

2017 STATE CONFERENCE

January 26–28 | State Affairs
Austin, Texas | Forum



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



 **TX YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT**



STATE AFFAIRS FORUM TOPICS 2016-17

Education

1. State funding for the UT System has dropped from 47% to 13% of the system's total budget.
2. Ethics among school administration
3. Texas ranks among the bottom third in the U.S. for per-pupil funding.
4. School testing reform in Texas.
5. Texas ranks 47 in the nation for SAT scores.
6. The low high school graduation rate in Texas
7. Education for special needs students in Texas
8. College campus sexual assault in Texas
9. Universal pre-K education considerations in Texas

Civil Liberties

1. Deaths in Texas due to driving while under the influence
2. Capital punishment in Texas
3. Voter ID laws in Texas
4. Texting and driving laws in Texas
5. The enactment of "campus carry" in Texas

Technology

1. Cyber Security in Texas
2. Decreased funding for NASA as it affects Texas
3. Fracking regulations in Texas
4. Driverless car regulations in Texas

Health

1. The National Institute of Health has lost 22% of its purchasing power since 2003's federal budget.
2. The opioid crisis has led to a near 100% rise in overdose deaths since 2003.
3. Drinking water quality in Texas leading to rise in "boil-water" advisories.
4. Medicaid expansion in Texas
5. Teen substance abuse

Economy

1. Public transportation infrastructure in Texas
2. Economic measures to support businesses in Texas
3. The poverty rate in Texas is 17%, compared to national average of 14.5%; the southern border of Texas has an average of 35%.
4. The minimum wage in Texas
5. Guaranteed paid family leave in Texas

National and Foreign Affairs

1. Drivers' licenses for undocumented immigrants
2. "Sanctuary cities" for undocumented immigrants
3. Surplus military equipment of police departments
4. The murder rate in major U.S. cities
5. Firearm laws and regulations in the U.S
6. U.S. companies' production in foreign countries
7. Planned obsolescence and increased electronic waste in the U.S.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Universal pre-k education

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Public schools

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. The Austin Independent School District provides a full-day prekindergarten program for all children who turn four on or before September 1st of the current school year.

9. Students must also qualify by being either

10.

11. • Limited-English proficient (LEP); or

12. • Educationally disadvantaged; or

13. • Child of active military parent; or

14. • Homeless.

15. Prekindergarten is a special program for eligible four-year-old students. The prekindergarten program is designed to meet the needs of a child's early years, which are a period of rapid growth. It is during this period that key concepts are developed which directly correlate to a student's future academic success. Prekindergarten is an exciting time for students and for parents. For many families, prekindergarten is the introduction into the public school system.

22.

23.

24. **Proposal for Action:**

25. Allow all kids to partake in in public education

26. Take the restrictions off pre-k registration requirements

27. Open to all kids regardless of economic status

28.

29.

30. **Results to be Expected:**

31. Affordable pre-k for everyone giving equal opportunity to all kids

32. Kids that barley miss the requirements will be able to get the help they need and deserve

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Creating new infrastructure that will reduce traffic congestion in Austin, San Antonio and
3. El Paso

4.
5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. Public transportation in the Austin, San Antonio metro area and in El Paso.
7.

8. **Justification:**

8. With the increase in population across the state it has led to severe congestion problems
9. for cities. The Austin – San Antonio metro area has seen rapid growth and the area has
10. not been able to keep up with this rapid growth and has made traffic congestion a major
11. problem. Most solutions to fix this problem will take too much time and will cause more
12. congestions as the infrastructure is built. In El Paso they have had a smaller population
13. growth compared to the Austin – San Antonio metro area but do to the lay out of the
14. city traffic has become a major issue and conventional means of addressing this issue
15. cannot be used in the city.
16.

17. **Proposal for Action:**

18. To address this issue the state of Texas will create two three types of public
19. transportation that will allow citizens to ride public transportation instead of using their
20. cars. In order to keep cost down the new types of transportation will be connected to
21. existing public transportation hubs or connection points. The first type will only be
22. added to the Austin – San Antonio metro area not in El Paso. The state will create a
23. commuter rail line between Austin and San Antonio. The commuter rail line will start in
24. the farthest north section of San Antonio and end in The farthest south side of Austin.
25. To keep cost down the commuter rail line will use the already existing tracks that run
26. along Interstate 35 between the two cities. The commuter line will have stations in New
27. Braunfels and San Marcos.
28. The second major type of public transportation is to build a monorail in Austin, San
29. Antonio, and El Paso. Each city will use their current bus transfer stations as the
30. monorail stations as well. Each city will decide on the routes but it must connect all
31. areas of the city and may be moved to the smaller cities that surround the major cities.
32. The cities will also decide if they want the standard monorail that travels on the track or
33. a hanging monorail system. There is currently a movable monorail system that can be
34. easily changed to match the current needs of the city as the city changes.
35. The third type would be to have cities use the elevated bus system. This system will be
36. used in areas that a monorail cannot be easily built. The city will decide on the route
37. and stops for the elevated busses
38.

39. **Results to be Expected:**

40. Once the three types of new public transportation is built we should see a decrease in
41. congestion on major highways and major roads in the three cities. The first goal is to
42. have a 25% decrease on cars that use the most congested routes. The second goal is
43. to have reduce the amount of time that commuters stay in traffic by 25%. The third
44. goal is to reduce the commute time between Austin and San Antonio by 25% during the
45. hours of 6:00 am and 8:00 pm

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. College Campus sexual assault in Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas Citizens

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. One in 5 women and one in 16 men are 4.sexually assaulted while in college. 5.More
8. than 90% of sexual assault victims 6.on college campuses do not report the 7.assault,
9. 63.3% of men at one university 8.who self-reported acts qualifying as rape 9.or
10. attempted rape admitted to 10 committing repeat rapes.

11.

12.

13. **Proposal for Action:**

14. Increase the severity of punishment for sexual assault predators, and create a lasting
15. impression on these people making sure they never do it again.

16.

17.

18. **Results to be Expected:**

19. A decrease in the amount of sexual assault cases reported on college campuses.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Justice for Campus Assault Victims

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. University communities

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. In 1972, an act entitled *Title IX* stated that all universities/colleges were required to provide assistance to anyone who claims acts of sexual violence, harassment, or assault.

9. In 2013, this was specifically addressed with the *SaVE Act*, which stated that anyone who claims acts of sexual misconduct is to be provided with free counseling, access to schedule changes, new dorming situations, and restraining orders. However in recent years, both the *SaVE Act* and *Title IX* have been violated many times in the way the school authorities have handled the cases. 1 in 5 women are raped while they're in college; along with 1 in 16 men being raped during their college years. Rape shouldn't be such a common statistic: and victim's cases shouldn't be handled the same way a child who steals candy is treated.

17.

18. **Proposal for Action:**

19. The proposed action is to create a law that states: upon enrollment to any Texas college or university (regardless of private or state affiliation), a survey will be sent to each student. The survey will ask whether or not the student would like to be a correspondent with the State Board of Education for Texas, giving reports every six weeks (or sooner if deemed necessary) on how each school is upholding the *Title IX* agreements that each college/university has to follow due to federal law. If a student finds an issue within the university, it will be reported to the State Board of Education for Texas, and punishments such as fines will be given out depending on the degree of offense. Both public and private schools will have to follow this law; public schools due to their funding coming from the state, and private schools because (according to a Law Review from Valparaiso University) the act of refusal to comply with the law will result in a case of state action, due to the school asserting a rule that directly violates state law.

32.

33. **Results to be Expected:**

34. Due to the primary source testimony coming from actual university students, there will be more timely reports of what is happening within the schools, as well as more reason for university staff to actually handle accusations rather than hiding them.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Capital Punishment

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas Capital Punishment

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. According to Deathpenaltyinfo.org (accessed 10/31/2016), each death penalty case in
8. Texas costs taxpayers about \$2.3 million. That is about three times the cost of detaining
9. someone in a cell at the highest ranking security level for 40 years. Death penalty cases
10. are much more expensive than other criminal cases and cost more than imprisonment
11. for life with no possibility of parole. According to Michelle Lyons, spokeswoman for the
12. Texas Department of Criminal Justice the average cost to house an inmate in Texas
13. prisons is \$47.50 per day, Therefore it would cost about \$17,340 to accommodate an
14. inmate for a year and \$693,500 for 40 years, far less than even part of the death
15. penalty costs.

16.

17.

18. **Proposal for Action:**

19. Abolish Texas Capital Punishment and replace with sentence of life imprisonment with
20. no possibility for parole.

21.

22.

23. **Results to be Expected:**

24. By Abolishing Texas Capital Punishment we could use the money better for more prison
25. space, better rehabilitation programs such as; drug rehabilitation, alcohol rehabilitation,
26. education for inmates, (and) especially dedicate more attention to juveniles. Because
27. Texas has to pay for the capital punishment the money be allocated for improvement on
28. local health; trauma centers, hospital personnel, police, and firefighters, and education.
29. Money for education could go to new textbooks, more qualified teachers, improvement
30. in school programs that help children like counseling, community in schools.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Both Private and Public Texas universities should have a required gun
3. registration/application with each school enrollment to better control campus carry laws
4. that are in place to this day at Texas campuses.

5.
6. **Major Area to be Affected:**

7. Universities and college campuses.
8. Texas citizens.

9. **Justification:**

10. Students of university campuses are now able to carry a concealed weapon as of August
11. 1st 2016, if they are 21 years or older (18 if they are in the military) and they have the
12. Texas handgun license or a concealed gun license (CGL). All who apply for the license
13. cannot be a convicted felon, charged with a felony, or have a serious mental illness.
14. Private schools can ban guns under the state law and public schools have made
15. regulations for students to follow by restricting them in dormitories, residential facilities
16. and classrooms.

17.
18.
19.
20. **Proposal for Action:**

21. Students who choose to carry firearms (or guns) on a college or university campus shall
22. be required to carry their handgun license and register their firearm and paperwork with
23. campus security.
24. Each year is a renewed application through age of 21.
25. If a student does take out their weapon where there are restrictions to weapons, they
26. will be violating a class A misdemeanor that's punishable by up to one year in jail and a
27. \$4,000 fine.

28.
29.
30. **Results to be Expected:**

31. 1. More administrators and security are aware of the students who own a firearm.
32. 2. Having maps to show where campus carry is allowed and more awareness of
33. safety procedures when a firearm is used or seen.
34. By having students more aware with these procedures, and showing the registration and
35. filed into the campus security system will keep students safe and aware.
36.

37.
38.
39.
40.
41.
42.
43.
44.
45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:** The purpose of our proposal is to create a comprehensive reform
2. to the immigration and sanctuary systems in order to establish a network of cities
3. within the state of Texas that provide security, resources and human services while
4. immigrants are being vetted by the government.

5.
6. **Major Area to be Affected:**
7. Economy and Immigration

8.
9. **Justification:**
10. Sanctuary cities are put in place to create a safe space for people of illegal
11. immigration status. The necessity of sanctuary cities were meant first to stop
12. unnecessary questioning by police and has ballooned into a full blown issues that
13. have become the heated topic of many debates. The need for reform and change in
14. sanctuary cities is incredibly necessary in order to put an end to illegal immigration
15. and create true reform to our currently failing immigration system. As well as then
16. provide those who need and deserve citizenship the chance to become American
17. Citizens.

18.
19. **Proposal for Action:**
20. Our proposal is to create comprehensive reform to our immigration system that will
21. lead to a decreased need of sanctuary cities and eventual removal. To qualify as a
22. sanctuary city a population of a city must at least be one million so that proper
23. resources can be provide to those going through the legalization process that a big
24. city can provide such as lawyers, classes for learning the English language, proper
25. police force and safety to those who are already citizens. To start we will create a
26. system lead by our department of immigration that will allow and deny people
27. within three year's time, to decrease the amount of illegal immigration. The time
28. was set in place to allow proper vetting of all immigrants into the country. Following
29. this the already implemented sanctuary cities system will be reformed to only keep
30. those who have modeled themselves as citizens who are willing to go through a
31. process to become American citizens. This should be a process that takes no longer
32. than two years to become an official citizen. This process would consist of a resume
33. of the immigrants and not the usual naturalization exam. Following this, the
34. resumes would be reviewed by the members of the immigration department where
35. they'll be accepted or denied, upon this review applicants in the U.S will receive
36. letters of acceptance and denial specific to their situation. With measures like this
37. implemented the increasing need for sanctuary cities will be depleted.

38.
39. **Results to be Expected:**
40. The results will be that illegal immigration will be reformed and that the situation of
41. mass illegal immigration will not continue to be a problem in the state of Texas. This
42. will then lead to a gradual removal of Sanctuary Cities, an implementation of a new
43. system and adequate immigration system that will work to create a strong
44. immigration structure into the United States.

45.
46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. A bill to improve the public transportation infrastructure in the State of Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Metropolitan centers in the State of Texas

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. Texas has one of the largest and fastest growing economies in the United States. Texas, if
9. viewed by itself, has the 11th largest economy in the world. The state now has over 30
10. million inhabitants, with thousands of people moving here every day. As late as the 1960s,
11. Texas was widely recognized as having the finest highways in the entire world. Since 1965,
12. however, the amount of money used for transportation infrastructure has fallen, year after
13. year. The Texas economy loses billions of dollars every year, and hundreds of thousands of
14. hours of productivity, due to single drivers sitting in traffic, all over the state. In order to
15. alleviate this gridlock, Texas must attack the problem with the same fervor that its
16. independent-minded citizens have approached problems such as World War II or the space
17. race. The time has come to put Texas back on the pinnacle of transportation infrastructure,
18. for Texas to resume its place as the premier example of putting people to work and putting
19. the economy in motion.

21. **Proposal for Action:**

22. The current bill proposes that Texas once again provide the finest highways and best
23. infrastructure for public transportation. This bill contemplates creating subway lines in the
24. largest and most gridlocked of cities, such as Austin. Austin is the state capital, and yet its
25. highways remain stuck in the 1950s, when the population was three times smaller.
26. Interstate 35 is a chaotic mess, Loop 1 is not much better, and Loop 360 is a "loop" in name
27. only, with traffic lights every 100 feet. This is no solution to efficiently and effectively move
28. people and products.
29. What is proposed is to immediately start building a subway in metropolitan Austin, which
30. would serve high density and traffic areas such as downtown, the airport, the University of
31. Texas, and shopping areas such as the Domain and Barton Springs mall. The population
32. growth will always outstrip the ability to build roads, so rather than continue to think "small,"
33. it is time to begin the work necessary to meet Texans' needs 20, 50 and 100 years from now.
34. If people could commute to work or to the airport or other vital areas, imagine how many
35. cars would be taken off the roads, thereby freeing them for other vehicles, and consequently
36. reducing the constant need to expand the roadway system.
37. Similarly, existing roads should be improved by strengthening bridges, widening roads,
38. putting in high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, and making safer bike paths along existing
39. roads to encourage non-automobile commuters.
40. In order to pay for such measures, it is submitted that the gasoline tax, which has not been
41. raised in nearly 20 years, should be increased by at least 25 cents per gallon. This would
42. create incentives for car owners to drive less, and would replenish transportation coffers. In
43. addition, the state should increase the amount charged for oil companies to lease land in the
44. state and to drill for oil or natural gas. Tolls received by the state should be applied to this
45. purpose.

49. **Results to be Expected:**

50. Although this would be a large project, traffic would be greatly decreased, and living quality
51. would be improved in Texas for over 100 years to come.
52.
53.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:** College Campus Sexual Assaults in Texas

2.

3. **Major Area to be Affected:** College students in Texas

4.

5. **Justification:** One in 5 women and one in 16 men are sexually assaulted while in college
6. (National Sexual Violence Resource Center). According to The Texas Tribune,
7. "more than 18 percent of female undergraduates at the University of Texas at Austin and
8. about 15 percent at Texas A&M say they have been sexually assaulted since arriving on
9. campus". Most cases go unreported, and many reports are silenced. It is estimated that 54%
10. of sexual assaults are not reported to the police (Hope Alliance). Assaults are often not
11. reported because there is a lack of trust between law enforcement and those affected by
12. sexual assault. Even with evidence, many courts have sent guilty perpetrators of home with
13. no charge or with minimum probation. Many affected by sexual assault are shamed to the
14. point that they don't believe that their voice will make a difference. This is often because of
15. the societal tendency to slut shame and perpetually blame women for being assaulted, as if
16. their appearance or behavior lends to non consenting sex. Instead of expecting children to
17. grow up learning how not to get raped, we should instead focus more on teaching consent.
18. Sexual assault is not an act done by men who are "sexually deprived or pathological", but an
19. act of "power and control", often correlated with violence (Hope Alliance). Addressing sexual
20. assault as an issue of violence and disrespect can help prevent future assaults. College
21. campus sexual assaults are especially troubling, considering that college is a rare opportunity
22. to engage in a strong education and an enriching learning environment. This kind of
23. education has created world leaders who have contributed to feats in society and helped
24. move closer to less poverty and more peace through innovation and knowledge. According to
25. Hope Alliance, victims of sexual assault are times more likely to abuse alcohol, 26 times more
26. likely to abuse drugs and four times more likely to contemplate suicide. If so many students
27. attending college are held back by traumatic experiences such as sexual assault, how are
28. they expected to live up to their potential?

29.

30. **Proposal for Action:** Sexual assault is a complex issue, and it is seemingly impossible to
31. know where to start when thinking of ways to combat it. However, it is important to look at
32. sexual assault in direct correlation with several social injustices that leave many groups of
33. people at a disadvantage. According to RAINN, the nation's largest anti-sexual violence
34. organization, the main reasons why sexual violence crimes were not reported to the police
35. was because the survivor feared retaliation, believed the police would or could not do
36. anything to help, believed it was a personal matter, believed it was not important enough to
37. report, or did not want to get the perpetrator in trouble. My proposal is a free app that serves
38. as a resource for sexual assault survivors and a way to report sexual assault safely,
39. confidentially, quickly, and without shame. Survivors simply choose from a selection of
40. authorities to report to, and are given a simple walk-through of the courses of action they
41. can take. Information from medical and forensic professionals would also be provided to
42. ensure a clear understanding of what to do and what not to do after a sexual assault. The
43. app would also include a platform for survivors to connect with each other to share stories
44. and offer support. Having one space to talk openly about sexual assault will empower
45. survivors and ensure justice is duly granted.

46.

47. **Results to be Expected:** If survivors are given access to an easy resource that allows them
48. to safely report sexual assault without the insecurities that come along with traditional
49. reports, those affected by sexual assault will be more likely to report sexual assaults. If more
50. assaults are reported, more perpetrators will be held accountable. A stronger criminal justice
51. system will inevitably reduce sexual assault cases and ensure the next generation has the
opportunity to meet their full potential in college and beyond.

Author: **Nia Hutson** YMCA Delegation: Enter Middle School/High School.

YMCA: **Metro Branch** City: **Austin** PROPOSAL #: 10

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Deaths in Texas due to driving while under the influence

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. People that drive in/through Texas

7.

8.

8. **Justification:**

9. According to raging alcoholic .com, people drive while under the influence of alcohol
10. nearly 300,000 times a day, but less than 3,200 are arrested. More than 112 million
11. Americans admit to having driving drunk. In Texas alone, as stated on madd.com,
12. almost 1,337 deaths were caused by a drunk driver. That puts Texas in the national
13. lead. Taxpayers grant \$6.2 billion for drunk driving fatalities. Drugabuse.gov "found that
14. about 47 percent of drivers who tested positive for drugs had used a prescription drug,
15. compared to 37 percent of those had used marijuana and about 10 percent of those who
16. had used cocaine" in accidents that resulted in death. "The most common prescription
17. drugs found were pain relievers."

18.

19.

20. **Proposal for Action:**

21. There are several steps that could be taken to lower the deaths in Texas due to driving
22. while under the influence. Increasing the awareness of the effect of being under
23. substances while driving can help people to realize the dangers they would be causing to
24. themselves and others. This can easily be enforced in school or billboards on major
25. streets and highways. Another step can be to lower the cost of cabs during happy hour
26. and 7-midnight on the weekends. Also, installing a breathalyzer in all cars in Texas can
27. ensure that no one drives under the influence.

28.

29.

30. **Results to be Expected:**

31. Exploding the risks of driving under the influence and finding alternate transportation for
32. those who are impaired can reduce the amount of deaths in Texas caused by driving
33. under the influence. If all these solutions are put into place, there would be no deaths
34. caused by the use of illegal substances while driving.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:** Ethics among school administration

2.
3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:** Administrators and students of Texas public schools

5.
6.

7. **Justification:** Education is the foundation of any healthy society. It has become
8. increasingly apparent that even with some of the best intentions, administrations of
8. Texas public schools are failing to affectively foster the growth and development of all
9. students. On the grand scale, disciplinary measures do not effect racial groups equally
10. due to implicit bias. In a DOE study of Civil Rights Data Collection, in the 2011-2012
11. school year African American students represented 16% of the total student population,
12. but made up 32% of students who received out of school suspension, and 34% of
13. students who were expelled. In the same year, 18% of preschool students were African
14. American, but they made up 48% of students who received one than one out of school
15. suspension.

16.
17.

18. **Proposal for Action:** Such racial disparities in discipline stem from implicit biases.
19. Implicit biases form from deep influences from the immediate environment spanning to
20. the broader culture. We propose an attempt to combat implicit bias and racial
21. stereotyping of students by administrators through a series of implementations. We plan
22. to bring about mandatory trainings for administrators on various cultural and minority
23. groups, but also more rigorous trainings on ethnic and minority groups represented by
24. the school's own student population. We plan to implement strict protocols on how to
25. deal with and discipline students based on each offense, thus lessening the chance of
26. any discrepancy in treatment due to race. We also plan to implement a similar protocol
27. to carry out school dress code evenly across genders. Among other forms of discipline,
28. we will reserve suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to only extreme offenses such as
29. (but not limited to) endangerment of other students.

30.
31.

32. **Results to be Expected:** We can expect more thoughtful and open minded school
33. administrators. Disparities of race among students receiving suspensions, expulsions,
34. and referrals will shrink. Cases of implicit bias and racial stereotyping among
35. administrators will shrink. Students can be expected to be held to the same standards
36. regardless of race or majority or minority status. With our proposal an aspect of a
37. broken system can be mended.

38.
39.

40.
41.

42.
43.

44.
45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:** To expand upon local city ordinances to ban texting while vehicle is
2. in operation in the state of Texas.

3.
4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:** All licensed drivers that operate a vehicle in the state of
6. Texas

7.
8.

8. **Justification:** When a driver gets on the road and starts texting, they are 23 times
9. more likely to get into an accident. This fact has led texting to be the number one cause
10. of car accidents in United States. According the National Safety Council, there are over
11. 100,000 accidents a year caused by distracted driving. In 2015, 38% of Texas drivers
12. admitted to using their phone while driving. Parents often promote the idea that texting
13. while driving is safe as 48% of young Americans from 12-17 say they have been in a car
14. as the driver was texting. Unless a statewide ban is put in place against texting and
15. driving, the threat of distracted drivers will continue to increase. There are about 5.25
16. million crashes a year 25% of them being caused by distracted drivers. Thousands of
17. lives could be saved if we end this now.

18.
19.

20. **Proposal for Action:** To create a statewide ordinance illegalizing texting and driving on
21. public roads. Advertise using billboards, a Netflix documentary, and have commercials
22. on Sundays during football games to promote the law. Require local law enforcement to
23. implement this policy.

24.
25.

26. **Results to be Expected:** There will be far fewer car accidents due to the decrease in
27. distraction. Not only will you be keeping your own passengers safe, but also other
28. drivers as well.

29.
30.

31.
32.

33.
34.

35.
36.

37.
38.

39.
40.

41.
42.

43.
44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. The enactment of "Campus Carry" in Texas

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. Public Colleges and Universities

7.

8.

9. **Justification:**

10. To ensure safety on all college or university campuses.

11.

12.

13. **Proposal for Action:**

14. Psychological testing to receive concealed handgun permission to open carry on campus
15. admitted only to those of adult age. Once one has passed the test then and only then they
16. will be able to carry a gun on campus. If caught on campus carrying a gun without a
17. license, then they will serve standard gun charge. Fine or sentence depending upon severity
18. of the charge.

19.

20.

21. **Results to be Expected:**

22. A decrease in school threats and shootings against faculty, student, or campus in general.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:** Implementing Texas Concealed Handgun License Campus Carry Laws
2. into States that Issue Permits for Concealed Handgun Carry
3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:** Public Colleges/Universities in States that Issue Permits for
6. Concealed Handgun Carry
7.

8.

9. **Justification:**

10. "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the
11. people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed," states the Second Amendment. The
12. right to bear arms is a staple of the US Constitution, and therefore encompasses concealed
13. carry as well. Public colleges (also known as state colleges) are funded and upheld (owned)
14. by the state, which abides to the constitutional laws of the US, thus, individuals should be
15. able to enact their rights as US citizens. Mass shootings, which are shootings in which four
16. or more people are shot and or killed (not including the shooter) at a single event, gravitate
17. towards gun-free zones. Amazingly, 96.2% of mass shootings between 1998 and 2015
18. occurred in zones labeled as gun-free. In one such instance, the Virginia Tech shooting, 19
19. of the 32 murdered were over the age of 21 – if CHLs were allowed on campus during the
20. time of the shooting, it is perfectly conceivable that at least one of the of-age victims would
21. have been able to stop the assailant. Anyone who has a CHL is able to exercise their second
22. amendment right on the majority of other public property; they should also have the
23. opportunity to protect themselves on state-owned college campuses.

24.

25.

26. **Proposal for Action:**

27.

- 28. ❖ Allow individuals who possess valid concealed handgun licenses (CHL) to exercise
29. their constitutional right on public college campuses
- 30. ❖ Enact Texas "campus carry" law (S.B. 11) into states that issue permits for
31. concealed handgun carry
- 32. ❖ Implement a 180-day delay in the enactment for 2-year and junior colleges

33.

34.

35. **Results to be Expected:**

36.

- 37. ❖ An increase in the amount of CHLs issued to college students
- 38.
- 39. ❖ Drastically improve opportunities to both prevent and reduce mass shooting time
40. spans on public campuses

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To keep American companies from avoiding U.S. Taxes.

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. American Companies

7.

8.

9. **Justification:**

10. Many companies have been moving their headquarters to foreign countries in order to
11. pay less than they would otherwise owe in taxes.

12.

13. **Proposal for Action:**

14. We propose that businesses that move to countries with a significantly low income tax
15. are forced to pay their proper taxes. They would be taxed at 70% lower than the
16. national rate for their foreign income, and would pay the difference in what they owe
17. and what they paid the foreign government in taxes.

18.

19.

20. **Results to be Expected:**

21. Tax revenue would increase.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To help stabilize the economy in Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Workers earning less than our suggested minimum wage.

6. Future workers of the state of Texas.

7.

8. **Justification:**

9.

10. If the minimum wage in Texas is raised then it will help the economy stay stable. Many
11. workers as of now are not able to support themselves on minimum wage because it is
12. too low of an amount. It's been shown that when the minimum wage is raised it will help
13. employees to stay well supported, so more workers of lower skill level can earn a wage
14. enough to support themselves through college or other endeavors. It has been proven
15. on many occasions by many cultures and countries that when the minimum wage is
16. raised it boosts the economy. As many as 10% of Texas workers would benefit
17. financially if minimum wage were increased. And an estimated 870,000 workers, or 14%
18. of all hourly rate workers in Texas, would experience an immediate pay raise. Adjusting
19. the minimum wage annually stands to help Texas keep their wage up to date with the
20. economy and the current dollar value. We plan to implement the wage raise over a 4
21. year period between 2016 and 2020.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26. **Proposal for Action:**

27. To raise the minimum wage in Texas to \$10.10 an hour instead of the current minimum

28. wage of \$7.25 per hour over the course of 4 years between 2016 and 2020

29.

30. To evaluate the minimum wage annually, and adjust if necessary

31.

32. **Results to be Expected:**

33. Many minimum wage workers will be able to make enough money to support themselves financially.

34.

35.

36. Workers will be compensated more reasonably for their work due to the annual changing of the

37. minimum wage.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Improving Texas' infrastructure

3.
4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas citizens, The Departments of Public Works

6.
7. **Justification:**

8. Every day, Thousands upon thousands of people use our Texas roadways, using them to get to jobs, school, and travel which propels our economy and society.

9. Consequently, this puts strain on these roadways, eroding and putting cracks on the surface. Without a safe and comfortable surface on our roads our economy cannot run as efficiently and safely as possible. In fact, poor roadway conditions contribute to approximately one third of collisions resulting in fatalities and serious injuries. This means that roughly 1000 people die each year due to poor road quality. It is also not economical to have poor roadway conditions at all; \$ 6.1 billion are spent each year repairing automobiles damaged from poor road conditions in Texas. As you can see, poor road conditions are detrimental to Texas each year.

10. Not only do poor road conditions impede economic movement and growth in Texas, but congestion on state highways and interstate highways do the same by wasting countless amounts of time and money each year. In fact, congestion on roadways in Texas cost approximately 10 billion dollars and 472 million hours each year.

11.
12.
13.
14.
15.
16.
17.
18.
19.
20.
21.
22.
23. **Proposal for Action:**

24. Action must be taken to repair damaged roads and reduce the amount of congestion on highways in Texas. In each county, the department of public works will be responsible for surveying all roads that have three lanes or more on one side of the median and determining the condition of the roads. If roads are in either in "poor" or "mediocre" condition, which is estimated to be about 45% of them, the Departments of Public works in each county will be responsible for either replacing or resurfacing them depending on their condition. Roads that have been resurfaced within two years upon the enactment of this proposal will not be subject to replacing or resurfacing. To try to lessen the congestion on highways in populated counties in Texas, public interstate and state highways within the following counties: Harris, Dallas, Tarrant, Bexar, Travis, Collin, El Paso, Hidalgo, Denton, and Fort Bend, will have another lane added on each side of the median and will be resurfaced if in a "poor" or "mediocre" condition, determined by the departments of public works. If said highways extend beyond the county lines listed above, these parts of the highways will not be subject to any of the changes above.

