



## 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session –Bill Scorecard

TexProtects worked with advocates in initiating and/or on passage of the following legislation during the 84th Legislative Session

Bill	Legislative Authors/ Sponsors	Child Protection Roundtable Committee/ Organization Sponsor	Procedural Process	Current Status
<b>Child Protective Services (CPS) Funding Increased Pay for CPS frontline caseworkers</b>  <b>HB 1</b>	<b>Key Budget Decision Makers:</b> Senator Schwertner, Sen. Uresti and Rep. Sarah Davis	Budget priority:  Additional \$8.8 million and authorization for increased pay and benefits for CPS frontline caseworkers.	Approved in Budget Signed by Governor	<i>Effective 9/1/15</i>
	Non-competitive pay is among the many reasons that CPS has high employee turnover, costing the state more than \$72 million in 2013 alone. Advocates led the effort for a cost-of-living (COL) adjustment up to \$1,200 per month for workers living in high cost areas where there is excessive turnover. This framework will allow DFPS to implement a market-driven formula to provide a salary supplement to workers in targeted areas of the state. Advocates also assisted in securing \$16.6 million for overtime pay for caseworkers and to provide merit pay to 25% of caseworkers at \$1,250 every 6 months.			
<b>Child Protective Services Funding: CPS Direct Delivery Staff</b>  <b>HB 1</b>	<b>Key Budget Decision Makers:</b> Senator Schwertner, Sen. Uresti and Rep. Sarah Davis	Budget initiative:  Increased funds for additional CPS direct delivery staff.	Approved in Budget Signed by Governor	<i>Effective 9/1/15</i>
	Advocates aided in securing an additional \$27.4 million for CPS direct delivery staff. The funding will allow the agency to hire 164.8 full time equivalents (FTEs) and 254.8 FTEs in 2016-2017 respectively. Staff includes Investigative, Family Based Safety Services and Conservatorship caseworkers, Interregional Specialists, Parent Child Safety Placement staff and administrative support for investigation units in rural counties. This is an overall increase of 1.8% in FY 2016 and 2.8% in FY 2017 above FY 2015 FTEs. The additional funds will maintain caseloads for Investigative, Family Based Safety Services and Kinship caseworkers and Foster/Adoptive specialists in FY 2017 and allow increased targeted support for certain caseworkers throughout the biennium.			



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<b>Child Protective Services Funding: Caseworker Support</b>  <b>HB 1</b>	<b>Key Budget Decision Makers:</b> Senator Schwertner, Sen. Uresti and Rep. Sarah Davis	Budget initiative:  An additional \$47.4 million for essential supports for caseworkers.	Approved in budget Signed by Governor	<i>Effective 9/1/15</i>
	Advocates assisted in securing funds to increase time with families by improving worker supports and systems; including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$32.6 million for enhancements to IMPACT that will help implement Transformation efforts and also allow caseworkers more efficiency in performing tasks, and expands the number of caseworker support centers. IMPACT modifications include enhancements to support Structured Decision Making, batch process for printing and mailing large volumes of letters, and vendor portal for service providers to timely report delivery of services.</li> <li>• \$7 million to expand CPS candidate outreach to recruit new caseworkers, improve candidate testing and screening process, and increase learning systems to support changing business needs of department and workers. It also creates a stipend program to support mentoring and training to new caseworkers.</li> <li>• \$3.3 million to continue the Office of Child Safety to analyze data, identify high risk areas of the state, and make safety recommendations through programs and services.</li> <li>• \$3.3 million to fund master conservatorship supervisors and specialists, master investigator supervisors, and administrative support. It also includes funding for interregional specialist caseworkers and supervisors to conduct face to face visits and document child updates for primary caseworkers.</li> <li>• \$1.2 million for worker safety office to provide ongoing support to workers who have experienced traumatic events.</li> </ul>			
<b>Caregiver screening and training by substitute care providers for children in the conservatorship of DFPS</b>  <b>HB 781</b>	<b>Author: Representative Burkett</b> <b>Joint Author:</b> Representative Naishtat <b>Sponsor:</b> Senator Perry <b>Co-Sponsor:</b> Senator Zaffirini	CPS Improvements	Passed both chambers Signed by Governor	<i>Effective 9/1/15</i>
	Advocates supported HB 781 which requires DFPS to determine and evaluate the training and assessments used for potential foster parents. Specifically, it ensures that child placing agencies utilize risk assessments and authorized training curriculums for staff, and mandates that each caregiver receive a minimum of 35 hours of training. Kinship caregivers are excluded from these requirements. HB 781 also allows the Department to monitor child placing agencies for efficacy, outcomes, financial accounting, records and services.			



