



82nd Session Select Interim Charges Relating to Agriculture and Rural Affairs

December 22, 2011

Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee

- Study and make recommendations for ways to increase investment, employment and production in Texas agriculture. Include a review of current land use and market trends as they relate to agricultural use and make recommendations for ways to support and enhance small farm and ranch operations.
- Study current federal, state and local safeguards regarding seafood consumption in Texas. Review existing academic studies, and federal, state, and private data relating to the safety of imported seafood, and provide recommendations on the need for additional studies and testing related to safety advisories for the public.
- Assess the current veterinary medical workforce, and make recommendations to address any disparities between small animal (companion) and large animal (food/fiber) veterinarians. Review the Rural Veterinary Medical Loan program (RVML) and make recommendations to enhance the use of RVML funds and other funding sources to increase the veterinary medical workforce.
- Review the impact of state laws relating to the closure of horse slaughter facilities across the United States. Analyze the impact on the equine industry and agricultural sector of the Texas economy.
- Examine ways to increase the use of Texas agricultural products in healthy foods readily available to Texas consumers. Evaluate the role of community initiatives in reducing obesity and diet-related diseases and make recommendations to support state and local efforts.
- Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Affairs, 82nd Legislature, Regular and Called Sessions, and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the implementation and effects of current and proposed federal laws and regulations, including Environmental Protection Agency initiatives that may impact the Texas farming and ranching industry.