

Texas Legislative News

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Subcontractor & Supplier Construction Newsletter



Texas Construction Association

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THEY CAME. THEY VOTED. THEY LEFT. The Texas Legislature reconvened at 10 AM, Wednesday, July 1, passed two bills and adjourned slightly before 5 PM, Thursday, July 2. This was shortest Special Session in the last 22 years. According to research by Senator Jeff Wentworth, the shortest Special Session in history was a one hour affair in 1919.

The Legislature passed two of three measures placed on the agenda by Governor Perry. SB 2 continued in existence for the next two years five state agencies, including the Texas Department of Insurance and the Texas Department of Transportation. These agencies will be considered again in the sunset review process and legislation will need to be passed in 2011 continuing the agencies.

In addition the Legislature passed HB 1 providing for the issuance of two billion dollars in bonds already approved by the voters. The proceeds from these bonds will be used for the construction of road projects. A provision was added to the bill preventing officials from converting existing free lanes into toll roads.

The measure on which the Legislature could not reach agreement involved the extension of the Department of Transportation's authority to enter into contracts with private entities to develop and construct toll roads. It appeared that most Legislators felt that this was an issue not affecting current projects and could await a closer review during a Regular Session of the Legislature.

While there were a few bills filed involving issues listed on the agenda by the Governor, none of these bills were consider by the Legislature. Also, no amendments were considered to the bills that passed except those germane to the particular legislation.

TCA staff closely watched the session's proceedings to see if there were any cracks to allow for amendments favorably to TCA interests. Regrettably, the legislators keep the issues tight and focused, thus preventing any opportunity for such amendments.

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