

## Latest News from the 85th Session

As of March 31, the Texas Legislature has been in session 81 days. With only 59 days remaining, the pace is picking up as legislators work to pass a budget and address other key legislative priorities. TLA is advocating against any cuts to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission budget, and for additional funding for TexShare/TexQuest, and increased broadband access in public libraries.

Given the Legislature has 3% less in state revenue to work with for this budget, members are looking for savings and not generally open to additional spending, no matter how worthy the program or service.

After weeks of hearings, the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees completed their budget deliberations.

The Senate Finance Committee did not make any cuts to the TSLAC budget, but did not adopt the TexShare/TexQuest or broadband exceptional items. On March 28, the full Senate unanimously approved a \$218 billion two-year budget, including \$106.3 billion in state revenue. It eliminates about \$1.8 billion in state funds from education but uses local property taxes and other revenue to make up the difference.

The House Appropriations Committee also did not make any cuts to the TSLAC budget, and did not adopt the TexShare/TexQuest exceptional item request, but did include the broadband request in Article XI.

The House will consider its budget bill on April 6. This \$218 billion budget (\$104 billion in state funds) cuts \$1 billion in state funds to Medicaid, and includes \$2.5 billion from the Rainy Day Fund.

More than 400 amendments have been filed. Representative Toni Rose (Dallas) filed an amendment which would fund the state library's \$1 million exceptional item request to increase broadband access in public libraries.

After the House passes its bill, the bills will go to conference committee to hash out the differences between the two. Once we know who is appointed to the conference committee, we will ask TLA members to reach out to those committee members to stress the importance of the TSLAC budget to libraries around the state.

Thank you to all of the TLA members that have testified before the committees, called, written, and emailed their legislators to share how important libraries are to our communities, and express support for the State Library budget.



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## Other Legislation

Visit the [Texas Legislature Online](#) to view bill text and status.

**SB 6** by Sen. Lois Kolkhorst: Relating to regulations and policies for entering or using a bathroom or changing facility; authorizing a civil penalty. The Senate passed the 'bathroom bill' and it has been sent to the House. TLA's Executive Board approved a resolution opposing this bill because it conflicts with the association's core values of diversity and inclusiveness, preempts local control, and negatively impacts the Texas economy.

**SB 196** by Sen. Sylvia Garcia: Relating to the notification requirement if a public school, including an open-enrollment charter school, does not have a nurse, school counselor, or librarian assigned to the school during instructional hours. TLA, TASL and the TASLA are in favor of this bill and requested additional language that more clearly defines librarian as a "librarian licensed under Chapter 21, Subchapter A, Section 21.003 (a), Texas Education Code." Senator Garcia agreed to this clarification and her office is requesting a hearing on the bill, which is in the Education Committee.

**SB 810** by Sen. Lois Kolkhorst: Relating to the use of open educational resources. This bill establishes a grant program administered by the Board of Higher Education to encourage faculty to adopt and develop courses that use only open educational resources; requires institutions of higher education to include whether textbooks are open educational resources, and provide a searchable list of courses and sections of courses that require or recommend only open educational resources. Lastly, the bill directs the State Library to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of creating a state repository of open educational resources. The bill was left pending in the Education Committee.

**SB 902** by Sen. Brian Birdwell: relating to a prohibition on the adoption of certain library standards by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. This bill would prohibit the State Library from requiring public libraries to meet minimum accreditation standards related to local operating expenditures, collections based on publication dates, hours of operation, and the number or classification of library employees.

TLA is strongly opposed to this bill, because it would diminish the quality of library services and dilute and devalue legitimate public library service by eliminating common baselines for professionalism, services and resources. The bill has been referred to the Senate Business and Commerce committee.

**SB 1364** by Sen. Borris Miles: Relating to the dissemination of information about historically underutilized businesses and the expansion of the small business development center network. This bill directs the Governor's Office of Small Business Assistance to promote the establishment of small business development centers at accessible locations, including public libraries, in areas of the state with the fewest number of historically underutilized businesses. It was referred to the Business and Commerce Committee

**HB 1021** by Rep. John Smithee: Relating to the authorized use of county law library funds. This bill authorizes county commissioners' courts to establish, maintain, and operate with other counties a joint free county law library, and clarifies that county law library funds can be used to establish



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[Affordable E-Resources](#)

[Increasing Broadband Access](#)

[SB 902: Prohibiting Certain Library Standards](#)

[ALA Fight for Libraries](#)

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and maintain a self-help center to provide resources to residents representing themselves in legal matters. The bill was passed by House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence committee and referred to Calendar committee.