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<b>Civil SOLs in Minor Sexual Assault Cases</b>	<b>Author: Representative Senfronia Thompson</b>	CPS Improvements/ Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA)	Died in House Calendars	<i>Failed to Pass</i>
<b>HB 1102</b> <i>Companion SB 113</i>	Advocates supported HB 1102 which removes the statute of limitations for civil cases that involve the sexual assault of a minor.			
<b>Colton’s Law</b>  <b>HB 2053</b>	<b>Author: Representative Farney</b> <b>Joint Authors:</b> Representatives Craddick, Thompson, Senfronia and Burkett <b>Co-Authors:</b> Representatives Ashby, Capriglione, Cook, Kacal, King, Ken, Kuempel, Leach, Phelan, Price, Rodriguez, Eddie, Rose, Simmons, VanDeaver, Villalba, White, James and Workman <b>Sponsor:</b> Senator Schwertner <b>Co-Sponsors:</b> Senators Campbell, Taylor, Van and Uresti	CPS Improvements/ TexProtects	Passed both chambers Signed by Governor	<i>Takes effect September 1, 2015, except Section 5 takes effect March 1, 2016.</i>
Advocates helped pass HB 2053 to address problems in the system revealed by the death last year of Colton Turner. It increases information and coordination between DFPS and the Department of Public Safety when an at-risk child is missing and allows for temporary detention of the child and related adults under certain circumstances.				
<b>Educational Support for Foster Youth</b>  <b>HB 3748</b>	<b>Author: Rep. Farney</b> <b>Sponsor:</b> Senator West	CPS Improvements/ Texans Care for Children	Passed both chambers Signed by Governor	<i>Effective Immediately</i>
Former foster youth who attend college face barriers to academic success. Advocates successfully advanced HB 3748 to strengthen educational supports for current and former foster youth by designating a liaison at higher education institutions for these students. It also enables the state to study long term trends regarding foster youth in higher education by requiring DFPS and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) through which they will exchange relevant information. These positive changes will better ensure students in foster care can thrive in the school environment and achieve educational success.				



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<b>Increased Penalties for Serious Physical Abuse and Fatality Cases</b>  <b>HB 3977</b>	<b>Author: Representative Dukes</b> <b>Co-Author:</b> Representative Leach <b>Sponsor:</b> Senator Perry	TexProtects	Passed House and died in Senate Committee	<i><b>Failed to Pass</b></i> <i><b>Died in Senate Criminal Justice Committee</b></i>
Advocates worked diligently to pass HB 3977 to remove probation eligibility and increase the minimum sentence to 10 years from 5 years for causing the death or serious bodily injury of a child. The majority of child fatalities are prosecuted under this statute, which currently allows a jury to give probation or as little as 5 years for killing a child.				
<b>Assessments for children in the conservatorship of DFPS</b>  <b>SB 125</b>	<b>Author: Senator West</b> <b>Co-Author:</b> Senator Zaffirini <b>Sponsor:</b> Representative Naishtat	CPS Improvements	Passed both chambers Signed by Governor	<i><b>Effective 9/1/15</b></i>
Advocates helped pass SB 125 to require that a child have a comprehensive assessment no later than 45 days after coming into care. The assessment must include a trauma screening and interviews with individuals knowledgeable about the child.				
<b>DFPS Sunset Bill</b>  <b>SB 206</b>	<b>Author: Senator Schwertner</b> <b>Joint-Authors:</b> Senators Birdwell, Campbell, Hinojosa and Nelson <b>Co-Author:</b> Senator Uresti <b>Sponsor:</b> Representative Burkett <b>Joint Sponsors:</b> Representatives Price, Raymond, Dutton and Larry Gonzales	CPS Improvements	Passed both chambers Signed by Governor	<i><b>Takes effect September 1, 2015, except Section 69 of this Act has no effect and Sections 42.050(d) and 42.052(f-1), Human Resources Code, as added by this Act, take effect September 1, 2016</b></i>
TexProtects and stakeholders played an instrumental role in the formulation of SB 206 and preserving key statutes recommended for repeal. SB 206 addresses the key goals of CPS Transformation. It allows caseworkers to spend more time with children and families and improves the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in CPS cases. It also includes provisions to reduce unnecessary administrative tasks and paperwork, reduce workload where possible, and provide DFPS with the flexibility to make its processes more efficient and adapt to changing best practices.				



