



Legislative UPDATE

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Lt. Governor Asks Senate Committee to Study Silencing TML

Last week, the [Legislative Update](#) reported that, in spite of the resignation announcement of the Texas Speaker of the House, cities aren't out of the woods when it comes to scrutiny from state leaders.

That prediction came true on Wednesday of this week, when Lt. Governor Dan Patrick released his [interim charges](#) to Senate committees. The League will report on most of the city-related items next week, but one demands immediate attention. The Senate Committee on State Affairs has been charged with the following:

Taxpayer Lobbying: Study how governmental entities use public funds for political lobbying purposes. Examine what types of governmental entities use public funds for lobbying purposes. Make recommendations to protect taxpayers from paying for lobbyists who may not represent the taxpayers' interests.

The charge comes on the heels of [Senate Bill 29](#), which passed the Senate but failed to pass the Texas House by a 58-85 margin. The bill would have prohibited a city from joining TML if the League advocates for or against legislation. It would likely have prevented League staff from writing this article.

State leaders suggest that the League and other lobbyists hired by cities don't represent the taxpayers' interests. But who is in a better position to determine the "taxpayers' interests" in any Texas city? The mayors and councilmembers who are elected by the taxpayers in their city or legislators, some of whom live hundreds of miles away?

Last session's vote on S.B. 29 was too close for comfort. If you are fed up with wanton city bashing by some state leaders, the time to contact your legislators is right now.

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