

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE AFFAIRS

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

9:00 AM

Capitol Extension, Room E1.028

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on State Affairs was held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.028, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Bryan Hughes, Chair
Senator Angela Paxton, Vice Chair
Senator Paul Bettencourt
Senator Mayes Middleton
Senator Tan Parker
Senator Judith Zaffirini

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Brian Birdwell
Senator Morgan LaMantia
Senator José Menéndez
Senator Charles Perry
Senator Charles Schwertner

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM. There being a quorum present at 10:07 AM, the following business was transacted:

The following members arrived after the roll was called: Senator Bettencourt, Senator Middleton, Senator Parker and Senator Paxton.

The Chair laid out the following interim committee charge:

Unmasking Protestors: Study the use of face coverings and hoods designed to conceal the identity of those bent on committing crimes at protests. Recommend legislation to stop the chaos and destruction by those who attempt to commit crimes while concealing their identity during public gatherings.

The following individuals provided invited and public testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair laid out the following interim committee charge:

Stop Noncitizen Voting: Evaluate the current safeguards in place to prevent noncitizens from voting in elections. Recommend legislation to facilitate the removal of noncitizen voters from the voter rolls as well as legislation to prevent noncitizens from registering to vote in Texas.

The following individuals provided invited and public testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair laid out the following interim committee charge:

Election Audit Reports: Evaluate the Secretary of State's election audit reports. Make recommendations to secure our elections and ensure counties follow the law.

The following individuals provided invited and public testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair laid out the following interim committee charge:

Runoff Elections: Study the prerequisites, timing, and efficiency of runoff elections. Make recommendations to increase the efficiency and lower the costs of runoff elections. Examine the 50% vote threshold to avoid a runoff, particularly when four or more candidates are running for the same office. Report whether the vote percentage threshold should be lowered in some instances.

The following individuals provided invited and public testimony (see attached witness list).

At 1:20 PM Senator Paxton assumed the chair.

At 1:49 PM Senator Hughes resumed the chair.

The Chair laid out the following interim committee charge:

Monitoring: Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on State Affairs passed by the 88th Legislature. Specifically, evaluate the impact of Senate Bill 2284, relating to the sale of distilled spirits to ultimate consumers by the holder of a distiller's and rectifier's permit. Report whether the increased sale of distilled spirits has had a positive impact on economic development and public safety in this industry.

The following individuals provided invited and public testimony (see attached witness list).

There being no further business, at 4:38 PM Senator Hughes moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Bryan Hughes, Chair

Victoria Ross, Clerk