information about AMPSS, can be found [here](#). For any questions on the program, please contact Patrick Kading, AMPSS Coordinator, Program Administration & Reporting at [Patrick.kading@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:Patrick.kading@twdb.texas.gov).

## **Federal Infrastructure Bill Update**

*In November 2021, the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law. The IIJA is altogether a \$1.2 trillion bill that will invest in the nation's core infrastructure priorities including roads, bridges, rail, transit, airports, ports, energy transmission, water systems, and broadband.*

*The League will monitor state and federal agencies and work with the National League of Cities (NLC) to access the latest information relating to the IIJA. We will be providing periodic updates in the Legislative Update on resources for Texas cities on how to access IIJA funding for local infrastructure projects.*

### **U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)**

On May 24, [DOT announced](#) that it is accepting applications for the Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program, created by the IIJA. The grant program offers roughly \$200 million in grants each year over the next five years to municipal or community-owned gas utilities to “improve the safety of high-risk, leak-prone natural gas distribution infrastructure and create good-paying jobs, with an emphasis on benefiting underserved communities, in both rural and urban areas.” The deadline for applications is July 25, 2022. Interested city officials can read more in the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#).

On May 25, DOT [provided notice](#) of a six-month waiver of the “Buy America” requirements in the IIJA for the purchase of construction materials in conjunction with DOT awards obligated on or after May 14, 2022, and before November 10, 2022.

### **National League of Cities (NLC)**

NLC has recently posted articles on the following programs funded under the IIJA:

- [Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program](#) (and other indirect broadband funding opportunities). Applications for Middle Mile program due by September 30, 2022. More information on the program can be found [here](#).
- [Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program](#). The program uses planning grants, capital construction grants, and technical assistance grants to “equitably and safely restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation, or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities that create barriers to mobility, access, or economic development.” The Notice of Funding Opportunity for the program is expected this summer. More information on the program can be found [here](#).

## **House and Senate Committee Interim Hearings**

The Texas House and Senate Committees are underway studying interim charges outlined by Speaker Phelan and Lt. Governor Dan Patrick.

Below is a full list of committee hearings set to hear certain city-related charges. All hearings will be held at the Texas Capitol unless otherwise indicated. If a committee has newly posted notice and was not included in last week's edition of the *Legislative Update*, it is indicated as such.

### **House Committee on Licensing and Administrative Procedures**

The committee will meet on June 7 at 10:00 a.m. to hear invited testimony only over the following interim charge:

Explore opportunities to strengthen and enforce laws to reduce illegal gaming and the proliferation of unlawful game rooms. Identify how cash-paying game rooms utilizing machines commonly known as "8-liners" have been allowed to proliferate and how the comptroller or other state agencies can assist law enforcement with ongoing investigations.

Information on the hearing and how to submit electronic comments can be found [here](#).

### **\*NEW\* House County Affairs**

The committee will meet on June 14 at 10:00 a.m. to hear invited and public testimony on the following charge:

Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure the intended legislative outcome of all legislation including the following:

- [H.B. 2073](#), relating to quarantine leave for firefighters, peace officers, detention officers, and emergency medical technicians employed by, appointed by, or elected for a political subdivision.

Information on the hearing, including how to testify or submit electronic comment, can be found [here](#).

### **House Committee on State Affairs**

The committee will meet on June 23 at 10:00 a.m. to hear invited and public testimony to consider the following interim charges:

Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislature. Conduct oversight of all

associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure the intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:

- [Senate Bill 2](#), relating to the governance of the Public Utility Commission of Texas, the Office of Public Utility Counsel, and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas.
- Examine the efforts of power generation facilities to weatherize their facilities.
- Review the status of projects intended to reduce transmission congestion within the electrical grid.

Information on the hearing, including how to register and testify at the committee hearing, can be found [here](#).

### **Senate Health and Human Services Committee**

The committee will meet on June 27 at 10:00 a.m. to hear invited and public testimony on the following interim charge:

**Public Health Data:** Review the processes for public health data collection and coordination by local and state entities as well as regional trauma centers. Identify any continuing barriers to the real-time dissemination of data concerning health care facility capacity – including data that can expedite timely care – and morbidity rates, as well as other information that can assist in public policy decisions.

Information on the hearing, including how to register and testify at the committee hearing, can be found [here](#).

### **Senate Finance Committee**

The committee will meet on June 28 at 10:00 a.m. to hear invited and public testimony on the following charge:

**Federal Funds:** Report on the state use of federal COVID-19 relief funds provided under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, the American Rescue Plan Act, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Acts, and similar legislation. Examine local use of federal relief funding, including funding provided through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. Evaluate the overall fiscal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on state agencies, including costs incurred due to federal mandates. Identify barriers to the effective utilization of funds and make recommendations on the expenditure of unappropriated funds. In addition, evaluate and report on the spending by state agencies that have been utilizing “one-time” federal funding (temporary enhancements, e.g. FMAP and ESSER) sources, where federal funding will likely be significantly reduced in future biennia.

Information on the hearing, including how to register and testify at the committee hearing, can be found [here](#).

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