



February 17, 2003

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No. 181

BUDGETWRITERS NEED PUBLIC INPUT

House Appropriations, Senate Finance, will take public testimony on major HHS program funding this week and next

The 2004-2005 budget requests of state agencies are now being heard by the House Appropriations subcommittees and the Senate Finance Committee. This brief Policy Page provides the meetings scheduled as of today; check the Texas Legislature's web site (<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>) for changes or other updates. CPPP staff contact information is also listed at the end of the Policy Page so you can find out what major programs are being funded at these HHS agencies.

****NOTE: THIS MAY BE THE PUBLIC'S ONLY CHANCE TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE 2004-05 BUDGET PROPOSALS****

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS

Membership: The following state representatives are on House Appropriations: Talmadge Heflin (Chair), Vilma Luna (Vice-Chair), Leo Berman, Dan Branch, Fred Brown, Betty Brown, Myra Crownover, John Davis, "Joe" Deshotel, Dawnna Dukes, Craig Eiland, Dan Ellis, Roberto Gutierrez, Peggy Hamric, Ruben Hope, Suzanna Gratia Hupp, Carl Isett, Elizabeth Ames Jones, Lois Kolkhorst, Ruth Jones McClendon, Jose Menendez, "Joe" Pickett, Jim Pitts, Richard Raymond, Jim Solis, Jack Stick, Vicki Truitt, Sylvester Turner, and Arlene Wohlgemuth.

In addition, the following are Budget and Oversight officials for some of the substantive (policy) committees:

Lois Kolkhorst (Business & Industry)
Carl Isett (Economic Development)
Arlene Wohlgemuth (Human Services)
Dan Branch (Public Education)
Vicki Truitt (Public Health)

These B&O Chairs will be "gatekeepers" for any legislation referred to their committees that will have a fiscal impact.

Committee Clerk: Angela Pena, Phone (512) 463-1091

Appropriations Subcommittee on Health & Human Services:

Chair: Rep. Wohlgemuth; other members are Rep. Davis; Rep. Dukes; Rep. Eiland; Rep. Hupp; Rep. Truitt

HHS Subcommittee budget hearings (all will be held in the John H. Reagan Building, Room 120, and will start at 7:30 AM, recess while the House goes into session, then reconvene upon adjournment):

Tuesday, Feb. 18th: Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation

Wednesday, Feb. 19th: Department of Health, and Special Provisions Relating to All Health and Human Services Agencies

Thursday, Feb. 20th: Department of Human Services

Friday, Feb. 21st: Health and Human Services Commission

Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government

Chair: Rep. Pickett; other members are Rep. Crownover, Rep. Hamric, Rep. Isett, Rep. McClendon

Scheduled budget hearings:

Thursday, Feb. 20th: 8:00 AM, Capitol Extension E1.030, Office of Rural and Community Affairs; Department of Housing and Community Affairs; Comptroller of Public

Accounts; Texas Workforce Commission; Texas Lottery Commission

The **Select Committee on State Health Care Expenditures** will also meet at 4 PM or upon final adjournment/recess on Tuesday, February 18, 2003, in the Capitol Extension, E1.010. This will be an organizational meeting only; no public testimony will be taken.

SENATE FINANCE

Membership: These state senators are on the Senate Finance Committee: Teel Bivins (Chair), Judith Zaffirini (Vice-Chair), Kip Averitt; Gonzalo Barrientos; Kim Brimer; Robert Duncan; Kyle Janek; Jane Nelson; Steve Ogden; Florence Shapiro; Eliot Shapleigh; Todd Staples; Royce West; John Whitmire; Tommy Williams

Senate Finance Committee Clerk: Stephanie Hoover, Phone (512) 463-0370

Hearings for this committee start at 8:00 AM and will be held in the Capitol Extension, E1.036, Finance Committee Room. Afternoon hearings will usually reconvene one hour after the Senate adjourns.

Wednesday, February 19: Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse; Department on Aging; Commission for the Blind; Interagency Council on Early Childhood Intervention

Monday, Feb. 24: Health and Human Services Commission

Tuesday, Feb. 25: Dept. of Health, Dept. of Human Services, Dept. of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Dept. of Protective and Regulatory Services

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Show up in person at these hearings to testify in support of these agencies' programs. If you cannot be at the hearing, contact the committee members, especially if they represent you. (To find out who your senator or representative is, see <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/fyi/fyi.htm>) Members of the budget-writing committees need to hear from you NOW, especially if you support revenue increases that will help avoid or reduce drastic cuts to programs receiving General Revenue.

To find out which agency administers the programs you are concerned about, or for more information on how to be an effective public witness at a budget hearing, contact CPPP:

- Patrick Bresette, Welfare and workforce development, bresette@cPPP.org
- Anne Dunkelberg, Medicaid, CHIP, Immigrant Benefits, dunkelberg@cPPP.org

- Eva DeLuna-Castro, Child protective services, foster care, deluna.castro@cPPP.org
- Celia Hagert, Hunger and nutrition policy, Food Stamps, hagert@cPPP.org
- Dick Lavine, School Finance and Tax Policy, lavine@cPPP.org
- Carlos Romo, Texas Fragile Families initiative, romo@cPPP.org
- Jason Sabo, Child care, workforce and economic development, sabo@cPPP.org

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