25.
26.
27.
28.
29.
30.
31.
32.
33.
34.
35.
36.
37.
38.
39.
40. **Results to be Expected:**

41. The expansion of these highways and the resurfacing of these urban roads will allow for smooth economic travel and activity ultimately benefiting Texas' economy greatly. Roads in good condition will lead to less loss of life and less loss of money due to repairs to damaged automobiles. Expanding state and interstate highways will lead to less congestion saving Texas citizens' time and money.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**
2. Texas ranks 47 in the nation for SAT scores

3.
4.
5. **Major Area to be Affected:**
6. Education in Texas high school students

7.
8. **Justification:**
9. Today, most kids are often told that going to college and pursuing higher education is
10. the only way that they can get anywhere in life. The majority of their adult interaction
11. is spent talking with people who've been to college, their teachers. When they get to
12. high school, these kids are heavily encouraged to take college level classes such as AP
13. and IB courses. But when it comes to the SAT, a test specifically designed to test
14. college preparation, we fall way too short from the mark. If all we're going to do is try
15. to push student more towards college, we need to provide a more rigorous curriculum
16. for those who aren't taking the highest level of classes, as there aren't any harder
17. classes that we can reasonably offer to the top students. Otherwise, we need to show
18. students that there are options other than college that they can take and still live a
19. fulfilling life.

20.
21.
22. **Proposal for Action:**
23. There are two main courses of action that we can do as suggested by the fact of the
24. proposal topic. The first, bringing up the low end of scores to overall improve the
25. average SAT score. This could be done in a number of ways such as providing
26. affordable SAT camps that help prepare students, especially those in demographics that
27. wouldn't normally try to get into SAT camps. Another way of helping SAT preparation is
28. providing an elective course in high schools devoted solely to SAT and other sorts of
29. college preparation. This would allow those who don't have the time out of school to get
30. preparation while they're doing something like caring for siblings or holding down a job
31. to support their family. Another thing to do is push higher level math courses earlier
32. than currently required at the bare minimum in high school. The SAT tests math topics
33. all the way up to trigonometry and precalculus, yet there's some students who aren't
34. even taking algebra 2 or geometry, the prerequisites to trigonometry and precalculus,
35. until their senior year of high school. Those students are not at all prepared for the SAT
36. and that could easily be fixed by teaching them the material earlier.

37.
38.
39. **Results to be Expected:**
40. Eventually, after a couple of years of these policies being in place, an overall rise in SAT
41. scores should be expected. Additionally, by providing SAT prep courses and affordable
42. SAT camps across Texas, we can reasonably expect groups that struggle more with the
43. SAT being able to find more help than previously possible.

44.
45.
46.
47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To expand cybersecurity's security. In order to increase internet safety and protection.
3. Via increased security.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. Internet safety in the state of Texas. Decrease in amount of people being hacked and
7. having their personally information stolen

8.

8. **Justification:** 110 MM American Adults hacked in 2014 (47%). All of these attacks give
9. hackers access to people's private information like credit card info, email, phone
10. number, and passwords. Modern day hacking is much more sophisticated than it was in
11. the 1990's so increasing cybersecurity would help to counteract these hackers.

12.

13. **Proposal For Action:** To better educate people in the field of cybersecurity by adding
14. electives available in high school that would teach the importance of being safe online
15. and stress the importance of cybersecurity classes in college, to get more people to
16. major in the field.

17.

18. **Results to be Expected:** By increasing awareness of cybersecurity the number of
19. hackings per year should drastically decrease as easily preventable cases are avoided.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Sexual Assault on Public University Campuses

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Public universities and their administration, students of these institutions, law

6. enforcement, sexual assault victims and perpetrators

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in which
9. the biggest example is rape. 11.2% of all students experience rape or sexual assault
10. through physical force, violence, or incapacitation. Among graduate students, 8.8% of
11. females and 2.2% of males experience rape or sexual assault. Among undergraduate
12. students, 23.1% of females and 5.4% of males experience rape or sexual assault. Only
13. 20% female student victim's, age 18-24, report to law enforcement. As of now, Title IX
14. is the only legislation passed on how colleges must handle rape cases. Title IX is a
15. comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any
16. federally funded education program or activity. However, Title IX does not require a
17. school to report incidents of sexual violence to law enforcement and is only enforced
18. when cases are brought to court and the school, upon notice, fails to take prompt and
19. effective steps reasonably calculated to end the sexual violence, eliminate the hostile
20. environment, prevent its recurrence, and, as appropriate, remedy its effects. The U.S.
21. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights has 246 ongoing investigations into
22. how 195 colleges and universities handled sexual assault under Title IX.

23.

24. **Proposal for Action:**

25. While Title IX is a good first step, one must ensure that schools' internal affairs do not
26. take precedent over legal action. Therefore, though schools may have their own policy
27. for handling sexual assault, school administration should be required to report to the
28. authorities any (alleged) sexual assault cases brought to their attention, as it is a matter
29. that concerns the safety of their students. Whether victims wish to press charges,
30. however, will be left up to their discretion.

31.

32. **Results to be Expected:**

33. Increased accountability for schools who are in violation of Title IX and for perpetrators
34. of sexual assault in universities.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Providing Universal Pre-K to all students

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. Texas Education

7.

8.

8. **Justification:**

9. Evidence and studies show that pre-kindergarten education improve children’s readiness
10. and preparedness to succeed in kindergarten. This provides them with a base to succeed
11. throughout the rest of their educational careers thus making them more likely to
12. succeed in their futures and become educated contributing members of society.

13.

14.

15. **Proposal for Action:**

16. Provide government-funded education to any Texan child for one year prior to
17. kindergarten. This optional year of education would provide the child with a base of
18. knowledge including basic mathematics (counting, patterns), reading skills (learning the
19. alphabet, basic wording), and other skills to help prepare them for kindergarten.

20.

21.

22. **Results to be Expected:**

23. Children will be better prepared to succeed in kindergarten and thus later in their
24. educational careers. We also expect that when students succeed, they are more likely to
25. make a greater investment in their education also contributing to their success.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**
2. Increase Education of Sexual Assault and Reliability of Public Universities in the State of
3. Texas
- 4.
5. **Major Area to be Affected:**
6. Public Universities in the state of Texas
- 7.
8. **Justification:**
8. In the United States, an estimated 1 in every 5 women and 1 in every 10 men are
9. sexually assaulted between the ages of 18 and 24. Around 66% to 80% of rapes go
10. unreported to the police which means only about 20% to 30% were reported. On college
11. campuses, 86% of the on-duty officers are responsible for handling rape related cases
12. and prevention conventions and 72% are responsible for response and assisting of
13. victims. Fraternity members are three times more likely to commit sexual assault than
14. the average male.
- 15.
- 16.
17. **Proposal for Action:**
18. -increase education on consent and safe sex to help prevent rapes in the future
19. -have rapes that are reported to the school be redirected to the police to prevent
20. colleges trying to talk down the victim to protect the reputation of the school
- 21.
- 22.
- 23.
24. **Results to be Expected:**
25. -a decrease in sexual assaults
26. -an increase in reports made by the victim closer to the attack
27. -Private Universities will also enforce these laws to protect their students
- 28.
- 29.
- 30.
- 31.
- 32.
- 33.
- 34.
- 35.
- 36.
- 37.
- 38.
- 39.
- 40.
- 41.
- 42.
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.
- 46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. College Campus Sexual Assault in Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. College-aged Students

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. Every year, students enter colleges and universities with worries about their majors, minors, and grades, not about their safety and chances of being sexually assaulted.

9. However, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 1 in 5 women and

10. 1 in 16 men are sexually assaulted during their college career. Of those assaults, less

11. than 5% are reported to authorities, meaning thousands of cases are not even

12. reviewed, putting thousands of students at risk. Every person in Texas faces the risk of

13. being harassed or assaulted, no matter their gender. High school and college students

14. specifically deal with this issue, especially because 63.3% of men admit to rape and

15. 18% of overall students have experienced rape within enrollment. In places where

16. students' dreams for the future should be developing, instead, are anxieties and fears of sexual assault.

17.

18.

19. **Proposal for Action:**

20. All high school and college campuses will give mandatory annual lectures about sexual

21. assault, consent, and safety for grades 10 through sophomore year of college. Each

22. lecture should be given to all genders. This lecture will be presented on a talk day for

23. each high school and college club, including athletic programs. These discussions and

24. lectures will help educate students about sexual topics like conception. Specific hot line

25. numbers exclusively for questions about sexual harassment should be provided by each

26. school campus or school district. Counselors specifically for victims of sexual harassment

27. should be provided at all college campuses, allowing students to easily access a readily

28. available support system. The punishment of a sexual crime should be increased to a

29. minimum of 5 years of imprisonment along with a fine of \$10,000. An increased

30. punishment should enforce the serious element of sexual harassment, resulting in less

31. assaults. Social media and YouTube ads informing the student population about sexual

32. harassment should be created, promoted, and aired, similar to modern anti-smoking

33. ads. The ads should feature statistics about sexual topics and cases of sexual

34. harassment. Promoting awareness about sexual assault would lead to a decrease in

35. sexual harassment and assault because of the state population being informed.

36.

37. **Results to be Expected:**

38. Students of all genders and sexualities would be more educated about sexual assault,

39. consent, and safety. Discussing sexual harassment would make the topic less

40. controversial and encourage those who are victims of sexual harassment to come

41. forward about their experiences.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Texas must establish a proposal that implements centralized wastewater treatment
3. plants rather than injection wells to get rid of wastewater

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. Fracking Industries, Injection Well Sites, Municipal Treatment Facilities

7.

8. **Justification:**

9. Fracking is the procedure of drilling and administering water, sand, and other chemicals
10. into the ground to release the gas found in rocks. Once the gas has escaped, it is
11. directed upwards and extracted out of the ground. However, wastewater is produced as
12. a byproduct, which is then injected into the ground via injection wells. Major industries
13. are using the soil beneath us an invisible dumping ground. These numerous injection
14. wells we have in Texas come with serious repercussions, such as contamination of
15. water, environmental decay, and earthquakes. Many farmers also cannot use their land
16. for farming or livestock because of leakage from injection wells, which affects the
17. economy. By finding a safer way of disposing these substances, we can avoid these
18. major problems facing Texas today.

19.

20. **Proposal for Action:**

21. Rather than injecting this dangerous substance into the ground, which is detrimental to
22. the environment, there are other ways to deal with this substance.
23. Texas should implement centralized wastewater treatment plants with facilities
24. specialized for brine treatment. One long term solution to deal with the wastewater from
25. fracking is by recycling it. Recycling and "cleaning up" the wastewater minimizes the
26. need for fracking companies to use injection wells. Methods of recycling wastewater
27. from fracking include anaerobic and aerobic treatment and electrocoagulation, which
28. helps remove contaminants from the water.

29.

30. **Results to be Expected:**

31. The number of and frequency of usage for injection wells will decrease. Recycling
32. wastewater saves more than thousands of gallons of fresh water and avoids many
33. potential disasters, such as contamination and earthquakes. By putting an emphasis on
34. reusing wastewater rather than getting rid of it, we can come up with more new
35. innovating technology.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. The opioid crisis has led to a near of 100% rise in overdose deaths since 2003.

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Opioid patient users in the United States, Pharmacies, Doctors

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. Opioid intoxication is a condition caused by use of opioid-based drugs. These include
8. morphine, heroin, oxycodone, and synthetic (man-made) opioid narcotics. Prescription
9. opioids are used to treat pain. Intoxication or overdose can lead to a loss of
10. alertness, unconsciousness, decreased breathing, and death. Natural opioids are made
11. from the juice of the poppy plant 12% of 18 to 25 year olds used prescription drugs
12. nonmedical in the past year. More than 1,700 young adults have died from Rx, opioid
13. pain relievers, the reasons range from trying to get high or thinking that Rx stimulants
14. will help them study better. The main issue is how is it that they can get these drugs so
15. easily, since July 21, 2014 patients can get opioid pain relievers without a prescription.

16.

17. **Proposal for Action:**

18. I. Since 2014 the overdose of opioid products have increased drastically for the
19. cause pharmacies have openly started selling the products to any customer
20. without a signed doctor's prescription.

21.

22. II. This proposal will ensure that every pharmacy will require to sign a document
23. approving the purchase of the drug (opioid). With this in action the amount of
24. deaths will increase drastically.

25.

26. **Results to be Expected:**

27. With our proposal in action we expect to see the percentage of 18 to 25 year olds death
28. rate decrease.

29. We also expect doctors to be have more awareness when prescribing opioid pain
30. relievers and to supervise their patient's records of any signs of addiction.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To lower the death rates due to opioid abuse.

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected**

6. Justice and health care system

7.

8.

8. **Justification:**

9. The number of deaths due to opioid overdoses is steadily rising in Texas.

10.

11.

12. **Proposal for Action:**

13. Lower the amount of opioids able to be prescribed per prescription and
14. provide counseling for anyone experiencing overdose symptoms. Increase the amount
15. of Narcon per policeman and harsher punishments for sellers and traffickers

16.

17.

18.

18. **Results to be Expected:**

19. Lower deaths and drug overdoses from opioid abuse.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To decrease the amount of deaths from opioid-related overdoses

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Those who currently have an addiction to opioid-based painkillers, as well as the
6. pharmaceutical industry

7. **Justification:**

8. Every year, around 30,000 people die from opioids, with over half being caused by
8. prescription painkillers. In fact, overdose deaths due to prescription opioid pain relievers
9. have more than tripled in the past 20 years. This trend has been steadily increasing since
10. 1990, mostly due to the increasingly improper prescription and use of opioid-based
11. painkillers. Large corporations interested in profit did not fund proper research into the
12. long-term effects of these drugs, and instead promoted the use of painkillers for chronic
13. pain, causing doctors to begin their over prescription. Health care providers wrote 259
14. million prescriptions for painkillers in 2012, enough for every American adult to have a
15. bottle of pills. Currently around 2.6 million Americans are addicted to opioids. Alarmingly,
16. over 75% of heroin addicts used prescription opioids before turning to heroin, and 94% of
17. respondents in a 2014 survey of people in treatment for opioid addiction said they chose to
18. use heroin because prescription opioids were more expensive and harder to obtain. Not
19. only this, but the nonmedical use of opioid pain relievers costs insurance companies up to
20. \$72.5 billion annually in health-care costs, an economic burden This is an epidemic that
21. must be addressed in order to insure well-being of all.

22.

23. **Proposal for Action:**

24.

25. In order to prevent future addictions, we propose the adoption of the CDC's guidelines
26. for prescribing opioids to prevent future addiction. This constitutes three main ideas. Firstly,
27. opioid painkillers should be prescribed only when necessary, replacing their use in the
28. treatment of chronic pain with alternatives, such as over-the-counter medications,
29. neurostimulators, physical therapy, and exercise. Second, opioid prescriptions should be
30. initially prescribed with the lowest effective dosage, in order to make sure no greater
31. quantity is given than needed for the expected duration of pain severe enough to require
32. opioids. Finally, clinicians should evaluate the benefits and harms of continued therapy with
33. patients at least every 3 months, and only continue the use of opioids if the benefits do not
34. outweigh harms of continued therapy. For the growing community of those addicted to
35. opioids we propose an increase in funding for rehab centers and/or the creation of more
36. addiction clinics. We also suggest that more funding be put into drugs like the Narcan nasal
37. spray, which is currently the only FDA-Approved naloxone, as it has been proven to treat
38. those in an emergency overdose situation.

39.

40. **Results to be Expected:**

41.

42. We expect a decrease in the number of opioid caused overdoses, as well as a dramatic
43. reduction in the number of addiction cases of prescription painkillers and heroin.

44.

45.

46.

47.

48.

49.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. What's on Tap

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Most Texas water refinement plants, Texas lakes and wildlife, and Texas civilians with
6. poor public drinking water.

