

Legislative Report
Marilyn Davis, VP Legislation

The following article is included in the January 2009 Texas Star. If you didn't read it there, here is another chance.

WATCH BILLS IN "REAL TIME"
By Representative Patricia Harless

In an effort to make the legislative process more open and accessible to the public, the House and Senate have created programs that allow citizens to track legislation, monitor committee hearings and watch either chamber as they meet in daily session on the House and Senate Floors. All of this can be found by visiting the website set up for the legislature: www.capitol.state.tx.us

SEARCHES

If you are looking for a particular piece of legislation, you can search for it based on the Bill number or, if you don't have that, a key word or phrase. The "Additional Searches" section of website provides links to a variety of areas that can be affected by legislation. Some of those include: Amendments to bills, Texas Statutes, the Constitution and Administrative Code. This section also allows a person to look at any Record Vote taken in either the House or the Senate.

DAILY LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS & COMMITTEE HEARINGS

To watch the House or Senate in Session, or to view a Committee hearing, simply choose the Chamber you are interested in by clicking the "Video Broadcasts" link in the **Legislative Activity** section located on the right hand side of the Homepage. Broadcasts are in real-time and provide citizens with the opportunity to follow legislation that is being debated even if they are unable to be there in person.

MY TLO

The "My TLO" section of the website provides citizens with a variety of resources that enable them to follow legislation and legislative activities. With an email address and password you can create custom Bill Tracking Lists and receive email alerts when there is any type of action taken on the bills on that list, view information on a PDA or cell phone, and save bill and text searches to be viewed later.

Using the above information, I want to give you more detailed instructions to help track legislation on topics of interest to you.

For instance: If you want to follow the "Voter ID" and "English as our official language" legislation, And You Do,

1. Go to www.capitol.state.tx.us
2. Find the "My TLO" section on the home page. Click "Receive meeting and bill alerts".
3. Click on "New user" and fill out the information requested—email and password. An email will be sent to you, saying, "Click here to activate your account". When you do so, you can login.
4. You can then sign up for bill alerts that will notify you when any action is being taken on the Voter ID and/or the English as official language issue(s).
5. You are ready to accumulate data so you can contact your legislator at appropriate times before a vote.

TFRW Legislative Day is April 16, 2009

What to Do Now

1. Mark your calendar.
2. Inform your fellow club members of the date and that they don't want to miss all the fun.
3. Contact your legislators and let them know you are coming.

What to Do Then

1. Show up in your red jackets.
2. Talk to your legislators about our targeted issues—Voter ID and English as official language—and any other issues that concern you.
3. Have a great time.