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<b>Educational Incentives for Caseworkers</b>	<b>Author: Senator West</b> <b>Co-Authors:</b> Senators Watson and Whitmire	CPS Improvements/ National Association of Social Workers- Texas (NASW)	Died in Committee	<i>Failed to Pass</i>
<b>SB 358</b> <i>Companion HB 600</i>	Advocates have been steadfast supporters of loan repayment assistance for caseworkers. SB 358 would have expanded the Title IV-E education program to Conservatorship workers and apply the waiver to Family Based Safety Services and Investigative caseworkers as well. It would have also created a loan repayment program for frontline and first tier supervisors in Investigative, Conservatorship and Family Based Safety Services for those who do not qualify for the IV-E program.			
<b>DFPS Office of Consumer Affairs</b>	<b>Author: Senator Kolkhorst</b> <b>Sponsor:</b> Representative Dutton	CPS Improvements/ One Voice Texas/ Texas CASA	Passed Both Chambers Signed by Governor	<i>Effective on 9/1/15</i>
<b>SB 830</b>	Advocates have encouraged the creation of an Independent Ombudsman office to address external CPS inquiries and concerns. SB 830 ensures there is an independent ombudsman’s office outside of DFPS to which foster youth and families can report. It also requires the ombudsman to regularly report performance data.			
<b>Child Fatality Data Reporting</b> <b>SB 949</b>	<b>Author: Senator Uresti</b> <b>Co-Author:</b> Senator Menendez <b>Sponsor:</b> Representative Naishtat	CPS Improvements/ TexProtects	Passed Both Chambers Signed by Governor	<i>Effective 9/1/15</i>
There is concern that the current report utilized by DFPS for child abuse and neglect related fatalities is not accurately measuring all abuse and neglect related deaths in Texas. Advocates worked to pass SB 949 to require DFPS to produce an annual report of all child fatalities investigated by DFPS by their investigative dispositions and as they occur in real time. This data will provide a better understanding of both abusive and non-abusive fatalities occurring in Texas.				
<b>Normalcy for Foster Youth</b>	<b>Author Senator Schwertner</b> <b>Co-Authors:</b> Senators Campbell, Kolkhorst and Uresti <b>Sponsor:</b> Representative Dukes	CPS Improvements/ Texas CASA	Passed Both Chambers; Signed by Governor	<i>Effective 9/1/15</i>
<b>SB 1407</b>	Advocates successfully advanced SB 1407 to strengthen the rights of children in foster care to participate in normal activities and experiences. It empowers substitute caregivers to approve or disapprove a child’s participation in activities based on a caregiver’s own assessment and availability to help facilitate a child’s access to these activities using a reasonable and prudent parent standard.			



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<p><b>Texas Home Visiting and Nurse Family Partnership Programs Funding</b></p> <p><b>HB1</b></p>	<p><b>Key Budget Decision Makers:</b>            Speaker Straus            Sen. Nelson, Sen. Schwertner and Sen. Uresti            Rep. Otto, Rep. Burkett and Rep. Sarah Davis</p>	<p>TexProtects Budget priorities:</p> <p>Additional \$5.4 million in the budget for the Nurse Family Partnership Program.</p> <p>Renewal of \$36 million in the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program federal funds.</p>	<p>Approved in Budget            Signed by Governor</p>	<p><i>Effective 9/1/15</i></p>
<p>Advocates led the effort to secure \$5.4 million for the nurse family partnership program in Texas to serve an additional 400 families, in addition to the \$17.8 million in 2014-2015. Advocates also helped pass at the federal level the renewal of \$36 million in the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) funds for the Texas home visiting program, in addition to the \$8 million in state funds. The combined funding of \$67 million for the NFP and HV programs will help serve approximately 8,000 families over the 2016-2017 biennium. This represents a 653% increase in funding since inception in 2008.</p>				