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. Texas has had upwards of 1000 boil water advisories since 2015 and there have been
9. over 46 pollutants found in the drinking water which is 575% more than the nation all
10. average. Houston is ranked 6th in the nation for worst drinking water quality while it is
11. the 4th largest city in the U.S. This is hurting our Texas youth by limiting their access to
12. clean water in school and at home. The water is affecting people's health and the
13. pollution in Texas's largest water supplies like the Trinity River and Galveston Bay have
14. surpassed those in other states by a significant margin. Most of the pollution has been
15. caused by toxic industrial pollution. Texas's top dump site for toxic industrial pollution is
16. the Houston Ship Channel, which received 3 million pounds of waste.

17.

18.

19. **Proposal for Action:**

20. There are many reasons a city's water quality can be compromised, among them are,
21. broken water mains, loss of pressure, high bacteria levels, weather related causes, and
22. industrial toxic pollution. This is not a new problem in Texas and must be stopped
23. immediately. First course of action that must be taken is to refurbish all water refineries
24. struggling with fraying infrastructure. Next there must be a stricter limitation on how
25. much waste industries should be allowed to discharge in public water. And last citizens
26. need to take a part in keeping their water clean by treating the environment with more
27. respect and limiting the amount of pollution in our water supply by putting things in the
28. trash can and not their drinking water. Clean water should be a right to all American
29. citizens and all people should have equal opportunities to clean water regardless of their
30. location.

31.

32.

33. **Results to be Expected:**

34. The overwhelming amount of "boil water" advisories should dramatically decrease and
35. All citizens in Texas will have equal opportunities to clean water.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:** Strengthen DWI Laws in the State of Texas

2.

3. **Major Area to be Affected:** DWI Laws

4.

5.

6. **Justification:** The State of Texas has the most deaths due to drunk drivers of any state
7. in the USA, even though 12 million less people live in Texas than in California. Every
8. year, thousands of Texans are killed for this absolutely unnecessary reason. It is
8. appalling and disgusting that drunk drivers who kill innocent people are handed such
9. light sentences. We must begin to crack down on drunk drivers.

10.

11.

12. **Proposal for Action:** Upon the first DWI conviction, an ignition-interlock device will be
13. installed in the driver's vehicle(s). This method has been proven to work in multiple
14. states. For example, Arizona has seen their DWI deaths decrease by 45% in 6 years,
15. while Texas has been seeing increases. We propose to change license suspension from
16. 90 to 365 days to simply 180 days. There will be a mandatory probation period of at
17. least a year. If found tampering with their ignition interlock device, they will be jailed for
18. at least 24 months. The fine will remain at \$2,000. However, from the second offense,
19. the penalties will be harsher. Jail time will be a minimum of 2 years and license
20. suspension will be a minimum of five years. The driver will be fined at least \$4,000. For
21. the third offense, the driver will be sentenced to time in a state prison ranging from 6 to
22. 8 years and will face permanent license suspension and a \$10,000 fine. For intoxication
23. manslaughter, the prison sentence will be at least 20 years. For intoxication assault, the
24. penalty will range from 5 to 15 years, depending on the severity of the assault. More
25. funding must also be provided to aid the DWI units of Texas police departments to
26. implement sobriety checkpoints, which have been proven to decrease DWI deaths.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31. **Results to be Expected:** Intoxicated people who kill and maim innocent citizens will
32. finally be given proper sentences. The number of DWIs will increase as more drunk
33. drivers are initially caught, but the number of DWI deaths will decrease. The rate of
34. second-offense DWIs will decrease with the mandatory installation of ignition-interlock
35. devices.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Optimizing the safety of autonomous vehicles and legalizing them in Texas.

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Driverless car testing companies in Texas.

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. Safety is the number one thought of people when it comes to what car they buy. There
8. are many people who want driverless cars, but Texas has not deemed them safe
9. enough. The car testing companies include: Google, Bosche, Volvo, Tesla, Nissan,
10. Mercedes-Benz, Uber (a software co.) and Audi. Their autonomous cars currently rely on
11. GPSs that are not perfect. During Audi's test drive from San Francisco to New York City,
12. they found that the car got a bit skittish when it was next to semi-trailer trucks. For the
13. most part, though, these cars can already easily navigate bridges, traffic circles, and
14. open highways, even in heavy rain. This proposal will help make driverless cars safer
15. and, in turn, make it more appropriate to have them on the roads in Texas.

16.

17. **Proposal for Action:**

- 18. • Driverless cars will be programmed to stop, if deemed necessary, immediately
19. after sensing a potential obstruction in its path. (ex. people, vehicles,
20. miscellaneous objects etc.)
- 21. • There will be a fine against companies who fail to concede to the new
22. requirements. First offense - \$100,000; second offense - \$500,000; third offense
23. - \$2,000,000 .
- 24. • Companies will send cars (manned by people) consistently to scan roads,
25. highways, and streets in order to update their GPSs.
- 26. • The car companies will improve the car sensors by making them able to adjust to
27. the light and shadows around them and by hosting annual software checks.

28.

29. **Results to be Expected:**

- 30. • Companies will be more inclined to follow the regulations due to penalties now
31. existing.
- 32. • The GPSs will be advanced, keeping these driverless cars from common error
33. such as driving off the road.
- 34. • When driverless cars are ready to be sold and on the road, the cars will be much
35. safer.
- 36. • Driverless cars will be available to the people in Texas when they are ready to be
37. sold.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To prevent DUI occurrences, the United States should implement a policy that bars and
3. restaurants should require drivers to take a breathalyzer test to ensure their sobriety
4. before being allowed to step into their vehicle.
5.

6. **Major Areas to be Affected:**

7. The United States population, public drinking locations in America
8.
9.

9. **Justification:**

10. Driving under the influence has serious repercussions, including injury and fatality. Each
11. year, over a million Americans are arrested for drunk driving. Alcohol-impaired drivers
12. are not only jeopardizing their own lives, but they're endangering the passengers and
13. rest of the population as well. In recent years, around ten thousand people in America
14. die each year due to a drunk driver.

15. Many people who are driving while intoxicated come from common locations for
16. drinking, such as restaurants, bars, or taverns. Enacting a law that stops the problem
17. from a frequent source will help save the lives of countless people.
18.

19. **Proposal for Action:**

20. Texas should establish a bill that regulates the sobriety of drivers at common public
21. drinking locations.

22. I. Before exiting the bar, bartenders and waiters should require the driver to take a
23. quick, compulsory breathalyzer test. Doing so will prevent needless injuries and
24. arrests from occurring and further ensure the safety of the driver, passengers,
25. and the rest of the population.
26. II. If the driver appears to be sober, then he or she should be permitted to leave the
27. restaurant.
28. III. If the driver appears to be drunk, then he or she should not be permitted to
29. leave, and the bar or restaurant is liable.
30.
31.
32.

33. **Results to be Expected:**

34. By passing a law mandating bars and restaurants to conduct breathalyzer tests,
35. instances of DUIs will decrease. People under the influence will be caught before
36. stepping into their vehicle, and numerous accidents and injuries on the road will be
37. avoided.
38.
39.
40.
41.
42.
43.
44.
45.
46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To decrease the murder rates in major U.S cities

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. The Department Of Justice, FBI, Texas Department of Public Safety, High crime areas,
6. Urban areas, FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR), The Human Services Council

7. **Justification:**

8. There is a report linking the recent increase in crime to the so-called "Ferguson effect,"
8. a theory that law enforcement has been less aggressive because of concerns about
9. being recorded and potentially charged with a crime. There is no evidence showing that
10. such thinking is to blame for the recent murders. It is found that a decline in exposure
11. to peer pressure had a significant impact on reduction in crime among 15 to 24 year
12. olds. Psychosocial factors also found that such as exposures contributed to a 24 percent
13. drop in crime. Nearly one in twelve youth said they belonged to a gang at some point
14. during their teenage years. The Gun Bounty program makes it possible for residents to
15. get a \$1,000 reward for turning someone in with an illegal gun. By funding programs
16. such as the GRASP (Gang Rescue and Support Project) is a peer-run, intervention
17. program that works with youth who are at-risk of gang involvement or are presently
18. active in gangs, helps families of gang victims, and serves as a youth advocate.
19. With about 37 percent of evaluations that evaluators were not aware of that contained
20. errors.

21.

22. **Proposal for Action:**

23. The state of Texas will assist in enforcing protocols in major cities.

24. I. Public Schools should eliminate out-of-school suspensions as
25. punishment, since that sends children away from school and can provide opportunities
26. to delinquent behavior.

27. II. A gun bounty program should include substantial financial rewards for
28. information leading to arrests and confiscation of illegal guns.

29. With law enforcement, the State Attorney's Office, and the judicial system working
30. together.

31. III. Successful efforts to reduce violence too often are limited in
32. The numbers they can serve or eliminated in future funding cycles in favor of untried
33. programs. The Human Services Council should assess existing prevention programs and
34. recommend to its funding partners

35. IV. Statutory Evaluation Plan. In order to provide the Department of Justice with the
36. necessary scientific tools for program evaluations, scientifically recognized
37. standards for program evaluations require strong controls.

38.

39. **Results to be Expected:**

40.

41. I. There will be a decrease in the amount of delinquent behavior.

42. II. By placing into effect with about 6,220 of those murders by firearm (72%) are
43. known to have involved a handgun. The chances of murders being caused will
44. decrease tremendously

45. III. Funding gives grants to States and local government programs which seek to

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. The state government should create more sanctuary cities to keep more illegal
3. immigrants safe.
4.

5.
6. **Major Area to be Affected:**

7. All sanctuary cities in Texas.
8.

8.
9. **Justification:**

10. As of 2012, more than 4.1 million immigrants live in Texas. This equates out to 15% of
11. the Texan population. Out of those 4.1 million immigrants, 1.4 million of the immigrants
12. are illegal. However, in the sanctuary cities that are standing today, laws do exist to
13. help protect them. These cities include Dallas, Houston, and Austi
14.

15.
16. **Proposal for Action:**

17. Create laws in cities close to the border to ensure the safety of illegal immigrants more
18. cities. If illegal immigrants retreat to cities such as Brownsville or El Paso, then these
19. laws would make sure that those immigrants would be safe as they would move onto
20. higher populated cities. With these laws in place, illegal immigrants would have the
21. chance to start their lives in the U.S.
22.

23.
24. **Results to be Expected:**

25. Illegal immigrants would be persecuted in fewer cities. They would also have support
26. from other people.
27.

28.
29.
30.
31.
32.
33.
34.
35.
36.
37.
38.
39.
40.
41.
42.
43.
44.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. A proposal relating to adding a 10-year-old age requirement for riding in an autonomous
3. car alone.

4.

5.

6. **Major Area to be Affected:**

7. People riding in autonomous cars under the age of 10. Parents will now be required to
8. ride with their children

8.

9.

9. **Justification:**

10. Adding an age restriction on riding alone in autonomous cars will create the safe use of
11. these vehicles without the worry of children getting lost or wandering off.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16. **Proposal for Action:**

17.

- Establish an age requirement to ride in an autonomous car alone consistent with this section.

18.

19.

- All rules adopted regarding riding in autonomous cars alone must:

20.

- Require at least 10 years of age.

21.

- Ensure that the rider has taken a course on vehicle safety and how to operate an autonomous car. The rider then must pass a test and obtain an Autonomous

22.

Vehicle License

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

28. **Results to be Expected:**

29.

Less accidents due to more autonomous cars driving.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Driverless car regulation

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. Driverless cars are becoming more and more common. Companies, like Tesla, are
9. investing their profits into the research and development of autonomous vehicles. As the
10. world is becoming more technologically advanced, Texas should encourage the
11. development of driverless cars, but also regulate the manufacturing of them,
12. maintaining the safety on Texas roads.

13.

14.

15. **Proposal for Action:**

16. All driverless cars will be treated the same as regular cars while on the road. There must
17. be yearly checkups for up to date software. Companies wanting to sell driverless cars
18. must submit their cars (and said software of cars) to testing by the Department of
19. Transportation. Automakers must also incorporate encrypted software, obstructing
20. cyber-criminals and data-trackers. Drivers must obey the same traffic laws as driving
21. with a regular car including no texting while driving and no driving while intoxicated.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26. **Results to be Expected:**

27. Drivers become safer on the road through the integration of self driving cars. Driving will
28. become quicker and more efficient as more and more driverless cars take to the road.
29. The roads will still remain as safe as they were before because of strict autonomous
30. vehicle regulations.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Protect Creators of driverless car technologies

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Manufacturers and Consumers

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

9. As more driver-assist features are built into our cars and then fully autonomous vehicles start hitting the roads, we can expect a major reduction in the staggering toll associated with vehicular crashes. That's great news because, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, every day in the United States, approximately 90 people die and 6,400 are injured in automobile accidents. And 94 percent of all those accidents are caused by human error. Just imagine if everyone who was drunk behind the wheel was in the backseat of a robot car instead. In 2014, 9,967 people were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes (28 per day), and there was an average of one alcohol-impaired driving fatality every 53 minutes. Motor vehicle crashes are also the leading cause of death for people age 16 through 24. It doesn't seem outlandish to predict that most these tragedies could be avoided if autonomous systems took over the job of driving for us. But this doesn't mean that there won't be accidents, and when they do occur who will be on the hook? The manufacturer of the car? The software designer who programmed it? The company that owned a fleet of them and ran an Uber-like service of robot cars on demand? In one sense, this is not a difficult question to answer: Just leave it to the tort system. As new technologies emerge, product liability and accident compensation have been handled traditionally through a variety of legal mechanisms, including: strict liability, negligence, design-defects law, failure to warn, breach of warranty, and so on. In fact, that's essentially what happened a century ago with the rise of the old-fashioned automobile. When crashes occur, courts can assign liability to those parties with the greatest knowledge and control over these systems, which will increasingly be the firms that manufacture or operate robotic cars. So, if the autonomous car maker of the future ends up putting a fleet of defective robot cars on the road that they knew had serious programming issues, courts would force them to pay for any resulting damages. But the car of the future is more likely to be an amalgam of Tesla, Uber, and Zipcar: a fleet of robot cars that are just sitting out there waiting for us to hail them for a ride. As cars become more of a service than a final good, liability will rapidly shift to the owner of the fleet of cars and away from end users. But if all the liability falls on the manufacturer or fleet owners of driverless cars, there's one big pitfall with this approach. America's legal system lacks a "loser-pays" rule—i.e., the party who loses the case covers the other party's legal fees—which means a perverse incentive exists to file potentially frivolous lawsuits at the first sign of any trouble. If enough lawsuits start flying, it could seriously undermine this potentially unprecedented public health success story. That's why it may be necessary to limit liability in some fashion to avoid the chilling effect that excessive litigation can have on life-enriching innovation. But we'll still need to deal with the handful of accidents that happen. One potential model to solve this problem can be found in the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which administers the law, Congress passed the bill "after lawsuits against vaccine companies and health care providers threatened to cause vaccine shortages and reduce U.S. vaccination rates, which could have caused a resurgence of vaccine preventable diseases." Importantly, while the law shielded vaccine creators from punishing liability to ensure they would continue to produce life-saving drugs, it did not ignore the potential risks to a small subset of the population who might be injured by taking them. The law included a compensation fund (made up of money collected from a small excise tax on vaccines) for those children suffering some harm from vaccines. Thus, this reform combined a no-fault legal regime (for the creators of the life-saving technology) with a compensation fund (for the handful of victims of that technology) to strike a sensible public health balance. This model might provide a solution to future litigation over driverless car technology. Initially, the tort system should be allowed to run its course because it may be the case that the gains are so enormous that frivolous lawsuits are not even a cost factor. But if excessive litigation ensues over just a handful of incidents and begins discouraging more widespread adoption, Congress might need to consider an indemnification regime that ensures the technology is not discouraged but which also compensates the victims. Creating this system will have challenges of its own, but the life-saving benefits of driverless cars are well worth overcoming a few roadblock

52.

