

## FROM THE TCFV POLICY TEAM



### Lege Happenings



*From left to right, TCFV policy team members: Jen Mudge, Molly Thibodeaux, Lisa Medina, Barbra Grimmer, Erin Mayes, Krista Varney, Molly Voyles and Lauren Lluveras*

With thousands and thousands of bills filed TCFV staff have been active at the Capitol this session! TCFV staff have put in over 30 cards 'for' a bill, which registers our support --and testified on many of these. We do so to stand with survivors and raise their needs and those of advocates.

To make sure the team can keep going until June 2nd, also known as Sine Die, the team held a wellness day on 3/19. We made bracelets over lunch, taking time to be together. While the length of legislative session may seem short at 140 days, every day is packed so keeping an eye on both the action and wellness is critical!



Did you know? The last day of session is often called 'Sine Die' which means adjourn without a date to reconvene.

Updates from the past two weeks include:

- TCFV staff submitted written comments on SB 38, authored by Sen. Bettencourt, to highlight needed changes to better support survivor safety and housing stability.
- TCFV Public Policy Manager, Jen Mudge, testified in support of HB 837 by Rep. Howard. This measure was brought forward by our colleagues at An-Nisa Hope Center and would provide training on family violence to cosmetologists, often a trusted person for a survivor. TCFV and An-Nisa were joined by our partners at Texas Advocacy Project (TAP) who also testified.
- TCFV staff expressed concern, along with our partners at TAP, about HB 2496 which proposes restricting eligibility for protective orders to individuals who have experienced family violence, as defined in code, in the past two years.



From left to right, Sadaf Patel (An Nisa), Jen Mudge (TCFV), Raazia Nathani (An Nisa), Amanda Elkanick Oder (TAP)

## The More You Know: Legislative Impact



Top: TCFV staff Barbra Grimmer & Molly Voyles with panelists in Houston.

Bottom: Molly Voyles with Sen. Alvarado

While the passage of legislation is critical, the implementation is just as significant. TCFV staff spoke on a panel in Houston hosted by Senator Carol Alvarado that highlighted the passage and implementation of SB 855 (88R) which established required training hours on family violence for judges. Huge thanks to Senator Alvarado for her work on that measure as well as the Minaret Foundation, Texas Advocacy Project, and An-Nisa Hope Center. TCFV Director of Public Policy, Molly Voyles, was joined by TCFV Public Policy Coordinator, Barbra Grimmer to talk about this important legislation. Other panelists included Baker Ripley Community Engineers, Judge Erika Ramirez (Harris County Criminal Court at Law No. 8), Sonia Corrales (Houston Area Women's Center), Lt. John Klafka (Harris County Sheriff's Office) and Mary McFaden (Harris County District Attorney's Office).

# 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) *Referred to Senate Criminal Justice & House Homeland Security, Public Safety and Veterans' Affairs*



**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) *Voted favorably from Senate Criminal Justice*



**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) *Referred to House Public Education & Senate Education K-16*



**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) *Referred to House Public Education & Senate Education K-16*

Read full bill text at the Texas Legislature Online!

Many thanks and send any questions or suggestions to us at [policy@tcfv.org](mailto:policy@tcfv.org)!