



Lege Happenings

We are proud to announce that all of our priority bills have been filed in the Senate AND the House- see a list on the last page with bill numbers! Bill filing ended on

March 14 with thousands and thousands filed! at At TCFV we are tracking hundreds of bills in a range of topic areas to take action on throughout session. Updates from the past two weeks include:

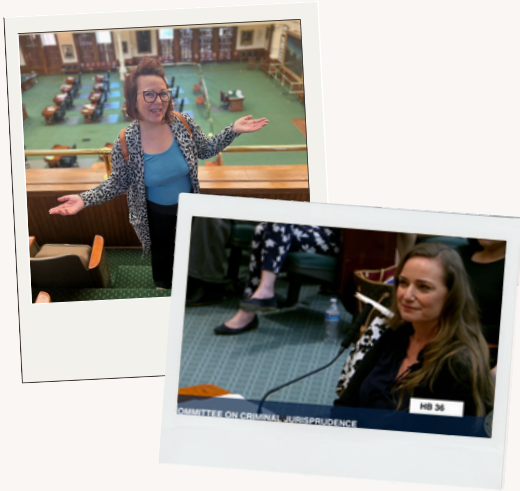


Staley and Audria at the Capitol right after delivering their powerful testimony!

- TCFV's bill SB 1120 authored by Sen. Hinojosa and sponsored by Sen. Huffman was heard in Senate Criminal Justice committee on Mar. 18. This bill offers family violence survivors the right to confer with a prosecutor on disposition decisions, such as plea agreements—a right many other survivors already have. We heard incredible testimony from a survivor, Audria Maltsberger, and from our public policy committee co-chair and County Attorney in Wilbarger County, Staley Heatly. The bill was voted favorably out of committee and recommended for Local/Uncontested Calendar, a great outcome!



Did you know? A bill with a companion in the opposite chamber generally has better odds of passing!



Barbra Grimmer (top) and Molly Voyles (below) testifying at the Capitol

- Also on Mar. 18 in the House Criminal Jurisprudence committee, TCFV Director of Public Policy, Molly Voyles, provided testimony in support of HB 36, authored by Rep. Bowers. The bill is titled the Sharon Radebaugh Act, in honor of a survivor who lost her life to domestic violence. The bill requires in certain cases that courts order real-time, active GPS tracking for high-risk offenders who pose a continuing threat to survivors. Powerful testimony was offered by Sharon Radebaugh's family and a number of survivors, including Rep. Bowers herself.
- TCFV Public Policy Coordinator Barbra Grimmer also testified in the Senate Business and Commerce committee on Mar. 11 in support of SB 1343, authored by Sen. Johnson. This bill, led by our partners at Texas Appleseed, would ensure people know their rights and how to exercise them regarding data collection and privacy, an important need for many survivors.
- TCFV staff submitted electronic comments on HB 32, authored by Rep. Button, to highlight changes that should be made in that legislation to support survivor safety and ensure eviction and legal aid safeguards are in place.
- Finally, TCFV registered support for two of TAASA's priority bills, SB 608 on tracking SAFE kit transfers and SB 761 on crime victims' rights enforcement.

The More You Know: A Key Part of Coalition Work is Supporting Our Partners

We work closely with partners during legislative session to collaborate on and support measures that keep Texas safer and healthier. As mentioned above, during the past couple weeks TCFV supported bills led by TAASA and Texas Appleseed and they did the same for TCFV! TCFV staff also attended advocacy days and showcases hosted by some of our great partners: the Texas Homeless Network, the Texas Violence & Injury Prevention Center at UT Health Houston and the Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition.



TCFV staff Jen Mudge & Molly Voyles with Eric Samuels, CEO, Texas Homeless Network

Policy Priorities



Reducing and Preventing Family Violence Homicide in Texas: This measure would create a two-year taskforce focused on prevention and reduction of family violence homicide with explicit charges to make policy recommendations for the 90th legislative session. (SB 1946, Zaffirini / HB 4155, Manuel)



Enhancing Crime Victims' Rights; Ability to Confer on a Plea Notice for Family Violence Survivors: This measure proposes to add victims of felony family violence to the list of people who can confer with prosecutors on the plea agreement, within Article 56A of the Code of Criminal Procedure. (SB 1120, Hinojosa and Huffman / HB 4918, Johnson)



Dating Violence Policy Implementation and Survivor Safety Supports: This measure focuses on implementing dating violence policies in schools by adding clean up language to Section 11.252 of the Education Code to ensure that these policies are addressed in district improvement plans. Language would also be added to address survivor safety in reporting dating violence to parents. (HB 1332, Garcia / SB 2242, West)



Support and Accountability for Youth Using Violence: This measure would allow for collection of data on dating violence in schools and would create a pathway for young people using violence to be referred to Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) with the option for healthy relationship and dating violence education to be offered. (HB 1963, Garcia, SB 2241, West)

Read full bill text at the Texas Legislature Online!

Many thanks and send any questions or suggestions to us at policy@tcfv.org!