53. **Proposal for Action:**

54. I propose we allow the tort system to run its course.

55.

56.

57. **Results to be Expected:**

58. I expect that this will provide security to the makers of self-driving cars and will ensure that this new technology will be handled correctly and will evolve into something great.

59.

60.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Teen Substance Abuse

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. The major area to be affected is the DFW Metroplex.

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. We are against teenage substance abuse because more teenagers are using things like
8. xanax just for the heck of it. This is not fair for kids who actually need the drugs in real
9. life. Also many kids are dying and becoming addicts of drugs, and teens are getting
10. horrible grades and becoming less smarter because of the strait use of weed for non
11. medical purposes.

12.

13.

14.

15. **Proposal for Action:**

16. Our main proposal for what there to be a law put in plcae that if you are getting a
17. medication and you are under 18 you have to be with a legal guardian to get substances
18. like xanex, and things of that nature.

19.

20.

21.

22. **Results to be Expected:**

23. The main result that we are expecting is that less kids will be getting drugs and abusing
24. it, if they are not allowed to get it then the number of children abusing the drugs will fall
25. down.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. This topic surrounds on the current development of public transportation in Texas. There
3. are areas that are congested with traffic which is why public transportation is a must. It
4. will bring many positives to the community surrounding the assigned area.
5.

6.

7. **Major Area to be Affected:**

8. The major area affected would most likely be Love Field in Dallas and Arlington. These
9. areas are majorly congested by foreigners who come in and out of Dallas. Arlington is
10. congested by the stadiums standing side by side and no public transportation in hand it is
11. only appropriate for there to be some congestion. Another party that would be affected
12. would be the people of Texas. Their taxed would go up to help pay for funding of the
13. construction.
14.

15.

16. **Justification:**

17. The building of public transportation is a necessity because of the stadiums in Arlington,
18. the Dallas Love Field airport, and the money it will bring in to our state, Texas. This will
19. help the stadiums because without public transportation we cannot have things like the
20. Super bowl at our stadiums because some people visit and don't want to rent a car. Also,
21. there is no public transportation to get from the Dallas Love Field airport, which brings
22. down flight rates. Lastly, it will bring money to our state because, even though we're
23. putting a lot of money in we get a lot out as time passes with the football games, baseball
24. games, and people who simply need a mode of transportation.
25.

26.

27. **Proposal for Action:**

28. We Sarah, Brianna, and Natalie propose that the city of Dallas in the state of Texas should
29. continue with the building of public transportation.
30.

31.

32. **Results to be Expected:**

33. We are for Texas's transportation system, and hope to acquire a smooth sailing system. We
34. want to build a system that saves money, gas, and time, Along with hope of raising and/or
35. maintaining property values. Texas host many important riveting events that require people
36. to attend in a timely manner. Therefore, we want to form fast moving subway that allows
37. people to attend events at ease.
38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

--

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Reducing the risk of violence cause by enactment of Campus Carry Law

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. Texas Citizens

7.

8.

8. **Justification:**

9. People are worried about the violence that can be caused by the Campus Carry

10.

11.

12. **Proposal for Action:**

13. There should be an age restriction of 20 years or older for persons to be able to carry
14. concealed weapons or open carry onto college campuses. Each person with said license
15. should be required to take a test for mental stability and basic protocol for gun control
16. and safety. Classes should be required for continued training for weapon safety.

17.

18.

19. **Results to be Expected:**

20. Prevention of gun violence.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Increase in smoking age

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. Texas Citizens

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. Too many teenagers are smoking at early ages. Nicotine is an active ingredient that is highly addictive. Raising the legal smoking age to 21 can decrease the number of smokers and decrease the number of smoke related health issues including cancer and death.

12.

13.

14.

15. **Proposal for Action:**

16. There are several steps that could be taken to discourage teenagers from smoking.

17. Raising the legal smoking age is one way to prevent young people under the age of 21 to become addicted.

19.

20.

21. **Results to be Expected:**

22. A decrease in the number of young people smoking. A decline in the number of smoking related health issues, fewer young people becoming addicted and fewer death related to smoking.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Firearm laws and regulations in the U.S

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Those with the possession of firearms in the state of Texas.

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

9. In just 2014 there have been 965 firearm homicides in the state of Texas. As of
10. December 23, 2015 a total of 12,942 people had been killed in the United States by gun
11. homicide. 12,942 deaths that could have been prevented were there more regulation on
12. the possession of firearms. There is a way to prevent all the unnecessary deaths faced
13. due to firearms; so many families must live in fear of never being able to see their son
14. or daughter again. Due to the problems being faced because of the widespread of
15. firearms in the state of Texas, but also the United States as a whole.

16.

17.

18. **Proposal for Action:**

19. To fix these problems in the state of Texas we need to put in place gun laws that prohibit
20. people to have possession of a firearm without probable cause. If they do have cause for
21. it such as Hunting they should be required to store it in a storage locker and retrieve it
22. when planning on completely these tasks. To resolve these problems we need to find a
23. common ground between firearm conservatives and those who support the regulation of
24. firearms because if we already have an understanding of the changes wanted to be made
25. there will be less problems.

26.

27.

28.

29. **Results to be Expected:**

30. A more extensive background check and reasoning for the purchase of a firearms,
31. ultimately the firearms with recreational use should be placed in a storage locker at all
32. times when not in use. Before being checked out the firearms owner must go through a
33. test to show their state of mind.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

48.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:** Abolish Capital Punishment

2.

3. **Major Area to be Affected:**

4. Texas Citizens

5.

6. **Justification:**

7. There are multiple reasons to abolish Capital Punishment in the state of Texas. The first
8. being that it is plain immoral. Religion groups throughout the United States regard
9. execution as immoral and wrong. Secondly, the death penalty has been known to
10. prolong suffering for a victim's family. Capital Punishment also leads to wrongful deaths.
11. There is evidence that multiple innocent lives have been taken by the Texas
12. Government who were put on trial, sentenced to death, and later found innocent after it
13. was too late. Capital Punishment could be considered sexist and racist. Only 2.5% of
14. death row inmates are women, proving women are less likely to receive the needle than
15. men. While an 11.8% of the Texas population is African American, an astounding 43.9%
16. of death row inmates are African Americans. Thus, making Capital Punishment racist as
17. well. The cost of putting people on death row is three times the cost for taxpayers
18. compared to that of a life sentence in a maximum security prison. The death penalty is
19. also bias in terms of location. Only 3% of 254 counties account for 70% of the death
20. penalties in the state of Texas, with Harris county sentencing the most. Based on this
21. information, it is obvious that where in Texas one lives could determine when one would
22. die. The outcome of a trial is not based more so on evidence and facts but rather it is
23. based on the ability of the defense. Someone who is wealthier would have a better
24. chance of a better outcome thus leading to the death penalty being unfair. Texas is one
25. of the last places in the world to still execute as punishment. Over 139 nations
26. worldwide have abandoned Capital Punishment, thus making the act of Capital
27. Punishment inhumane, cruel, and unusual. Lastly, scientific studies have consistently
28. failed to demonstrate that executions deter people from committing crime any more
29. than that of a long prison sentence. Based on the given information, it is clear to see
30. that Capital Punishment in the state of Texas should be abolished.

31.

32. **Proposal for Action:**

33. Rather than putting people to death, the proposal for action is to resort to life sentences
34. in maximum security prisons having individuals work to better themselves.

35.

36. **Results to be Expected:**

37. Abolishing Capital Punishment benefits the people of Texas in many ways. For one,
38. taxpayers pay less. It leads to the justice system of Texas being less sexist, racist, and
39. bias. The suffering of those affected by a crime would be shortened. The lives of
40. innocent people would not be taken at the hand of Texas Government. Lastly, broken
41. individuals would work to find peace in their minds as well as their hearts.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

48.

--

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.
- 21.
- 22.
- 23.
- 24.
- 25.
- 26.
- 27.
- 28.
- 29.
- 30.
- 31.
- 32.
- 33.
- 34.
- 35.
- 36.
- 37.
- 38.
- 39.
- 40.
- 41.
- 42.
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.
- 46.
- 47.
- 48.
- 49.
- 50.

Title or Purpose:

Opioid (Hydrocodone and Oxycodone) abuse

Major Area to be Affected:

Texas Citizens, Texas Health Care Facilities, Texas Health Care professionals

Justification:

The major opioid abuse issues in Texas stem from the opioids Hydrocodone and Oxycodone. These narcotics are supposed to be prescribed by doctors to patients with chronic pain. Yet, in certain cases, these opioids are often misused as people begin to take them for pleasure, financial gain, or because of increased tolerance. Some people will attain many of these narcotics from attending several doctors and pharmacies without the health care professional having knowledge of it. Sometimes, even clinics and workers in the field will get involved in these illicit acts of mishandling opioids by distributing or selling. From the lack of proper handling of these drugs, there has been a clear 16% increase in poisoning deaths from opioids from 1999-2007, putting opioids at 36% of the cause of poisoning deaths in Texas. And as legal prescribing of Oxycodone in Texas increased by 6.5% from 2007-2010, Oxycodone calls at the Texas Poison Center increased by 32.5%. However, the amount of people calling the Texas Poison Center after an overdose is not nearly enough compared to the entire population of Texas. If actions are not taken soon, more people will become victims of opioid overdose deaths.

Proposal for Action:

There are many ways that opioid overdoses as well as opioid addictions can be prevented. Providing education for the community and placing stricter guidelines on the prescribing of opioids are just some of the ways that communities in Texas can help current and future victims of the opioid crisis. Specific, physician-signed prescriptions and documents of a patient's current pharmacist and clinic should be provided and carefully looked over in the opioid-handling process. Physicians should give appropriate dosages and discuss alternative pain control options. Providing outpatient therapy and rehabilitations for those struggling with addiction is essential to the decrease of the victims claimed by this epidemic.

Results to be Expected:

Because of these different steps towards diminishing the opioid crisis, there will be a reduction in victims claimed by it. Education will especially warn the public about the risks and precautions that should be taken whenever taking opioids. It will also reinvent the prescribing of these opioids, thus less people will become affected by the opioid crisis.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Teen Substance Abuse

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas teenagers

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. 1 out of 6 of Texas teens reports having misused or abused a prescription drug in the
8. past year. Among 12 to 17 year olds in Texas, the average age of first marijuana use is
9. 13.7 years old while the average age of first cigarette use was 13.1 years old. In 2008,
10. 12 percent of all Texas secondary students said that when they drank, they usually drank
11. five or more beers at one time, and 13 percent reported binge drinking of liquor. Alcohol
12. is the primary drug of abuse in Texas. In 2008, 63 percent of Texas secondary school
13. students (grades 7–12) had ever used alcohol, and 30 percent had drunk alcohol in the
14. last month. Nearly nine of every 100,000 Texans died from prescription drug overdoses
15. in 2012, most caused by abuse of illegally obtained prescription medications.

16.

17. **Proposal for Action:**

18. Adding a monthly, random drug tests for an all-around participating, state-wide,
19. mandated act on fixing teen substance abuse. Only used upon secondary schools, and
20. only a requirement of two drug tests within a school semester. If having failed their first
21. drug test they will be given a \$500 dollar minimum fine. If then the student proceeds to
22. fail the second test, then the results are to be put on their permanent record. Secondly
23. the student must then attend a school based teen substance abuse program. We suggest
24. that we commence a school based teen substance abuse program instead of
25. rehabilitation center for cost purposes. Lastly the student is given a larger fine than
26. previously given and they must attend a minimum of 64 hours of community service.

27.

28. **Results to be Expected:**

29. A decrease in the percentage of teen substance abuse in Texas. Through many hours of
30. the substance abuse program and community service, students will then to be pushed to
31. stop the use and abuse of substances varying from alcohol and over the counter
32. medication to illegal drugs such as marijuana and heroin. In lasting results students may
33. be able to focus on school and look forward to a better future ahead.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. A Proposal to Limit Opioid Prescriptions to Surgical Patients Only

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Medical Field and the United States Crime Rate

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. The number of opioid overdoses has increased almost 100% since 2003.

8. 1 in 4 people who are prescribed an opioid medication for pain, get addicted.

9. From 2000-2010 Opioid abuse increased 160 percent in Texas.

10. When taking an opioid it interacts with the "reward center" of your brain and when you

11. keep activating the reward center you build a tolerance to it so you need more and more

12. drugs to get you back to that level of high. From 1999-2009 the number of opioid

13. deaths increased from 122 to 555. In 2009 there were 555 deaths from overdosing in

14. Texas. Of those 555 deaths, a combined total 363 of them were from Dallas/ Ft. Worth

15. and Houston (major metropolitan areas). From 1999-2007 Methadone overdoses

16. increased from 27 to 224. 165 percent increase of Oxycodone overdoses from 200-

17. 2010. 60 percent of all opioid overdose reports are about Hydrocodone. Texas is 1 of the

18. top 10 states for Hydrocodone distribution. Texas is targeted by the DEA as a state with

19. diversion problems. Most opioid overdoses and abusers are white males within the ages

20. of 40-55. Paracetamol and Non-Steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) are

21. common and effective alternatives to opioid based painkillers.

22.

23. **Proposal for Action:**

24. We would like to limit all opioid subscriptions for surgical purposes only.

25.

26. **Results to be Expected:**

27. Opioids would no longer be prescribed to patients experiencing mild pain such as chronic
28. migraines or inflammation of any kind.

29. The number of overdoses caused by opioids would decrease.

30. Regulations on opioids would increase.

31. Metropolitan areas would see a decrease in overdose cases.

32. Production of other Schedule I drugs, such as cocaine, will be decreased.

33. Drug Trafficking within the United States will dramatically decrease.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Planned Obsolescence and Increased Electronic Waste in the United States.

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. United States Citizens.

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. Ingenuity and innovation have become the main motivations of technology
9. manufacturers, producing new products considered superior to previous design models.
10. However, as consumers purchase these new products, owing their success to planned
11. obsolescence policies, the products that become obsolete will either collect dust or be
12. discarded, which generates electronic waste. In 2014, the United States production of
13. electronic waste accounted for 7.1 million tons of the 41.8 million tons of electronic
14. waste generated worldwide. While a relatively small percentage of total annual United
15. States electronic waste is recycled, the majority of the waste will be disposed of in
16. landfills, incinerators, or exported overseas. The presence of electronic waste in landfills
17. or incinerators could potentially cause harmful toxic leeching or toxic emissions,
18. respectively. While some states have passed legislation to regulate the disposal of
19. electronic waste, such as Texas, who enacted a computer and a television take-back
20. program, there is no federal legislation that mandates the recycling of electronic waste
21. in the United States. The disposal of electronic waste happens both domestically and
22. internationally; many companies export their electronic waste to developing countries
23. whom have little to no resources in place to recycle the received electronic waste. States
24. and companies are free to pursue any disposal option that suits their respective
25. constitution, as no incentive compels them otherwise to pursue recycling options.

26.

