

SENATE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

COMMITTEE: Local Government
TIME & DATE: 11:00 AM, Tuesday, September 1, 2026
PLACE: E1.016 (Hearing Room)
CHAIR: Senator Paul Bettencourt

The Senate Committee on Local Government will meet Tuesday, September 1st, at 11:00 A.M. to hear invited and public testimony on the following interim charges:

1. **Examining the Effect of Increasing the Homestead Exemption:** Review and report on the effects of Senate Bill 4 and Senate Bill 23, 89th Legislature, Senate Bill 2, 88th Legislature, 2nd Called Session, Senate Bill 1, 87th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, Senate Bill 2, 86th Legislature, and Senate Bill 1, 84th Legislature, which in combination have increased the homeowners' school tax exemption from \$15,000 to \$140,000 for those under the age of 65, and from \$25,000 to \$200,000 for those 65 and older. Identify the percentage of Texas homeowners that no longer pay school property taxes due to these efforts.
2. **Holding Local Government Fees Accountable:** Examine the collection, use, and oversight of fees imposed by local governments, including but not limited to utility connection charges, permit and inspection fees, and drainage or stormwater improvement fees. Evaluate whether these fees are subject to adequate financial transparency requirements and whether independent audits should be required. Make necessary recommendations to enhance accountability and ensure fee revenues are used solely for their intended public purposes.
3. **Ensuring Transparency in Appraisal District Funding:** Study the governance, budgeting authority, and cost allocation practices of county appraisal districts. Examine the fiscal impact of appraisal district costs on taxing entities. Evaluate whether additional guardrails are warranted.

Public Testimony is limited to two minutes. If submitting written testimony, please provide 20 copies to the committee clerk with your name and/or the name of your organization on each copy and email a digital copy to the committee at ross.leake_sc@senate.texas.gov.

NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WHO PLAN TO ATTEND THIS MEETING AND WHO MAY NEED ASSISTANCE, SUCH AS A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER OR PERSONAL ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES, ARE REQUESTED TO CONTACT THE SENATE COMMITTEE COORDINATOR AT 512/463-0070, 72 HOURS PRIOR TO THE MEETING SO APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE.