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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS WHAT ARE THE REAL NUMBERS?

The 80th Legislature is supposed to be the session of a new Tom Craddick, a Speaker who will be more inclusive, less heavy-handed and not retaliatory. A review of the committee assignments indicates that this new Tom Craddick has yet to appear.

OVERALL CHAIRMANSHIPS DO NOT REFLECT DEMOCRATIC GAINS IN THE HOUSE

Since 2003, Democrats have picked up 7 seats, and are now 46% of the Texas House (81-69). In 2007, Democrats will hold 25% of Chairmanships, the same percentage as in 2005, despite gaining 6 net seats in the 2006 elections.

For the 80th Legislature, 19 committees have both a Republican Chair and a Republican Vice-Chair; only 3 committees have both a Democratic Chair and Democratic Vice-Chair.

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS DO NOT REFLECT THE DIVERSITY OF THE TEXAS HOUSE

Female members hold 4 fewer Chairs and 1 fewer Vice-Chair positions this session compared to 2005. Anglo-Republican males make up only 43% of the House, yet they have been given 63% of the Chairmanships.

There are more Hispanic and African-American members of the Texas House this session than in 2005, yet minority members now hold 2 fewer Chairs and 1 fewer Vice-Chair positions than in 2005.

Harris County has a Hispanic population of over 1.1 million. Dallas County has a Hispanic population of over 830,000. No Hispanic member from either county, despite 31 years of combined seniority, are Chairs or Vice-Chairs.

Only 1 member of Border & International Affairs is actually from the Texas-Mexico border, and that member is not Hispanic.

State Affairs is expected to handle all major immigration legislation this session, and that committee lost 2 Hispanic seats, both of whom are officers of the Mexican American Legislative Caucus (MALC); only one Hispanic remains on the State Affairs Committee.

THE COMMITTEES HANDLING CONTROVERSIAL OR PRIORITY ISSUES THIS SESSION ARE REPUBLICAN DOMINATED

REPUBLICANS ARE GIVEN SUPER-MAJORITIES ON CRITICAL COMMITTEES

Appropriations (18-11 Republican, Republican Chair) – 1 net Democratic seat lost

Calendars (7-4 Republican, Republican Chair)

- This speaks for itself, although under Craddick this committee has become mainly an extension of Nancy Fisher's office.

Civil Practices (6-3 Republican, Republican non-lawyer Chair)

- This committee is expected to handle the Texans for Lawsuit Reform (TLR) agenda this session.

Energy Resources (5-2 Republican, Republican Chair)

Environmental Regulation (6-1 Republican, Republican Chair)

Local & Consent Calendars (8-3 Republican, Republican Chair)

- This committee is heavily stacked to block bills of members not aligned with Tom Craddick.

Natural Resources (6-3 Republican, Democratic Chair)

- This committee will handle all water issues.

Public Education (6-3 Republican, Republican Chair)

- 8 of the 9 committee members are from the Houston/Dallas areas, leaving rural school districts grossly under represented.

Redistricting (10-5 Republican, Republican Chair)

Regulated Industries (7-2 Republican, Republican Chair)

State Affairs (7-2 Republican, Republican Chair)

Transportation (8-1 Republican, Republican Chair)

COMMITTEES CHAIRED BY DEMOCRATS

Border & International Affairs (5-2 Democratic) – Note Immigration issues will go to the State Affairs Committee.

Business & Industry (5-4 *Republican*)

Economic Development (4-3 Democratic)

Human Services (5-4 *Republican*)

Licensing & Administrative Procedures (5-4 *Republican*)

Natural Resources (6-3 *Republican*)

Rules & Resolutions (6-5 *Republican*)

Urban Affairs (5-2 Democratic)

DEMOCRATS ARE PACKED ON TWO COMMITTEES

Criminal Jurisprudence (7-2 Democratic)

Juvenile Justice & Family Issues (9-0 Democratic)

80TH LEGISLATURE - HOUSE COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

A Committee by Committee Analysis

AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 4 to 3 Republican majority, switched from a Democratic majority

APPROPRIATIONS

- New Republican Chair
- New Democratic Vice-Chair
- 18 to 11 Republican majority
- Loss of Democratic member
- Democrats gained 6 seats since 2005 and should have gained representation on this committee.
- Seniority requests by members to serve on Appropriations no longer apply, and a bipartisan effort to reinstate that long-standing practice was rebuked during the debate on the House rules.
- 14 of the 29 members did not serve on Appropriations last session.
- 4 freshman and 3 sophomore members were appointed even though there is a very steep learning curve for the budgeting process.
- Past Appropriations Committee members with particular expertise in select budget areas have again been left off the committee (for example, Reps. Pitts, Haggerty and Pickett, also Reps. Gallego, Coleman and Hochberg, all of whom have experience on budget and school finance conference committees).