27.

28. **Proposal for Action:**

29. In order to decrease the total United States electronic waste disposed of annually, we
30. propose the enactment of a federal act of legislation that would require each state to
31. possess a minimum of 1 piece of legislation that pertains to the recycling of electronic
32. waste. The guidelines and requirements for the creation/modification of state electronic
33. waste legislation would be set during the federal creation process so as to ensure
34. effectivity and exclude biased influences.

35.

36.

37. **Results to be Expected:**

38. By considering electronic waste recycling a beneficial option, the quantity of electronic
39. waste disposed of annually in the United States should decrease while the national
40. recycling rates pertaining to electronic waste would increase. The detrimental hazards
41. derived from the improper disposal of electronic waste would decrease. All states, by
42. enacting legislation in pertinence to the recycling of electronic waste would positively
43. impact the national rates while promoting sustainable standards to both the domestic
44. and foreign public.

45.

46.

47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Raising the minimum wage in Texas.

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas economy, poverty rate, U.S. labor market

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. The federal minimum wage was introduced in 1938 during the Great Depression under
8. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It was initially set at \$0.25 per hour and has been
9. increased by Congress 22 times. In 2009, it changed from \$6.55 to \$7.25 an hour.

10. Currently, 29 states plus the District of Columbia (DC) have a minimum wage higher
11. than the federal minimum wage. The national cost of living for a single adult with no
12. children is \$28,458 (Texas: \$26,314). Texas has the 22nd highest cost of living across
13. all states, yet maintains the federal minimum wage of \$7.25. As the COL has risen
14. throughout the years, no plan or actions have been taken place to secure the well being
15. and financial stability of Texas citizens. It is necessary to increase the minimum wage in
16. Texas to better the living quality of residents.

17.

18. **Proposal for Action:**

19. Form a committee whose job would be to index the minimum wage in order for it to
20. raise automatically with the cost of living, beginning in 2017 (as seen in 15 states,
21. incurring the District of Columbia) Alongside setting the tipped minimum wage equal to
22. the value of full minimum wage, ensuring that tipped workers are paid the full minimum
23. wage by their employer.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Texas Water Quality

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Major Water pollution and wildlife endangerment throughout Texas

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. Despite Texas being the leading producer of wind energy, Texas water pollution ranks
8. among the worst in the nation. Texas is the nation's second most prominent water
9. polluters. 16.5 million pounds of toxic chemicals released into the water each year, the
10. highest amount of toxicity released pounds per year, 30x more than the next state. And
11. this is just against humans. Huge amounts of fish in lakes, rivers, and streams die from
12. this water toxicity. Not only does this water toxicity affect water, but this could cause
13. acid rain, which leads to plant poisoning and other obvious environmental effects. If this
14. negative toxicity continues, it could lead to light pollution thru acid rain condensing in
15. the clouds. Not to mention a bunch of other detrimental effects to the environment. And
16. what is one main cause for concern of pollution? Pesticides used in rural farming. They
17. contribute tremendously to this water pollution through toxic runoff and ground soil.
18. Which brings me to my proposal for action.

19.

20. **Proposal for Action: Clean Pesticides**

21. The way for Texas to stop it's long run of terrible water pollution is to simply input
22. organic pesticides. This would slowly drain out the bad water pollution, and as a bonus,
23. organic pesticides are better for plant growth. "Drain out", means that the polluted
24. water would be basically drained and replaced with fresh water naturally. How we would
25. do this is slowly cut off a supply of these harmful nonorganic pesticides in our stores
26. and replace them with organic pesticides. We clean up our pesticides, and we clean up
27. our filthy rivers, and make it safer for everyone and the environment.

28.

29. **Results to be Expected:**

30. By passing this proposal, we clean up our rivers, and we make the environment safer
31. for all Texans.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. A Comprehensive Approach to Teen Substance Abuse

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas Public Schools

6. Texas Teenagers

7. Texas Department of State Health Services

8.

8.

9. **Justification:**

10. Nonmedical adderall use increased to 6.5 percent among 12th-graders, continued

11. increasing to 7.6 percent in 2012 and is now at 7.4 percent in 2013 Approximately 20

12. percent of 12th graders reported binge drinking in 2014. Nearly 40 percent had used

13. alcohol in the last month. 1 in 5 teens have abused prescription medications, according

14. to the Centers for Disease Control

15.

16.

17. **Proposal for Action:**

18. • Creates a separate branch within the Texas Department of State Health Services
19. to comprehensively address the issue of Teen Substance Abuse.

20. • Develops a program that provides drug rehabilitative services at an affordable
21. and accessible cost.

22. • Establishes a database within the separate branch to collect research and
23. information from school districts within the state.

24. • Coordinates with school districts with elevated levels of teen substance abuse to
25. increase education and emotional counseling directed at limiting illicit drug use.

26. • Provides educational grants to students who have shown a sustained interest in
27. pursuing Psychology to use for graduate and doctoral education.

28. • Reforms Substance Abuse education within Texas to emphasize the dangers of
29. non-illegal substances such as Over-The-Counter medications and prescription
30. drugs.

31. • Through the established Substance Abuse Branch within the Texas Department of
32. State Health

33. • Services, a hotline will be created to allow for teens to have the opportunity to
34. talk to trained professionals.

35. • School Districts that fail to see an appreciable decline in Substance Abuse or fail
36. to implement significant changes to address the problem may be subject to
37. additional investigation and possible cuts to administrative costs.

38. • Individuals who purchase inhalants, tobacco, and alcohol for teens will receive
39. significantly harsher punishments

40.

41.

42. **Results to be Expected:**

43. Lower rates of Teen Substance Abuse in the State of Texas

44.

45.

46.

47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To decrease the maximum dosage of prescription painkillers to 30 milligrams per day to
3. decrease the overdose death rates in the state of Texas.
4.

5.
6. **Major Area to be Affected:**

7. Texas Public Health System, Health Insurance Companies, the American people
8.

8. **Justification:**

9. Within the State of Texas, the usage of prescription painkillers has mirrored the national
10. average. The prescription of these analgesics has increased fourfold from 2000-2010.
11. Additionally, opioid abuse calls to Texas poison centers have increased by over 160%.
12. As a result of the increase in prescribed doses, the number of overdoses and
13. opioid-related deaths have increased drastically.
14.

15.
16. **Proposal for Action:**

17. Require that all practicing physicians prescribe no more than 30 milligrams of
18. prescription painkillers per day for an eligible patient. The drugs that will be limited
19. include: methadone, codeine, hydrocodone, oxycodone, buprenorphine,
20. hydromorphone, morphine, meperidine, tramadol, and opium. If path to addiction
21. seems likely in a patient, then a physician must require drug abuse counseling and/or
22. refer to a addiction recovery therapist. If requirements aren't followed by doctors,
23. penalties might include loss of licensing and criminal charges. Physicians should
24. evaluate benefits and harms of opioid therapy with patients every 3 months or more
25. frequently and review prescription drug monitoring program data.
26.

27.
28. **Results to be Expected:**

29. By initiating and practicing these policies, the amount of painkillers prescribed will
30. decrease in Texas. The increasing number of opioid related overdoses will drastically
31. diminish. In addition, physicians will be more informed on the dangers of prescribing
32. opioids and will be inclined to find alternative forms of therapy.
33.

34.
35.
36.
37.
38.
39.
40.
41.
42.
43.
44.
45.
46.
47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To decrease poverty rate in Texas by helping individuals retain ownership of house unit.

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. • Communities in where the majority live under the poverty.
6. • Companies, Investors, Real estate agents, etc. that wish to invest or buy housing
7. units inhabiting individuals who live in an areas directly on or under the poverty
8. line.

8.

9. **Justification:**

10. Currently Texas has a huge problem concerning those who struggle to obtain a living

11. space. As of now Texas has a percentage of 17.2% overall whose income is lower than

12. the poverty line. For children under the poverty line Texas holds a percentage of 24.3%,

13. and are ranked 39th in the United States. We must protect those who currently reside in

14. difficult situations and who are not given a chance to try to continue living in their own

15. homes. Many of these individuals have children, which requires a need for more aid,

16. these children are the victims of this and are left struggling to live a healthy childhood.

17. Many people are given no other option but to leave their home and find somewhere else

18. to live do to the influx of international creasing rates. With the previously stated parties

19. being able to change their rates at any time, this leaves the families in an uncertain

20. position. These individuals should be given a certain limit concerning price, that

21. individuals in the community can be able to adjust to. This will allow the families to be

22. able to determine how and if they will retain the living space.

23.

24. **Proposal for Action:**

25. To introduce legislation requiring real estate companies to
26. compromise with the financial statements of neighborhoods or communities that are
27. under the poverty line.
28. 1). Parties interested in changing prices for housing units have to notify people retaining
29. living space. Individuals living in units will be given a 14 day period to respond that they
30. are aware of the circumstances.
31. 2). Financial advisors will take the financial statements (not including financial aid) from
32. the current individual obtaining the living space.
33. 3). Financial advisors will then receive the negotiating prices from those interested in
34. housing units and will discuss any further disclosure.
35. 4). After obtaining information, they will notify the community about the proposed rate
36. to be changed through less tter and will take concerns from individuals who have
37. questions.
38. 5). Final set price will be made by financial advisors appointed by local government
39. officials , and will then notify interested parties and the community.
40. 6). Action of prices will then be set after another sixty days.

41.

42. **Results to be Expected:**

43. Less families will be forced to move out of neighborhoods because of an increase of

44. house cost. Individuals will be given a chance to retain their homes, which will allow an

45. economically stable situation for the families and households.

46.

47.

48.

49.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title:** Sanctuary Cities for Undocumented Immigrants

2.

3. **Major Area to be Affected:** Inhabitants of the United States of America

4.

5.

6. **Justification:**

7. Sanctuary cities started gaining traction as early as the 1980s. Currently, there are a about
8. 276 sanctuary cities in the United States. We have laws and policies in more than 200
9. jurisdictions, including some of the largest cities and counties in the country, that are meant
10. to protect immigrant communities by preventing local authorities from cooperating with
11. federal deportations of undocumented immigrants who have run-ins with the law. Sanctuary
12. cities are a magnet for illegal immigration. It's an incentive to cross the border illegally and
13. run straight to a city that doesn't enforce immigration laws. That gives illegal immigrants
14. time to blend in without fear of deportation, collect taxpayer funded benefits, and, often,
15. commit crimes.

16.

17.

18. **Proposal for Action:**

19. It is pleasing to see the House Appropriations Committee finally take some action by voting
20. to strip sanctuary cities of some federal grant money. But much more must be done. With
21. strong Republican majorities in both Houses of Congress, it's time to act on illegal
22. immigration We propose to implement clearer guidelines and establish proper enforcement.

23.

24.

25. **Results to be Expected:**

26. With stricter guidelines less people will be able to get away with harsh crimes and there will
27. be less abuse of the cities. The immigrants that deserve the sanctuary will be able to
28. properly take the help they need without worrying about eradication of the cities due to
29. abuse by extreme criminals.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title:**

2. Texas Needs To Adopt More And Better Driverless Car Regulations In Texas

3.

4. **Major areas to be affected:**

5. U.S. Citizens Living In Texas

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. According to the National Conference Of State Legislators, In 2015, Three bills proposed
8. in Texas concerning the safety around using driverless cars have been failed. In 2016,
9. there haven't been any more attempts to enact more bills upon the state of Texas. The
10. three bills in 2015 were the following: TX HB 933 (Creates a border security pilot
11. program) , TX SB 1167 (Relates to autonomous motor vehicles), and TX HB 3690 (
12. Relates to the operation of autonomous motor vehicles by the State Department of
13. Transportation). Texas transportation officials appear unsure how to oversee their safe
14. operation. Unlike California, where regulators have been drafting regulatory rules to give
15. the public safe access to the cars, Texas has no obvious restrictions on self-driving
16. vehicles, which is why companies, such as google are testing out prototypes in Texas.
17. While only four states — Nevada, California, Florida, and Michigan — have allowed
18. driverless cars on public roads, many experts agree that self-driving cars could be used
19. in controlled environments like highways by 2020. And a study of 2,000 drivers found
20. that more than 75% of Americans would consider buying a self-driving car.

21.

22. **Proposal For Action:**

23. Texas needs to meet somewhere in between not enough regulations and too much
24. regulations. Bill HB 1207, which was passed in 2012 in Florida, defines "autonomous
25. vehicle", requires that the user of the driverless car have a drivers licence and,
26. Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to make one report with ways
27. regulations could be improved. This doesn't mean the Department of Highway Safety
28. and Motor Vehicles are making any changes, but merely putting forth suggestions based
29. off their background knowledge in this field. Another beneficial bill for Texas would be
30. bill HB 1065, which was passed in 2015 in North Dakota, it advocates for research on
31. these driverless cars that will determine who much safer this technology is in
32. comparison to regular cars. A third suggested bill would be the S 1841, which is still
33. pending in the Senate Study Order for Massachusetts, if proposed in Texas it would
34. allow manufacturers to certify that all safety standards are met with the vehicle and that
35. the vehicle can be driven on public roads. The only addition I would make to this last bill
36. is that not only the manufacturers get to decide whether or not a driverless car is safe
37. to go on public road, but the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration should
38. overlook this determination.

39.

40. **Results to be Expected:**

41. These would be three bills that would help driverless car companies receive a balance
42. between safety and development. Not only safety for other road users, but for driverless
43. car companies, such as Google, Audi, and Mercedes-Benz as well. These regulations
44. would allow these companies to steer clear of any technological accidents that could
45. cause them to be held accountable for something that could've been avoided. Overall,
46. by using careful regulations in Texas we could see a new industry that would greatly
47. benefit our economy, since this new technology will improve transportation.

48

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Cyber Security

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. The Internet and the information available

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. Typing in an individual's phone number into a search engine or website online results in a plethora of information. This includes the names of the owner, relatives, and or previous owners of the number, ages of listed persons, their home address, pictures of their homes, social media profiles, etc. All of this information can be obtained by knowing a name or a phone number and typing it into a website called Nwber and others like it

13.

14.

15.

16. **Proposal for Action:**

17. Limit the amount of information that is accessible from websites such as these.

18.

19.

20.

21.

22. **Results to be Expected:**

23. Information would not be readily available to anyone with access to the internet and basic knowledge such as a name or phone number.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Medicaid Expansion in Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. All eligible people, especially under the proposed requirements

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. According to 2010 data released by the United States Census Bureau's Current
8. Population Survey, Texas has the highest rate of uninsured people of any state, with
9. 24.6 percent of Texas residents, or 6.2 million people, uninsured. As of now, Texas'
10. insurance rates, 1.75 times the national average, create significant problems in the
11. financing and delivery of health care to all Texans. This being a huge problem seeing
12. that the costs of healthcare is rising and wages are becoming stagnant and lowering.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20. **Proposal for Action:**

21. What is being proposed is decreasing of Medicare requirements. Both national and state
22. data show an extremely disturbing trend. There are more people in Texas that are not
23. insured, but moreover, Adults with dependent children are only eligible if their household
24. income doesn't exceed 18 percent of poverty level. Adults without dependent children are
25. not eligible at all, and Pregnant women are eligible for Medicaid if their household income
26. does not exceed 198 percent of poverty. So we will lower the requirements to increase the
27. amounts of people eligible for healthcare and a free or low cost. This can be done by
28. reducing the amounts of corporate subsidies substantially, tax cuts, and other regressive
29. kinds of spending. It is also proposed that Texas use the 65 billion dollars that would be the
30. surplus without the expansion. The reason being that Texas is a highly business friendly state
31. and not a people friendly state. This can be easily seen in the strict healthcare requirements
32. and one of the highest uninsured rates in the country.

