



**RATLIFF COMPANY**

1504 SAN ANTONIO  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701

AUSTIN OFFICE:  
TEL (512) 494-9180  
[WWW.RATCO.NET](http://WWW.RATCO.NET)

HON. THOMAS RATLIFF  
RANDY ELLISTON

February 11, 2019

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** DPROA, Dwight Walker, and Boux Bland

**FROM:** Randy Elliston

**SUBJECT:** Legislative Update

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Gentlemen,

The 86<sup>th</sup> regular session of the Texas Legislature is moving forward under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick and newly elected House Speaker Dennis Bonnen. With the election of Speaker Bonnen there has been a major shakeup in House Committees. The committee dealing with pension issues in the House this session will be the newly created House Committee on Pensions, Investments & Financial Services. Speaker Bonnen has appointed representative Jim Murphy of Houston as chairman. The committee in the Senate dealing with pension issues will again be the Senate Committee on State Affairs. Senator Joan Huffman of Houston will again be the chairman of this committee. You will notice both Jim Murphy and Joan Huffman are from Houston.

Representative Dan Flynn was not selected to serve as chairman of the House Committee on Pensions, Investments & Financial Services but will now chair the House Committee on Defense & Veterans' Affairs. The word is that Flynn is not happy he was not appointed as chairman of Pensions, Investments & Financial Services. Even though he is no longer the chair, he will remain on the committee as a member.

We are reviewing pension bills as they are filed, and I have attached a list of the bills we are currently watching. This list will change as we expect more pension related bills to be filed. If you see anything in any of these bills that concerns you or you have question about please contact me.

OVERSIGHT COMMITTEES AND BOARDS:

**Senate State Affairs Chaired by Senator Joan Huffman:**

The committee has no future meetings scheduled at this time. I expect this to change quickly as bills have already been referred to this committee.

Senate bills to watch:

**SJR 27 by Huffman:**

Proposing a constitutional amendment prohibiting the use of state funds to pay for the obligations of a local public retirement system. This SJR would require a vote to amend the constitution by voters at an election to be held November 5, 2019 and basically says the state is not on the hook for local public retirement systems. See attached SJR.

SB 322 by Huffman, referred to State Affairs:

Relating to the evaluation and reporting of investment practices and performance of certain public retirement systems. This has a lot of oversight, evaluation, and reporting requirements for the systems. See attached SB.

**House Committee on Pensions, Investments & Financial Services Chaired by Rep. Jim Murphy:**

The committee is scheduled to have its first meeting on Wednesday 02/13/2019 at 10:30 AM or upon final adjourn./recess in room E2.026.

The posting states "The Committee will meet for organizational purposes and to hear invited testimony". There is no witness list included for anyone that is invited to testify.

The committee is also scheduled to meet on Thursday 02/14/2019 at 8:00 AM in room E2-026.

The posting states "The Committee will meet to hear invited testimony". There is no witness list included for anyone that is invited to testify.

House bills to watch:

None at this time

**Pension Review Board of Texas:**

The Review Board met on January 24, 2019 at 10:00AM. The board received updates for addressing funding shortfalls for the following two plans:

- City of Fort Worth and Fort Worth Employees' Retirement Fund
- City of Galveston and Galveston Employees' Retirement Plan for Police

I have attached a link below for the audio only of this meeting. Normally there is video but they must have been having technical problems and only have audio. There was a lot of interesting discussion about these two plans to which you may want to listen.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ed\\_owvxu0&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ed_owvxu0&feature=youtu.be)

The Pension Review Board is not scheduled to meet again until June 27, 2019.

Randy Elliston, Government Affairs Consultant  
Ratliff Company  
1504 San Antonio  
Austin, Tx 78701  
Cell: 512-415-9975

Randy Elliston is a retired Chief of the Texas Highway Patrol with over 35 years of experience in Texas State Government Relations. He is now a member of the Ratliff Company team representing clients in areas of public safety, law enforcement, transportation and state administrative processes.