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<p><b>Abusive Head Trauma Prevention Program Funding</b></p> <p><b>HB 1</b></p>	<p><b>Key Budget Decision Makers:</b>          Senator Uresti and Sen. Schwertner          Rep. Dukes and Rep. Sarah Davis</p>	<p>TexProtects Budget priority:</p> <p>\$5.5 million to establish an evidence-based abusive head trauma prevention program.</p>	<p>Approved in Budget          Signed by Governor</p>	<p><i>Effective 9/1/15</i></p>
<p>Advocates led the effort to secure up to \$5.5 million to establish a program to prevent abusive head trauma, the number one cause of child fatalities due to abuse. The state will be able to serve families at 50% of the birthing hospitals using the “Period of Purple Crying” evidence-based program, which educates parents before they are discharged from the hospital and includes subsequent visits by home visitors.</p>				
<p><b>Prevention and Early Intervention Programs (Evidence-based) Funding</b></p> <p><b>HB 1</b></p>	<p><b>Key Budget Decision Makers:</b>          Senator Uresti and Sen. Schwertner          Rep. Burkett and Rep. Sarah Davis</p>	<p>TexProtects Budget initiative:</p> <p>Additional funds for evidence-based prevention programs as a funding priority.</p>	<p>Approved in Budget          Signed by Governor</p>	<p><i>Effective 9/1/15</i></p>
<p>Advocates assisted in securing an additional \$19.1 million in prevention funding for the Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES) Project to serve an additional 7,032 families, in addition to the \$8 million in 2014-2015. HOPES supplements and strengthens the existing home visiting system built under HHSC. Project HOPES contracts with community based organizations to provide child abuse and neglect prevention services that target families with children between 0-5 years of age. Contracts are targeted in certain counties; include a home-visiting program component; and tailored to communities, including collaborations between child welfare, early childhood education, and other child and family violence services.</p> <p>Advocates also helped in securing \$3.2 million to provide services, such as home visitation, household management and parent education to military families. The resources will help keep these families and their children safe while preparing for, experiencing and returning from deployment.</p>				



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<b>Post-Partum Depression Awareness Month</b>	<b>Author: Representative Senfronia Thompson</b> <b>Sponsor:</b> Senator Huffman <b>Joint Sponsor:</b> Senator Uresti	Prevention	Passed Both Chambers Signed by Governor	<i>Effective 9/1/15</i>
<b>HB 2079</b>	Advocates helped pass HB 2079 to designate May as post-partum awareness month.			
<b>Social Impact Financing</b> <b>HB 3014</b>	<b>Author: Representative Parker</b> <b>Joint Authors:</b> Representatives Burkett and Guerra <b>Sponsor:</b> Senator West	Prevention/ TexProtects	Passed Both Chambers Signed by Governor	<i>Effective 9/1/15</i>
	Advocates worked diligently to pass HB 3014 to allow for the utilization of social impact financing to bring evidence based prevention programs to scale. It could have an immediate effect tackling social problems that endanger children, and in turn bring quick savings to taxpayers by preventing the devastating, costly effects of child maltreatment.			





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<b>Post-Partum Depression Support</b>  <b>HB 3115</b>	<b>Author: Representative Coleman</b> <b>Joint Author:</b> Zerwas	Prevention	Died in Committee	<i>Failed to Pass</i>
Advocates supported HB 3115 that would have enhanced the screening, treatment, accessibility and affordability of services for individuals with post-partum depression.				
<b>HHSC Sunset Bill</b>  <b>SB 200</b>	<b>Author: Senator Nelson</b> <b>Joint Authors:</b> Senators Birdwell, Campbell, Hinojosa and Schwertner <b>Sponsor:</b> Representative Price <b>Joint Sponsors:</b> Representatives Raymond, Dutton, Burkett and Larry Gonzales	Prevention	Passed Both Chambers Signed by Governor	<i>Takes effect September 1, 2015, except Article 3 takes effect January 1, 2016, excluding Sections 3.02(b) and 3.42, which take effect September 1, 2015; Sections 1.23(a), (b), and (c) take effect September 1, 2016; and Sections 1.16 through 1.19 and 1.23(d) and (e) take effect September 1, 2017.</i>
Advocates have encouraged better coordination of prevention services. Provisions within SB 200 improve the coordination of prevention services that focus on improving the well-being of children related to child abuse and neglect, health, behavioral, education and other co-occurring social issues by requiring the consolidation of prevention programs into one division at DFPS by the end of fiscal year 2016.				