34.

35. **Results to be Expected:**

36. More people to be eligible and signed up for Medicare. This so the cost of healthcare for
37. the average person stagnates and decreases. This would also be to increase the amount
38. of people that are insured and reduce the amount of medical debt and high premiums
39. that people have to pay.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. To curtail the amount of opioid overdoses by putting more regulation on opioid like
3. substances.

4.
5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. Adolescents and young adults in the state of Texas
7.

8. **Justification:**

9. In the status quo there is a major opioid crisis. For instance, the American Society of
10. Addiction Medicine says "Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the
11. US, with 47,055 lethal drug overdoses in 2014. Opioid addiction is driving this epidemic,
12. with 18,893 overdose deaths related to prescription pain relievers, and 10,574 overdose
13. deaths related to heroin in 2014". Right now there is a major opioid crisis in the United
14. States. Though the problem is already bad, it grows especially worse when we look to
15. Texas. Patrice A. Harris, Chair in American Medical Association Board of Trustees, says
16. "The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identify prescription drug abuse as the
17. fastest-growing drug problem in the country. In 2014, more than 2,600 Texans died
18. from drug-related overdoses." This means that Texas alone accounts for 5.52% of
19. opioid related drug overdoses in the U.S.

20. Opioids are dangerous because of how addictive they are. According to the
21. Government's site for drug abuse (Drugabuse.gov), opioids are so addictive because
22. they stimulate the regions of the brain involving pleasure. The drugs prescribed latch
23. onto opioid receptors in the body to produce such an effect, but the not so good effects
24. are caused by this too. This problem cannot continued to be ignored. Current efforts to
25. fight this problem are obviously not enough.
26.

27.
28. **Proposal for Action:**

29. The best way to fight the problem of opioid abuse is stronger regulation. In the case of
30. prescription drugs, we propose it be mandatory for doctors to verbally inform the
31. specific patient (in addition to the guardian) if a drug has the ability to be lethal to the
32. user as well as if it is known to be highly addictive. The patients need to be informed
33. verbally that their life will be at risk if they abuse. This will be especially true with
34. opioids, as the people who are likely to abuse them may not do so if they know their
35. very life is at stake. We propose a three step plan to fixing our illegal opioid problem: 1)
36. Educate people 2) Take the focus of the drug war away from things like Marijuana and
37. focus on the potentially lethal opioids. 3) Make treatment and rehab available at the
38. request of addicts.
39.

40.
41. **Results to be Expected:**

42. Drug crime will decrease as well as opioid overdoses. This will be an overall benefit to
43. the cause of preservation of life. Families won't be losing their children to the evil of
44. drug abuse. Texas will have a stronger workforce, as more young people will be alive
45. and able to work. We yield our time to the chair.
46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Capital Punishment

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Criminals in the prison system along with the judicial system in the state of Texas.

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. Texas is first in the number of executions carried out in the United States since 1976.

8. Harris County alone accounts for 280+ death sentences and 116 executions since 1982,

9. according to deathpenaltyinfo.org. Texas also ranks high in the population of prisons,

10. surpassing the prison population of California.

11.

12. **Proposal for Action:**

13. In order to decrease the number of people in prisons, we would carry out more Capital
14. Punishment executions. Texas currently has 254 prisoners waiting on death row. With
15. this enactment of capital punishment, this number would decline and prevent the prison
16. system in the state of Texas from becoming ever more populated. The decision of
17. capital punishment would be made by the jury during their trial of murder, sexual
18. assault, or any other the felony that could end with the prisoner receiving life in prison.

19.

20. **Results to be Expected:**

21. The population of prisons would decrease. This result would allow the taxpayer's money
22. to go to funding education rather than to the prison system.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Reducing the substance abuse of Texas teens.

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Areas with high substance abuse. However, a narrowed audience would be teens,
6. particularly high school students and college students.

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. Substance abuse is caused by a number of individual, family, genetic, and social factors
9. rather than by any one cause. The United States has some of the highest drug use
10. statistics among teens. However, Houston and many other Texas cities have the highest
11. in the entire nation. The substance abuse issue is extremely important because our cities
12. have exceeded the national average for drug use among teenagers.

13. Cocaine: National average: 4.8%, Fort Worth: 5.6%, Houston: 9.6% (highest city)

14. Ecstasy: National average: 5.1%, Fort Worth: 5.4%, Houston: 8.6% (second highest
15. city)

16. Heroin: National average: 2.5%, Fort Worth: 1.5%, Houston: 6.1% (third highest)

17. Methamphetamines (speed, crystal, crank or ice): National average: 3.2%, Fort Worth:
18. 2.7%, Houston: 6.5% (third highest)

19. Inhalants: National average: 7.7%, Fort Worth: 5.8%, Houston: 8.4%

20. This is a growing problem and drug abuse in the adolescent years leads to a difficulty in
21. managing ones life. Teenagers that use are at risk for becoming addicted more than
22. those adults, and may develop mental health issues.

23.

24.

25. **Proposal for Action:**

26. I propose to promote awareness for teen substance abuse and the programs that are in
27. place to help teens that use or are addicted to drugs. It should be harder for Teens to
28. get access to drugs. America and Texas should start a war on drugs.

29.

30.

31. **Results to be Expected:**

32. With the passage of this proposal, there will be a reduced amount of teens in texas that
33. use drugs. It will also be harder for teens to gain access to drugs. There will also be an
34. increase in awareness of teen substance abuse and what people should do in a loved one
35. or friend is a victim to substance abuse.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Raise the Minimum Wage

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Lower Classes

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. Research shows that as of 2015 452,000 people employed in Texas earned minimum
9. wage making Texas 13% of national minimum wage workers. As minimum wage sits
10. at \$7.25 a family of three sits below the poverty line, in fact, a single person working
11. a typical 40 hour week does not meet the standard living in Houston. An average cost
12. of living in Houston for one person is approximately \$15,825 a year. A full time job
13. supports a single person at \$15,080 a year. This cost includes healthcare, food, and
14. transportation. It does not however account for emergency funds, unexpected
15. expenses, pets, or leisure activities. The list is endless, and minimum wage only
16. accounts for the bare necessities. Regardless of inflation Texas has not raised its
17. minimum wage since 2009 putting the value of federal minimum wage at a lower
18. standard than it was in 1968. These statistics put Texas in a 17.5% poverty rate
19. ranking us at 35th out of 50 states in terms of poverty rates.

20.

21.

22. **Proposal for Action:**

23. We propose to raise the minimum wage to \$10. Raising the minimum wage to \$10 will
24. not only benefit individuals, but families, and society.

25.

26.

27. **Results to be Expected:**

28. Not only will raising the minimum wage benefit the lower class, it will give those in
29. poverty an opportunity to move up in social class therefore taking some of the pressure
30. off of public assistance programs allowing them to give more focus to those in severe
31. need. The US economy is constituted by 70% consumer spending; therefore, raising the
32. minimum wage would put \$450 billion back into the economy, yearly. This will cause a
33. circulation of money and everyone, the rich, middle class, and those impoverished will
34. reap the benefits. Raising the minimum wage will also account for inflation and give
35. those in the lower class more incentive to work for jobs that are willing to pay them
36. fairly. Taxpayers will save and estimated \$153 billion a year because low paid workers
37. will no longer have to solely rely on food stamps and other government programs.
38. Employers will see a decrease in employee turnover costs and an increase in
39. productivity.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Texting and Driving laws

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas Drivers

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. A close relative and I were driving down the road at night to the corner store one block
9. away. He was going 55 mph in a residential street at 11pm. I looked over to see him
10. texting while driving and when I looked forward all I saw were two beaming headlights
11. coming straight towards us. Suddenly, I found myself in a hospital bed, bruised and cut
12. from head to toe. Incidents like mine happen every day except most people aren't as
13. lucky and are killed on impact. According to The National Safety Council, cell phone use
14. while driving leads to 1.6 million crashes each year. Nearly 330,000 injuries occur each
15. year from accidents caused by texting while driving. 1 out of every 4 car accidents in
16. the United States is caused by texting and driving. Unfortunately, the state of Texas
17. does not have a law that prohibits Drivers from using cellphones. The only texting and
18. driving restriction currently in place is one that only forbids the use of cellphones in a
19. school zone.

20. With so many drivers on the road Texas should have a law that not only prohibits them
21. from using the phone but also protects them from other drivers.

22.

23.

24. **Proposal for Action:**

25. Create and enforce a law that bans Texans from texting while driving. We will also
26. promote safe driving skills and emphasis the importance of not texting and driving.

27.

28.

29. **Results to be Expected:**

30. Enacting and enforcing laws that forbid the use of cellphones while driving will create a
31. significant decrease in the

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. College campus sexual assault in Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. All college campuses throughout Texas

6. **Justification:**

7. The number of forcible sex crimes reported on U.S. college and university campuses
8. more than doubled to 5,000 between 2001 and 2013, likely due in part to more diligent
8. reporting of such offenses both by victims and by institutions. Reports of sex crimes
9. increased by nearly 1,000 from 2012 to 2013 alone, according to a new report by the
10. National Center for Education Statistics, the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the
11. American Institutes for Research, a nonprofit social sciences research group.

12.

13.

14.

15. **Proposal for Action:**

16.

17. There is no comprehensive national data on how colleges punish sexual misconduct. But
18. schools that receive Justice Department grants related to violence against women fill out
19. surveys on how they resolve internal sexual assault complaints. This table shows
20. statistics on punishment and acquittal, as well as case dismissals, for nearly 100 schools
21. that answered at least one of four semi-annual surveys for 2012 and 2013. This
22. "solution isn't working". We need to implement a system where women can feel safe to
23. wonder the campuses without the fear of being sexually assaulted. We can use
24. resolutions such as free self-defense classes and making the "buddy system
25. mandatory". Also jail time for sexual offenders under the age of 25 is as low as 14
26. months in some cases. Jail time like these are no punishment for sexual offenders which
27. is why it has become so repetitive. When the Texas government starts taking sexual
28. assault seriously so will the students and other offender. So I move that the minimum
29. jail time for a sexual offender be 7 years. According to post studies real rehabilitation
30. takes place after at least 5 years in prison.

31.

32. **Results to be Expected:**

33.

34. The rate of sexual assault to be reduced by large number after at least 4 years. Women
35. on college campuses to be more comfortable at their campuses. Sexual assault be an
36. issue that is taken seriously. Too many college women have suffered from sexual
37. assault or fear of being sexually assaulted I think it's time to put a stop to it.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Due to the 22% decrease in purchasing power, increasing the budget of the U.S.
3. National Institute of Health would better fund the institute for the improvement of the
4. Nation’s health and leadership, as well as counter the decrease of the purchasing
5. power to increase it.
6.

7.
8. **Major Area to be Affected:**

8. The U.S. National Institute of Health, biomedical researchers, the American people,
9. global politics, and leadership position.
10.

11.
12.
13. **Justification:**

14. Cancer, being one of the nation’s biggest killers, needs to be thoroughly researched
15. to ensure effective actions to combat it. Even President Obama, in his 2016 State of
16. the Union Address, acknowledged the importance of it with the establishment of
17. National Cancer Moonshot. With the intention of investing over \$680 million to
18. support and research crucial areas of cancer, such as prevention and cancer vaccine
19. development, immunotherapy, genomic analysis, and more, sufficient funding is
20. necessary to ensure that these goals will be met. Additionally, stagnate funding has
21. not only further undermined biomedical research and conjured concern among the
22. public, but has also jeopardized America’s global leadership in biomedical research
23. and as a result, created fewer opportunities for young scientists. Without sufficient
24. funding, the exploration of potential new breakthroughs will be impeded on.
25.
26.

27.
28.
29. **Proposal for Action:**

30. Thus, we propose to raise the National Institute of Health’s budget by 2.5% above
31. the enacted FY 2016 level.
32.

33.
34.
35. **Results to be Expected:**

36. This increase of budget is crucial in trying to combat the negative harms of inflation
37. and the purchasing power cut and will help the institute strive towards their goals of
38. enhanced survival of cancer patients from applications of precision medicine, critical
39. steps toward universal flu and HIV vaccines, and crucial progress on the artificial
40. pancreas that will lead to better management of diabetes. NIH will pursue these and
41. more to enhance the America’s role of leadership in biomedical research. Additionally,
42. the increased budget will counteract the effects of inflation and the reduction of
43. purchasing power.
44.
45.

46.
--

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title:**

2. Deaths in Texas due to driving while under the influence

3.

4. **Purpose:**

5. The state of Texas should mandate a harsher penalty 1st and 2nd time DWI offenders.

6.

7.

8. **Major Area to be Affected:**

8. The State of Texas, its' residents, its' drivers, and persons that are legally eligible to consume alcohol.

9.

10.

11.

12. **Justification:**

13. Drivers who constantly drive while intoxicated are putting the lives of other drivers, passenger, and even pedestrians at risk. One shouldn't suffer for the careless and selfish act of others.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

22. **Proposal for Action:**

23. The state of Texas to increase the awareness through alcohol safety campaigns

24. A.) Displaying commercials

25. B.) Displaying billboard ads

26. The state of Texas will serve 3rd time offenders with a minimum of five years, a minimum of \$25,000 fine and a 1 to 3 year license suspension.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33. **Results to be Expected:**

34. A decrease in the number of DUI charges and cases within the State of Texas which will

35. also decrease the count of deaths caused by driving while intoxicated.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title:** Drivers' licenses for undocumented immigrants
- 2.
3. **Purpose:** The State of Texas to mandate that undocumented immigrants be allowed the
4. opportunity to get a driver's license.
- 5.
6. **Major Area to be Affected:** Residents of the State of Texas and undocumented
7. immigrants that migrate to the State of Texas
- 8.
8. **Justification:**
9. A drivers license aids in the safer roads. As it is stated in the article "Licenses for illegal
10. immigrants would make all drivers safer" *By The Boston Globe* at present, many of the
11. estimated 160,000 undocumented residents in Massachusetts drive without any driver
12. education or insurance, creating potential hazards and significant financial risk to other
13. drivers. The language in the bill makes it very clear that the license would not entitle its
14. holder to any benefit other than the right to drive. (The Boston Globe). This same logic
15. of education, proper insurance, and the potential to eliminate substantial financial and
16. road risks should be used in the State of Texas. If immigrants were allowed to get a
17. driver license, it ensures a right to drive and essentially promotes living within the law.
- 18.
19. **Proposal for Action:**
20. In order for undocumented immigrants to get a driver license, they will need to:
21. A.) Provide the documents that are needed to apply for a drivers license
22. B.) Pass the written section of the Drivers License exam
23. C.) Pass the driving section of the Drivers License Exam
24. D.) Pass the modified citizenship exam that would be administered
25. E.) Immigrants should have a clean criminal record
- 26.
- 27.
28. **Results to be Expected:**
29. Undocumented immigrants would be able to get a driver license. This also ensures that
30. the roads will be safe because immigrants will have the competent skills to drive under
31. the state and nation requisites.
- 32.
- 33.
- 34.
- 35.
- 36.
- 37.
- 38.
- 39.
- 40.
- 41.
- 42.
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose**

2. Fracking restrictions in Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected**

5. Texas

6.

