Bill Prefiling: FAQs

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Prefiling is the filing of bills and resolutions before the regular legislative session convenes. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, prefiling increases the efficiency of the legislative process by allowing more time to draft legislation, and by allowing leadership more time to review bills prior to committee referral. Prefiling in Texas occurs the first Monday after the general election in even-numbered years. Below are answers to frequently asked questions about prefiling.

Who can prefile legislation?

Returning members and members-elect of the upcoming legislative session may prefile bills.

Can members of the public prefile legislation?

Not directly, but members of the public are free to contact their representative to discuss the possibility of the representative authoring a bill on a particular issue. For more information, please view the Citizen Handbook: How the Texas Legislature Works.

Is there a limit to how many bills a member can prefile?

There is no stated limit in the House or Senate rules.

How do you view prefiled bills?

- If you are looking for a specific bill number, you can look it up on the Texas Legislature Online (TLO).
- You can also view a list of bills filed each day by selecting "Today's Filed Bills" from the TLO General Reports section.
- If you are looking for prefiled bills on a specific subject, the TLO Bill Search page allows you to select from a range of subject codes.
- If you need assistance locating prefiled bills, please call the Texas Legislative Reference Library at (512) 463-1252.

What happens to prefiled bills?

Bills are filed with the Chief Clerk in the House and the Calendar Clerk in the Senate, and are made publicly available via the Texas Legislature Online.

What role does the library have during prefiling?

In addition to answering research requests, library staff creates the TLO/TLIS record for every legislative measure. In addition, library staff reviews each bill and enters its proposed statutory changes into Index to Sections Affected (ISAF), assigns subject codes to each bill to enable better searching, and checks to see if companion measures were filed in the opposite chamber. We continue this process for each bill as it moves through the legislative process.