



Dan Patrick

Lieutenant Governor of Texas
President of the Senate

Interim Charges

Criminal Justice

- **Police Safety and Community Engagement:** Review law enforcement efforts to engage community leaders and increase their involvement in communities. Assess dangers to law enforcement officers and the collection and distribution of threat assessment data. Make recommendations to reduce the number of injuries and deaths to or by law enforcement officers.
- **Jail Safety Standards in Texas:** Evaluate the current guidelines and practices in county and municipal jails relating to the health, welfare, and safety of those in custody. Review law enforcement and correctional officer training, with emphasis on mental health and de-escalation. Study the effectiveness of existing oversight mechanisms to enforce jail standards; making recommendations for policies and procedures if needed. Examine the current mental health and substance use treatment services and medical resources offered in county, municipal, and state correctional facilities.
- **Re-Entry and Continuity of Care:** Review current programs provided by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and the Windham School for incarcerated persons to prepare them for re-entry, including inmates in administrative segregation. Examine opportunities for incarcerated persons once they are released and make recommendations to expand successful programs to provide resources and support for released inmates. Assess the success of Certified Peer Support Services. Continue to monitor the Darrington Seminary Program. Study the continuity of care for individuals released from TDCJ, the Windham School, and county and municipal jails and make recommendations if needed.
- **Diversions:** Examine the success of current pretrial diversion and treatment programs in Texas and in other states. Make recommendations on best practices and how to implement and expand these programs in Texas to maximize effective use of resources and reduce populations in jails.
- **Bulk Criminal Records Dissemination:** Study how bulk criminal records are disseminated. Review the list of entities with access to and their current use of criminal records. Make recommendations to streamline the dissemination of records through bulk requests to ensure accuracy and limit inappropriate use of records.

- **Contact with Incarcerated Inmates:** Review costs family members incur to maintain contact with an incarcerated family member. Make recommendations to promote familial contact and relationships for incarcerated individuals. Review visitation practices across the state in determining effective and appropriate methods of maintaining familial contact for incarcerated individuals.
- **Civil Asset Forfeiture:** Conduct a study of civil asset forfeiture laws in Texas and compare them to similar laws in other states. Determine best practices to protect public safety and the private property rights of citizens. Examine the reporting requirements and recommend legislative changes if needed to ensure transparency.
- **Monitoring Charge:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following: 1) Decriminalization of school truancy and the response of school districts to take steps to address truancy before referring students to court; 2) Progress and success of the Governor's Office grant program for law enforcement body cameras; 3) Changes made to the operation of the Civil Commitment program in Texas; 4) Administration of Veterans Treatment Court Programs; and 5) Progress made by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department to plan for regionalization of the youth population, create specialized programs, and implement established sentencing schemes.

Veteran Affairs and Military Installations

- **Strike Force, VA Health, Mental Health:** Study the state of veteran health and mental health in Texas. Review the progress made by state strike force teams to reduce the claims backlog and decrease wait times at VA hospitals. Evaluate if the passage of the federal Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014 and other state initiatives have improved access and outcomes. Determine if state strike force teams should continue as established and make recommendations on necessary changes.
- **State Veteran Employment:** Study current veteran hiring policies among state agencies and consider the effectiveness of a percentage-based system. Make recommendations if there are other ways to equitably measure the success of veteran employment within an agency.
- **Veteran Benefits:** Given pending litigation on the subject, study what veteran benefits, if any, are currently only offered to residents of the state of Texas--whether by being born here or by entering the service in Texas--and assess whether any of these additional benefits leave the state liable for lawsuits under the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Make recommendations for legislation that could reduce the state's liability.

- **Veterans Courts:** Study successes and challenges of veteran's courts in Texas, including evidence of rehabilitation or recidivism. Consider alternative means of funding, such as voluntary donations at points of contact with state services, and make recommendations.
- **Defense Adjustment Authorities, Compatibility Use, and Encroachment:** Consider best practices for improving the military value at military installations in Texas. Determine cost-effective policies and make recommendations that would strengthen military value.
- **Monitoring Charge:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Military Installations during the 84th Legislature, Regular Session and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following: 1) Monitor the implementation of legislation relating to the qualifications of veteran county service officers, and make recommendations if further changes should be made.

Subcommittee on Border Security

- **Sanctuary Cities:** Study the various sanctuary city policies statewide, the number and types of crimes committed by previously arrested illegal immigrants within the jurisdiction of a "sanctuary policy," and possible solutions to discourage governmental entities from putting in place policies that conflict with immigration laws. Make recommendations to improve community safety.
- **Local Law Enforcement, PEP:** Study local government efforts to secure their border communities and identify areas where the state could invest to bolster local law enforcement infrastructure and activities. Review the challenges faced by state and local law enforcement when providing border security, including the federal Priority Enforcement Program (PEP).
- **Interstate Compact:** Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of a potential interstate compact on border security, and consider the constitutional and legal questions that underpin the proposal. Consider which other states might be party to an interstate compact on border security. Make recommendations for policies that Texas should adopt pursuant to an interstate compact, if it were authorized by the Legislature and approved by Congress.