7. **Justification**

8. I want to put regulations on it, since it is bad for the environment. When they pump the

8. water up from the ground and the pump it back down it which makes it easier for the

9. tectonic boundary easier to shift. It also can contaminate nearby aquifers.

10.

11.

12. **Proposal for Action**

13. _One of the ways we can help prevent a lot of the accidents caused by fracking, is by

14. surveying the ground around it. Making sure that there isn't any canals, lakes, ponds, or

15. aquifers within a few miles of where they plan to get the oil. Having a group of

16. hydrologists and geologist come out and look around for anything that could cause harm

17. to near-

18. by water areas and towns. To help with the tectonic plate boundaries we can move the

19. water to another place after it is pumped up. Once we run out of places to put the water

20. we can make another man made lake and start to put it there so it doesn't go to waste

21. and later on down the road we can reuse it.

22.

23. **Results to be Expected**

24. _Some of the results that we expect is that there will be less earthquakes, which will

25. allow families in nearby cities and towns not to have to worry as much about having a

26. natural disasters. We should also be able to keep all of our canals and underground

27. aquifers safe from being tampered with by the oil industries. If we are able to keep all of

28. that water clean it allows us to keep using it, instead of having it just sitting there being

29. unusable since oil got mixed in with it.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PRPOSAL

1. **Title:** Texas ranks 47 in the nation for SAT scores

2.

3. **Purpose:** The State of Texas to require all schools and all school districts to offer an SAT prep course to students.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:** Students, Faculty, and Staff of school districts within the State of Texas

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. The SAT is an assessment that was made to fairly rank and compare all students.

9. Colleges determine your entrance based on your score. If a student scored low then you

10. have a lower chance of acceptance compared to somebody who scored higher. The state

11. of Texas poorly prepares students for SAT test leaving the Texas youth at a

12. disadvantage. Although some Texas school do give SAT/ACT/PSAT prep courses, whom

13. ranking usually is high for best Texas schools, not all schools provide it. Allowing Texas

14. youth to have a disadvantage leads to better prepared people occupying their space at

15. top tier colleges that prepare students for life. The problem interferes with the students

16. and the generation's success because they are the future and if not well prepared then

17. their potential could never be reached thus delaying innovation for a better life.

18.

19. **Proposal for Action:**

20. School Districts within the state of Texas will offer SAT prep as an elective for High

21. School sophomore, juniors, and seniors. The course will be taken over two semesters

22. (one full school year) for sophomore, junior, and senior students. The courses would be

23. taught during the school day as it is an elective and by a certified SAT instructor.

24. Requiring Texas schools to provide courses for the SAT test as an elective would be a

25. way to better the score rankings for the State of Texas and provide college level support

26. opportunities for all Texas students. Throughout the class, students will be taught test

27. taking skills needed to take an exam successfully, given extra practice for weak

28. subjects, and taught how to think critically.

29.

30. **Results to be Expected:**

31. Some results that could be expected would be useful to students throughout life and

32. give opportunities to the parties involved. For example, providing upper classmen with

33. the course will allow them to succeed by achieving high scores that allow them to qualify

34. for a National Merit scholarships which would help a substantial amount of students

35. whom don't have the money in hand to pay for college, and their good scores would

36. reflect well on them because colleges like when students do well on the PSAT their first

37. years because it is evidence of the student success the first years in college. Courses

38. being taught by certified teachers would benefit those looking for jobs because it creates

39. more jobs. In addition the class will provide the students with test taking skills that are

40. applicable to everything. For example, time management provides a great skill that

41. contributes to organization, stamina is beneficial because it will one will learn to finish all

42. at once instead of leaving it till the end, and "work smarter not harder" teaches the

43. student to strategies and had a system that works for them. Also the extra practice for

44. classes will further help students in other classes only benefiting them.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**
2. Grant guaranteed paid family leave.
3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**
5. All workers in Texas
6.

7. **Justification:**
8. In the status quo, Texas employers are only bound by the Federal Family and Medical
8. Leave Act (FMLA), which only allows for unpaid leave for issues concerning family or
9. medical reason. The FMLA only grants job security, which isn't enough for people to
10. maintain a stable lifestyle. The FMLA excludes roughly 40% of Americans due to its
11. requirements of being full time workers for at least a year. Those that are eligible for
12. FMLA, typically cannot afford to take time off. An example of a state using paid family
13. leave is in New York Starting January 1, 2018, the Paid Family Leave bill or PFL will
14. be enacted. This bill allows for workers across the state to earn at least 50% of their
15. regular wages for 12 weeks in the span of 12 months.. Other states that provide
16. guaranteed paid leave are California, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. These states
17. have already seen a decrease in people leaving the labor force during instances
18. where family or medical leave is necessary. In Texas currently, only 14% of the
19. population has access to paid family leave through their employer, this staggeringly
20. small number is leading more people to take off less time for these needs. It has also
21. been seen that unpaid leave typically prompts workers to leave the labor force
22. altogether as they see they have nothing to lose.
23.

24. **Proposal for Action**
25. Every worker in Texas will have .2% (two-tenths of one percent) of their payroll
26. deducted, as well as every employer will also contribute .2% so that every worker
27. can have up to 12 weeks of leave where they earn at least 50% or their regular
28. wages within a 12 month period.
29.

30. **Results to be Expected:**
31. By implementing this proposal, we will first see a decrease in people leaving the labor
32. force. In 2007 when Google increased their paid maternity leave, they saw a 50%
33. decrease in new moms leaving their company. Second, this proposal reduces the
34. reliance on government assistances for new mothers. A New Jersey study found that
35. when paid family leave was put in place women became 39% less likely to need
36. government assistance programs and 40% less likely to need food stamps. Columbia
37. University found that fathers that chose to take paternity leave were more likely to
38. play a bigger role in their child's life nine months later. Paid family leave also promotes
39. gender equality, a study done in Sweden found that for every month a father took
40. paternity leave, the mother's income increased by at least 7%, which causes a
41. decrease in the wage gap. Economic stability is another benefit of paid medical leave
42. as it costs anywhere from 25 to 200 percent annual compensation to replace workers.
43. Due to the fact that paid medical leave creates less turnover, this would be more
44. money saved than spent for businesses. Lastly paid medical leave allows for more
45. productivity in the workplace. When people are dealing with medical issues it becomes
46. increasingly difficult to focus on their job and be productive. Paid medical and family

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**
2. Texas Ranks 47 in the nation for SAT scores
- 3.
4. **Major Area to be Affected:**
5. Education
- 6.
- 7.
8. **Justification:**
- 8.
- 9.
10. **Proposal for Action:**
11. New high school curriculum that encourages learning and preparation for SAT
12. Funding for SAT Prep
13. Focus more on understanding material instead of memorizing
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
18. **Results to be Expected:**
19. Higher SAT scores
20. Higher standardized test scores
21. More admissions into top tier schools for high school seniors
- 22.
- 23.
- 24.
- 25.
- 26.
- 27.
- 28.
- 29.
- 30.
- 31.
- 32.
- 33.
- 34.
- 35.
- 36.
- 37.
- 38.
- 39.
- 40.
- 41.
- 42.
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.
- 46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Education for special needs students in Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Special needs students enrolled in Texas public schools

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. An investigation by the Houston Chronicle has revealed that unelected state officials in

8. Texas "arbitrarily decided what percentage of students should get special education

9. services" more than a decade ago and then began auditing school districts that did not

10. comply. Their efforts, which started in 2004 but have never been publicly announced

11. or explained, have saved the Texas Education Agency billions of dollars but denied

12. vital supports to children with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder,

13. dyslexia, epilepsy, mental illnesses, speech impediments, traumatic brain injuries,

14. even blindness and deafness, a Houston Chronicle investigation has found.

15.

16.

17. **Results to be Expected:**

18. Special needs students will have a better education.

19.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Bullet Train Proposal

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas (Austin, Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio areas)

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

8. Texas is in need of an infrastructure overhaul. With the current installation of the bullet

9. train from Dallas to Houston projected to benefit the 50,000 Texans that make the

10. commute to Dallas or Houston on the weekly basis. With that figure in mind, the

11. possibility to replicate that number to routes that use I-10, I-45, and I-35 is something

12. to capitalize on. With the increasing number of people looking for alternative means of

13. travel. A system of bullet trains would be a beneficiary to both the economy and

14. workforce of Texas

15.

16.

17.

17. **Proposal for Action:**

18. As with the current planning of the Dallas to Houston line, it is intuitive to repeat the

19. same execution and planning of the Dallas to Houston line to make sure that

20. environmental, economic, and other important questions that need to address in the

21. planning of such a project need to brought up. This bill is to open the planning phase

22. such preparations so that something this large of a price tag will not fail within the first

23. few years of operational status.

24.

25.

26.

27.

27. **Results to be Expected:**

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

- 1) Texas roads and commerce will be improved due to faster travel times between cities that take an average of 3 ½ hours to commute.
- 2) Local (pertaining to Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas.) economy will improve as a new source of gross income is made available.
- 3) This new railway will further connect the major cities of Texas and strengthen the ties within the populace of these cities.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Texas ranks among the bottom third in the U.S. for per-pupil funding.

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. School districts and public school students

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

9. Texas has consistently cut education funding. Therefore Texas schools only spend \$9,559
10. per student compared to the national average of \$12,040 per student. Meanwhile Texas has
11. 5.2 students enrolled in public schools, which is due to 1/11 child in America calling Texas
12. home. The spending has increased less than 1% between 2010 to 2015 from \$9,462 to
13. \$9,559 and rising from 40/51 states to 38/51. This has only been created by the increasing
14. property values throughout Texas. 49% of all funds give to schools are raised by local
15. property taxes.

16.

17.

18. **Proposal for Action:**

19. As well as suggesting that the Texas government start providing at least 12-15 thousand
20. dollars per pupil annually by increasing state taxes instead of local taxes, since Texas ranks
21. 45/51 in state taxes. Also suggesting that Texas legislators allocate the funds given by the
22. state motor-fuels taxes (gasoline and diesel fuel) towards the available school funds, which
23. as of right now only receives ¼ yet the State Highway Fund receives ¾. Also based off of
24. recent successes in other school districts throughout the country, we suggest that school
25. districts form alliances with food companies and these food companies, for example, coca
26. cola provided one school district with \$4 million and 350,000 per year which allowed this
27. school district to fund different school activities and teacher needs but as well as student
28. funding that usual school budgets couldn't afford.

29.

30.

31. **Results to be Expected:**

32. With increases in government spending per student that would allow for students to have
33. more access to educational resources and have more resources as well for teachers to
34. better allow for the educating of students. There is a correlation between the states that
35. provide more per student funding and the states higher SAT and ACT scores. It will also be
36. seen in low income students that are in districts provided with an increase of around 20%,
37. they will have large increases between 10-30% in the number of graduating students and
38. increase in amount of time spent in higher education after graduating high school.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Reported college campus sexual assault cases in Texas are an issue.

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. The Texas Government should be aware that when students go to college there is a significant possibility the students will be assaulted sexually. This percentage is higher for women than it is for men.

6.

7.

8. **Justification:**

9. With the sense of freedom that comes with college life, some feel that they are free to do whatever they please. However, this is incorrect. One in every five women will be sexually assaulted on a college campus. Unfortunately, these cases do not get recognized enough; they are treated with less conviction than that of a scholastic dishonesty case. Many suspects are not punished at all. Victims feel embarrassed and are sometimes shunned from their families. As a state with many college campuses, we should make it a priority to fix the system to prevent any more sexual assault cases. Currently the University of Texas at Austin has the highest account of rape or sexual assault on a yearly basis with the University of North Texas as a close second. Many students feel unsafe walking to their dorms/apartments at night. With this proposal we can help resolve this issue.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

23. **Proposal for Action:**

24. To solve this issue, we plan to find the campuses responsible for these unreported incidents and fine them for each one that was not resolved in the proper manner. We also plan to educate the students on sexual harassment and teach them the proper way to handle the issues of sexual assault. For example, free self-defense classes will be provided, and more security and safety instructors on the campus. We hope these strategies will improve the safety of the students residing at the campuses.

33. **Results to be Expected:**

34. We hope to improve the safety of college campuses by preventing sexual assault on students. By educating and training students, their physical and mental knowledge will most likely prevent them from getting themselves into uncomfortable or dangerous situations. Many campuses will be more diligent in reporting sexual assault cases to avoid being fined.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. Teen substance abuse

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. The state of Texas, teens, parent, schools, and police officers

7.

8.

8. **Justification:**

9. Teen substance abuse is a major problem in Texas. More than three in ten high school
10. students have smoked cigarettes and drank alcohol. These substances do not only
11. endanger the adolescents, but also the people around them especially when they are
12. driving a motor vehicle that can lead to crashes which can cause many deaths for their
13. age group.

14.

15.

16.

17. **Proposal for Action:**

18. Students should be randomly tested without influence from administrative picks.

19.

20.

21.

22. **Results to be Expected:**

23. A lower teen substance abuse rate.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. The low high school graduation rate in Texas

3.

4. **Major Area to be Affected:**

5. Texas State high school

6.

7. **Justification:**

8. To increase high school graduation rates

8. To help people be more successful

9. Let them think about their future more deeply

10.

11. **Proposal for Action:**

12. Student should care more about school and their future. Some teachers should help
13. improve morale of the school and student. The parent should encourage their students
14. to attend school and create more possibilities for their future. Tell them to leaned more
15. and tell them think about the future The school should have limited school time and also
16. suggest to have outdoor school time. Provide career training in junior high to develop
17. better plans for the future

18.

19. **Results to be Expected:**

20. The high school graduation rates will increase in the state

21. 1) The student will think about their future more clearly

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL

1. **Title or Purpose:**

2. The Opioid Epidemic

3.

4.

5. **Major Area to be Affected:**

6. All opioid users and distributors

7.

8.

8. **Justification:**

9. The abuse of opioids has raised expediently over the past 10 years with more than
10. 200,000 US cases per year. In the year 2014 there were more than 18,000 deaths from
11. prescription users alone. Taking deaths out of the equation opioids should be regulated
12. more because of the side effects. Some of the side effects consist of: liver damage,
13. brain damage, heart infections, and gangrene. This is why we must get a better handle
14. over this epidemic

15.

16.

17.

18. **Proposal for Action:**

19. What we believe would be most effective in the battle of controlling opiate abuse would
20. be to measure the amount prescribed per patient based on the severity of the injury and
21. the physique of the patient. For example, say you're 5'11-6'3 and weigh anywhere from
22. 150-180lb. Suppose you got your wisdom teeth removed, putting your sex, height, and
23. weight into the equation we will determine what your dosage will be.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28. **Results to be Expected:**

29.

30. Less deaths and overall cases due to prescription opioid abuse.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

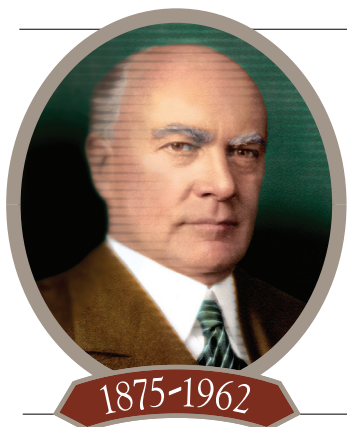
43.

44.

45.

THANK YOU

To our sponsors for their continued support of
the YMCA Texas Youth & Government program:



HATTON W.
SUMNERS
FOUNDATION, INC.

