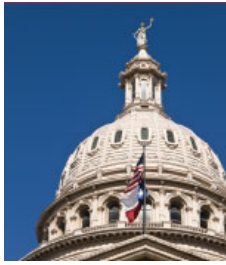


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AUSTIN NEWSLETTER

Texas Farm Bureau's Weekly Newsletter for the 85th Legislature

July 21, 2017 | 85th First-called Special Session

And we're off...

The first week of the first-called legislative special session has begun. Hundreds of bills have been filed even though Governor Greg Abbott has no intent of adding additional issues to his proclamation.

The Senate was successful in passing two safety net sunset pieces of legislation on second reading on Wednesday. The Senate then adjourned until 12:01 a.m. Thursday to take the legislation up on third reading and passed [SB 20](#) and [SB 60](#), both by Sen. Van Taylor (R-Plano). The Constitution requires bills to be read on three separate days. Once the legislation passed, the governor, as promised, issued proclamations on the other 19 items he would like to see addressed during the special session.

Over the weekend, Senate committees will be taking up bills dealing with school finance, permitting by political subdivisions, property owner's rights to remove trees and vegetation from their property and other issues on the governor's call.

The House is taking things a little slower. On Thursday, they started referring the other bills on the call of the governor to the appropriate committees. One sunset bill, [HB 1](#) by Larry Gonzales (R-Round Rock), passed out of the State Affairs committee earlier this week. The House Calendars committee has set this legislation for full floor debate on Monday.

Property Rights

[SB 14](#) by Sen. Bob Hall (R-Canton) would reduce the risk of fire destroying or damaging a home by removing many barriers to a private property owner's right to protect their property from fire. It would prohibit a municipality or HOA, in most cases, from enacting or enforcing an ordinance or rule restricting a property owner's right to remove a tree that poses a risk of fire to their property. We are working to add additional language to the bill to ensure the Texas Department of Agriculture still has the ability to slow the spread of citrus greening, citrus canker and other diseases that negatively affect the production of agriculture.

[HB 70](#) has been filed in the House by Rep. Paul Workman (R-Austin), and it has been referred to the House Urban Affairs committee. The House committees are supposed to start meeting next week to hear the additional items on the call.

TFB supports SB 14 and HB 70. (TFB Policy 2017: "Real Property Rights," Pg. 54, Ln. 183-185)

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