**HB 2024** by Rep. Yvonne Davis: Relating to the publication of an image that depicts an individual without the individual's consent; imposing a civil penalty. This bill prohibits the publication of an unauthorized image on the Internet, and defines unauthorized image as "an image that depicts an individual who has not consented to the capture or publication of the image." A business entity that owns or operates a website and receives a request from an individual who is depicted in an unauthorized image, to remove that image, must comply or face penalties.

Rep. Davis' goal is to address bail bonds and revenge porn websites; however, TLA has concerns about the bill as drafted. It is very broad and includes several undefined terms which could have unintended, negative consequences for libraries. We are working with the Representative's staff to seek clarification and modifications to the bill, which was referred to the Business and Industry Committee.

## TLA Priorities

### Texas State Library & Archives Budget

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) budget is submitted with two main parts: the request for the base budget (i.e., the funds needed to continue services and operations at current levels) and the request for exceptional items (i.e., additional funding for existing or new operations).

The exceptional items list provides the means to secure additional support for programming.

TLA supports the TSLAC budget request and all of the exceptional items. Our priority and focus will be on Item #2 to expand TexQuest and TexShare and on Item #5 to increase broadband access.

- Item #1: \$1.6 million to secure state data through computer and physical security
- Item #2: \$8.4 million to expand affordable e-resources in STEM areas for education and workforce readiness through TexQuest and TexShare (download fact sheet)
- Item #3: \$500,000 for market adjustments necessary to recruit and retain personnel to deploy the state's mandated services
- Item #4: \$241,800 to hire two information analysts to help secure the public's access to state and local government records
- Item #5: \$1 million to increase broadband access in Texas communities by encouraging library participation in E-Rate discounts (download fact sheet)



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[Increasing Broadband Access](#)

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# Federal Library Funding at Risk

## President Trump Proposes Elimination of Institute for Library & Museum Services

To fund increased military spending and tax cuts, President Trump's America First: A Budget to Make America Great Again eliminates funding for libraries and museums, as well as arts, humanities and cultural programs. Collectively, these programs account for less than 0.5% of the national budget.

The Institute for Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) grants and programs provide critical support to libraries and museums across the country. Texas receives nearly \$11 million from the IMLS in Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds. Over 90% of these funds pay for library services benefiting local communities across our state.

These federal funds support TexShare/TexQuest resources, interlibrary loan, grants to local libraries, summer reading programs, Edge technology assistance, and continuing education for library staff. Watch this video to learn more about how federal funds are used across the state.

Libraries are centers for technology, job counseling, retraining, entrepreneurship, education, teaching and learning, services to veterans, and so much more. They contribute to communities' economic growth. According to a recent Texas State Library and Archives Commission study, for every \$1 invested in Texas libraries, communities benefit from an impressive return on investment of \$4.64.

The Texas Library Association's almost 7,000 members, and the thousands of library supporters throughout the state, will actively oppose this proposal which, if enacted, would have a significant, immediate, negative impact on millions of Texans. Libraries are so much more than book depositories, they are essential to what makes Texas and America great.

We've posted the most up-to-date information on our Issues & Taking Action page.

Here are some steps you can take right now:

1. **Call your Members of Congress** – ask them to publicly oppose wiping out IMLS, and ask them to commit to fighting for federal library funding. (You can find talking points and an email template on [ALA's Action Center](#).)
2. **Share your library's IMLS story using the #SaveIMLS tag** – tell us how IMLS funding supports your local community. If you aren't sure which IMLS grants your library as received, you can check the searchable database available on the IMLS website.
3. **Sign up to receive ALA action alerts** – they will let you know when and how to take action, and send you talking points and background information.
4. **Register to participate in National Library Legislative Day** on May 1-2, either in Washington, D.C., or [online](#).

We are at the very beginning of the federal Appropriations process, but the more members of Congress we can reach early on and demonstrate the value and importance of libraries; the more likely they are to oppose eliminating IMLS and library funding.



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