BORDER & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- Democratic Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair from North East Texas
- There is no CBO for this committee even though its jurisdiction entails many budgetary needs.
- Only one member of the committee is actually from the Texas-Mexico border.

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

- Democratic Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- CBO changed from a Democratic Hispanic to a Republican Anglo
- 5 to 4 Republican Majority

CALENDARS

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- 7 to 4 Republican majority
- Democrats gained one seat on the committee

- Though Democrats gained a seat on this committee, the overall trend of diluting Democratic power by spreading Democrats thin on some committees and concentrating them on others was continued.

CIVIL PRACTICES

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- 6 to 3 Republican majority
- Loss of 1 Democratic seat
- White Democrats lost three seats on the committee
- As changes in liability law fall off the agenda, Craddick is moving his supporters to more plumb jobs, yet he is still maintaining his grip on this committee.

CORRECTIONS

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 4 to 3 Democratic majority
- Net Democratic pickup of 1 seat
- With the net loss of 1 female seat there are no women now serving on this committee.

COUNTY AFFAIRS

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- 6 to 3 Democratic majority
- 7 urban/suburban members and 2 rural members serve on the committee, continuing the trend of diminishing the power and influence of rural communities.

CRIMINAL JURISPRUDENCE

- Democratic Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 7 to 2 Democratic majority
- This committee is heavily packed with Democrats and is unfortunately unlikely to handle major legislation this session.

CULTURE, RECREATION, & TOURISM

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 4 to 3 Republican majority
- This committee lost its sole Hispanic representative.

DEFENSE AFFAIRS & STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 7 to 2 Democratic majority
- Two sessions ago, Republicans dominated this committee 6 to 3 when Homeland Security legislation was a major issue. Since then, this committee has become another of those packed with Democrats in an effort to keep them from dealing with the priority issues of the session.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Democratic Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 4 to 3 Democratic majority, a change from last session's 4 to 3 Republican majority
- This committee is not expected to handle any major legislation this session.

ELECTIONS

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 4 to 3 Republican majority
- This committee is expected to again consider the disenfranchising "voter id" bill, aimed at reducing elderly and minority voter participation. This session, the committee is chaired by Rep. Leo Berman who has already filed several bills that are considered extremely antagonistic towards minority communities.

ENERGY RESOURCES

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 5 to 2 Republican majority
- The demographic makeup of this committee remains unchanged from last session, meaning there is still a heavy Republican majority controlling the very important issues surrounding the production of oil and gas and the conservation of energy resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 6 to 1 Republican majority
- Net loss of 1 Democratic seat
- Committee remains all white and all male

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 5 to 2 Republican majority

GENERAL INVESTIGATING & ETHICS

- Chair changed from Democrat last session to a Republican
- Republican Vice-Chair
- 3 to 2 Republican majority
- Seniority requests by members do not apply to this procedural committee, which has a Republican majority and jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to the ethics and conduct of all state and local government officers and employees.

GOVERNMENT REFORM

- Chair changed from last Democrat session to a Republican
- Republican Vice-Chair
- 4 to 3 Republican majority, loss of Democratic majority (2 seats)
- Loss of 1 African-American member compared to last session
- Two sessions ago, this committee was chaired by Republican Rep. David Swinford, had a 5 to 2 Republican majority and dealt with major legislation.
- Last session, Swinford was Chair of State Affairs, Democrats were stacked on this committee and government reform legislation was not a top priority.
- This session, Democrats lost 2 seats on this committee including the Chairmanship.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 5 to 4 Republican majority
- Loss of 1 African-American member compared to last session
- Only 1 Hispanic member on committee
- Rep. Morrison, author of Tuition Deregulation, continues to serve as Chair, despite skyrocketing tuition rates.

HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- 7 to 4 Republican majority
- Loss of 1 Hispanic member compared to last session

HUMAN SERVICES

- Democratic Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 5 to 4 Republican majority
- 6 of 9 members did not serve on the committee last session, including the Chair
- Loss of 1 Hispanic member on committee compared to last session
- Loss of 1 African-American member compared to last session
- Loss of 2 female members on committee compared to last session
- Restoration of cuts to Human Services in the budget over the last four years will be a critical issue this session, and the Republican CBO has the power of the purse on the committee.

INSURANCE

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 5 to 4 Republican majority
- Net gain of 1 Democratic seat, one Asian seat, one female seat
- All leadership of the committee is Anglo, Republican, and male

JUDICIARY

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 5 to 4 Democratic majority

JUVENILE JUSTICE & FAMILY ISSUES

- Democratic Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- 9 to 0 Democratic majority
- Another committee packed with Democrats and unlikely to handle major legislation this session.

LAND & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- CBO changed to a Republican
- 5 to 4 Republican majority

LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 4 to 3 Democratic majority

LICENSING & ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

- Democratic Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 5 to 4 Republican majority

LOCAL & CONSENT CALENDARS

- Republican Chair
- Vice-Chair changed from last session to a Republican
- 8 to 3 Republican majority, lost one Democratic seat

LOCAL GOVERNMENT WAYS & MEANS

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- 4 to 3 Republican majority
- With the net loss of 1 female seat there are no women now serving on this committee.
- This Republican dominated committee is likely to play a key role in determining the ability of local governments to generate revenue.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Democratic Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 6 to 3 Republican majority

PENSIONS & INVESTMENTS

- Republican Chair compared to a Democratic Chair last session
- Democratic Vice-Chair, changed from a Republican Vice-Chair last session
- Democratic CBO
- 4 to 3 Democratic majority
- Net gain of 1 Democratic seat
- Rep. Eiland, who opposed Craddick in the speaker's election, was stripped of his chairmanship and replaced with a Craddick loyalist.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Developing a viable, long term solution to public school finance is still the biggest issue facing lawmakers.

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 6 to 3 Republican majority, with 6 Anglo Republicans
- Lost Democratic Vice-Chair with over 20 years of experience
- Only 2 minority committee members, one Hispanic and one African-American

- Democrats gained 6 seats since 2005 and should have gained representation on this committee and not lost a senior member and a leadership position.
- The CBO lives in University Park and represents Highland Park, one of the wealthiest school districts in the state. This is an important distinction with the elimination of Robin Hood being advocated and the ongoing need to maintain equity in the public school finance system.
- 8 of the 9 committee members represent Houston/Dallas suburbs—school districts in the Panhandle, West, East and South Texas have no representation.
- There are 1,038 school districts in Texas. The bulk of the committee represents the largest type of school districts in the state, leaving the 877 small/mid-sized districts in the state are largely under-represented.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- A key issue this session regarding Public Health is the need to restore vital funding to health care services cut over the last four years, and the Republican CBO has the power of the purse on the committee.
- 5 to 4 Republican majority, only 3 minority committee members, two Hispanic and one African-American

REDISTRICTING

- Republican Chair
- Vice-Chair changed from last session to a Republican
- 10 to 5 Republican majority, loss of one Democratic seat

REGULATED INDUSTRIES

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 7 to 2 Republican majority
- The size of the committee was expanded and packed with two more Republicans this session.
- The committee is all male, with 7 seats held by Anglo members, and 2 by minority members.

RULES & RESOLUTIONS

- Democratic Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- 6 to 5 Republican majority

STATE AFFAIRS

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair

- Republican CBO
- 7 to 2 Republican majority
- Net loss of 1 Democratic seat
- Minorities lost two seats, leaving white members in a 7 to 2 majority and again filling all leadership roles.
- The committee added a Republican as it is likely to take up key immigration issues this session.

TRANSPORTATION

- Republican Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Republican CBO
- 8 to 1 Republican majority, loss of one Democratic seat (a Hispanic)
- The Chair of this committee strongly supports toll roads and the committee has oversight of toll roads and transportation contractions included in the Governor's mobility plan and the Trans-Texas Corridor.

URBAN AFFAIRS

- Democratic Chair
- Republican Vice-Chair
- Democratic CBO
- 5 to 2 Democratic majority
- This is another stacked committee unlikely to work on major legislation this session.

WAYS & MEANS

- Republican Chair
- Democratic Vice-Chair
- CBO changed from a African-American Democrat to an Anglo Republican
- 5 to 4 Republican majority
- Net loss of one woman serving on the committee, leaving the committee male-dominated, 8 to 1.