

By: Huffman

S.B. No. 1426

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to operation and management of the first capitol state historic site and replica by the Texas Historical Commission.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 442, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter B-3 to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER B-3. FIRST CAPITOL STATE HISTORIC SITE

Sec. 442.068. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Commission" means the Texas Historical Commission.

(2) "First capitol site" means the first capitol state historic site located in West Columbia, Texas.

(3) "Replica" means the replica of the first Republic of Texas house of representatives building housed on the first capitol site.

Sec. 442.0681. JURISDICTION AND MAINTENANCE OF FIRST CAPITOL SITE AND REPLICA. (a) The first capitol site and replica are under the jurisdiction of the commission. The commission is responsible for the preservation, maintenance, and operation of the site and replica.

(b) The commission shall:

(1) develop, expand, and manage the first capitol site and replica by:

(A) expanding, renovating, and managing the site

1 and replica to enhance visitor experience and historical accuracy;

2 (B) overseeing maintenance and operations of the
3 site and replica to ensure long-term preservation and public
4 accessibility; and

5 (C) providing financial support for ongoing
6 operations and new projects, such as administration, personnel, and
7 site improvements;

8 (2) enhance the facilities and infrastructure for the
9 site by:

10 (A) relocating the replica to a historically
11 accurate location on the site;

12 (B) constructing a historically accurate
13 replication of the first Republic of Texas senate building on the
14 site;

15 (C) constructing and maintaining a visitor
16 center on the site to provide educational resources, exhibitions,
17 and interactive experiences for visitors; and

18 (D) implementing other improvements to the
19 site's facilities and infrastructure in accordance with the site's
20 purpose and mission;

21 (3) assume responsibility for the historic
22 preservation and interpretation of the first capitol site and
23 replica by:

24 (A) preserving and maintaining historical
25 documents, artifacts, relics, and other items of historical
26 significance related to the site and this state;

27 (B) developing exhibitions and interpretive

1 programs to reflect the site's mission and educate the public; and

2 (C) conducting ongoing research to enhance the
3 accuracy and depth of the site's programs;

4 (4) oversee the operations of and personnel for the
5 first capitol site and replica by:

6 (A) employing a site director and other personnel
7 the commission considers necessary to fulfill the commission's
8 duties and responsibilities for the site;

9 (B) establishing efficient operational and
10 visitor engagement policies and procedures; and

11 (C) ensuring personnel development aligns with
12 current best practices for historic site management;

13 (5) acquire resources and seek donations for the first
14 capitol site and replica by:

15 (A) accepting and managing donations of money,
16 land, historical relics, or other donations supporting the site's
17 mission;

18 (B) seeking grant opportunities and
19 public-private partnerships to increase funding for site
20 preservation and improvement efforts; and

21 (C) acquiring property and artifacts aligned
22 with the historical significance of the site that contribute to the
23 site's mission and narrative;

24 (6) strategically develop the first capitol site and
25 replica by:

26 (A) identifying and acquiring real property
27 adjacent or relevant to the site to support the mission of and

1 expand the site;

2 (B) ensuring all acquisition of real property
3 aligns with the historical context of the site and contributes to an
4 authentic and immersive visitor experience; and

5 (C) engaging in strategic planning to enhance the
6 site's presence in the nearby community and promote heritage
7 tourism;

8 (7) facilitate community engagement and partnership
9 for the first capitol site and replica by:

10 (A) collaborating with local organizations,
11 schools, and other relevant stakeholders to foster community
12 involvement and support of the site;

13 (B) establishing partnerships with historical
14 societies, institutions of higher education, and cultural
15 organizations to strengthen the site's educational impact; and

16 (C) hosting events, lectures, and programs that
17 encourage public participation and awareness of this state's
18 history; and

19 (8) ensure responsible stewardship of resources and
20 the first capitol site and replica by:

21 (A) maintaining ethical and professional
22 standards for site operations; and

23 (B) conducting periodic assessments to measure
24 progress and identify areas to improve stewardship of the site.

25 Sec. 442.0682. GRANTS; DONATIONS. The commission may
26 accept a grant or donation for any program or purpose of the first
27 capitol site and replica.

1 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.