



SB 1946 (ZAFFIRINI)/HB 4155 (MANUEL): REDUCING & PREVENTING FAMILY VIOLENCE HOMICIDE IN TEXAS

With increases in family violence homicide in our state, addressing lethal violence is an issue that requires a collaborative team working towards solutions. Research consistently indicates that there are three top lethality indicators; strangulation, stalking, and the intersection of firearms and family violence, this measure would create a 2-year taskforce focused on prevention and reduction with explicit charges to make policy recommendations for the 90th legislative session.



SB 1120 (HINOJOSA & HUFFMAN)/ HB 4918 (JOHNSON): RIGHT TO CONFER ON A PLEA FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

Victims of sexual assault, stalking, indecent assault, and trafficking have the right to confer with the prosecutor on disposition decisions including plea agreements, rather than solely getting notice. This measure proposes to add victims of 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. This measure would allow family violence survivors greater safety and voice in the criminal justice process while also addressing a gap in the list of rights afforded to family violence victims.



HB 1332 (GARCIA)/SB 2242 (WEST) & HB 1963 (GARCIA)/SB 2241 (WEST): SCHOOL DATING VIOLENCE POLICIES

Current code requiring dating violence policies (Section 37.0831, Education Code) has referenced implementation in district plans for nearly 20 years but the circular code reference was never made. This measure focuses on implementing these policies 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. Survivors' parents would receive notification first to ensure time for safety planning and to require the survivor be offered safety resources and support. **(HB 1332 / SB 2242)**

A second 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 / SB 2241)**



HB 4238 (MEYER) / SB 2902 (ZAFFIRINI): PROTECTING SURVIVORS FROM COLLECTION OF COERCED DEBT

This measure seeks to protect individuals from debt collection actions when they are victims of identity theft by adding a new section to the Texas Finance Code, establishing that creditors and debt collectors cannot collect on debts incurred as a result of identity theft under certain conditions. Creditors and debt collectors could pursue legal action against the perpetrator of the identity theft to recover the debt.

We urge esteemed members of Senate Finance and House Appropriations to add an additional \$25 million dollars (\$12.5 million each year of the biennium) to continue our shared goal to ensure all survivors can access shelter, services, and a new safe home

Enhanced Funding for Barrier Reductions is Working

66,629

Texans sought services at a family violence center in FY 24.

23,047

children were served that year.

- Service numbers increased thanks to funds invested by the Legislature. In Texas, three more survivors per day are served by a family violence center in FY 24 compared to FY 23.
- Increased funds led to thousands of Texans receiving services that would have been otherwise unavailable, including housing, and reduced the denied rate.
- With 1 in 3 Texans experiencing family violence in their lifetime, survivors' access to shelter and safety is critical. Investment in housing specific to survivors will reduce the ongoing capacity crisis.

Severity of Violence and Urgency of Need

205

Texans were killed by their intimate partners in 2023

- Since 2018, calls to law enforcement for family violence incidents reported by the Texas Department increased by 26%.
- Texas family violence programs funded through HHSC offered over 200,000 more services in FY 24 than FY 23 showing a huge growth in need for survivors across Texas.

Rising Needs Result in Waitlists and Capacity Crisis

50%

of survivors will be denied shelter solely because the program is full.

- A 2024 study shows that nearly 60% of survivors who are denied shelter will live outside, in a car, or return to the home with violence.
- In the same study, 88% of survivors who obtained shelter reported feeling safe or very safe, demonstrating the import of this service.

Investing in Housing Can Prevent Violence

71%

of survivors in a Texas-based study stated they needed help finding housing.

- 88% of survivors in a 2024 study experienced homelessness. 60% of these survivors experienced homelessness more than twice, indicating a need to focus on safe and stable housing.
- Though many factors can create this access issue, the housing crisis leaves shelters full, and survivors all too often lack an ability to transition to safer stable housing.

Battering Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP) Funding

TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

We appreciate funds in SB 1/HB 1, Article V, Rider 43 of \$5 million dollars over the FY 26-27 biennium for BIPPs but additional funds are critically needed. We urge esteemed members of Senate Finance and House Appropriations to include a \$925,000 biennial increase to support capacity for BIPPs.

BIPPs Urgently Need Additional Funds

25

is the number of BIPPs in TX in FY24 & FY25 that are accredited & funded-grew by one program

- The number of BIPPs grew in FY24 & 25 thanks to funds from the 88th Legislature. An average BIPP award is just under \$80,000 leaving a large gap between funding and rigorous compensation standards.
- Funds are needed to raise the average award to just under \$100,000 so BIPPs can make meaningful efforts to compensate trained staff and expand their reach to serve more participants.
- 100 programs are accredited but not funded and monitored. Increases to allow an additional program to receive funding are needed.

BIPPs are Cost Effective

\$24.35

is the average cost per person for a BIPP session.

- This is versus the average cost per person of those housed in prison at \$77.49. \$3.48 is the cost per day of BIPP over 18 weeks of sessions.
- Along with overall efficacy for both individual victim safety and for the community, BIPPs represent a cost-effective solution to offender accountability for Texans.
- Offenders sentenced to jail/prison are 243% more likely to re-offend than offenders assigned to BIPP.

BIPPs Work

9,473

individuals served in a Texas BIPP in FY22 and FY23.

- Nationally, offenders completing at least three months of a program were 32% less likely to re-assault their partners.
- In Texas the model is even more effective - In one county in Texas, program completers had an overall criminal recidivism rate of just 13%; and only 14% were re-arrested for family violence. In another Texas county, BIPP was more effective than jail or regular dismissal in reducing the likelihood of future arrests.

BIPPs Center Offender Accountability and Victim Safety

72%

is the successful completion rate of participants in a Texas BIPP.

- BIPP facilitators educate on abuse being a choice, promote positive behavioral change, and when offenders deny/minimize their actions or blame their behavior on the victim, facilitators hold offenders accountable.
- BIPPs are mandated to keep monthly communication with referral sources about the participants' compliance and notify them about any additional threats or violence committed by the offender.
- BIPPs notify the victim of the offender's entrance and exit from the program and offer resources and referrals to family violence services.