WHO WE ARE

VOTING RIGHTS

BEYOND BORDERS

CRIMINAL INJUSTICE
TEXAS LEGE IS BICAMERAL

2 CHAMBERS
- SENATE (31 MEMBERS)
- HOUSE OF REPS (150 MEMBERS)

HOW OFTEN?
- ONCE EVERY 2 YEARS
- 140 DAYS

SPECIAL SESSIONS
- 30 DAY 'MINI' SESSIONS
- CAN ONLY BE CALLED FOR BY GOVERNOR

COMMITTEES
- HOUSE AND SENATE
- FINANCE, CALENDARS, ELECTIONS, ENERGY, ETC...
**HOUSE**
- 150 members
- 2 year terms
- Speaker of House leads

**SENATE**
- 31 members
- 4 year terms
- Lt. Gov leads

**EXEC**
- Governor
- Lt. Governor
- Speaker of the House
what are committees?

Legislative committees are subgroups within the 2 chambers. As soon as a bill is filed, it will be sent to the committee that deals with that issue.

SENATE COMMITTEES

• 15 committees
  ○ 1 subcommittee
  ○ 1 special committee

HOUSE COMMITTEES

• 34 committees
  ○ 3 select committees
TAKING ACTION AT LEGE

how to advocate for yourself and your community!
making a plan

• **STEP 1**: WHEN WILL YOU VISIT

• **STEP 2**: WHO WILL YOU VISIT

• **STEP 3**: WHAT IS YOUR PITCH

• **STEP 4**: WHAT WILL YOU LEAVE BEHIND
ELEMENTS OF A PITCH

FEEL

- Why does the issue matter to you?
- Why does this issue matter to your community?

KNOW

- Is there data that can help make your claim?
- What organizations support this issue?

DO

- What is the specific ask?
- Frame as what TO DO instead of what NOT TO DO
My name is Crystal Vigil. I'm a resident of Houston, a public educator, and the proud mother of two small kids.

My son is 10. He still sleeps with his favorite stuffy at night. And this year, one of my students who is the same age as my son, was prosecuted through juvenile justice after he made a bad choice and shoplifted an iPad from a Target. This little boy was arrested in handcuffs that barely fit his wrists.

10 year olds don’t belong in the Juvenile Justice system. They are still children and if they act out, it is usually because of trauma they are experiencing.

What do you want them to feel?
20% of 10-12 year olds in detention in 2018 were special education students. Half of the 10- to 12-year-olds in detention in 2018 had mental health needs. Kids that are in detention have underlying needs that need to be met with services not punishment.

We ask for your support on two bills:
HB 491 Increases the age from 10 to 12 the age at which a child can be prosecuted by OJJDP HB 501 raises the age of criminal responsibility from age 17 to age 18
GETTING TO THE CAPITOL

WHERE CAN I PARK?

WHERE DO I ENTER?
MAP

Where can you park?
• Capitol visitors garage on San Jacinto Blvd & 12th Street
• Free 1st 2 hours, then $4 per hour
• Street parking also (sparsely) available = $2/hr

Where is the entrance?
• North entrance
• South entrance
INSIDE THE CAPITOL
VISTING LEGISLATOR'S OFFICES
**SCHEDULE MEETINGS**

most effective ways:
  - Call their office
  - Email their office and staff

**DROP IN VISITS**

Directories of the capitol are available in both entrance lobbies
  - Note: During unscheduled visits, it’s not likely that you will have an opportunity to meet with the legislator, instead you will likely meet with a legislative aide.
TESTIFYING AT LEGE
HOW TO REGISTER

- House: Kiosks in the Capitol Extension
  - Find a kiosk
  - Identify the hearing & bill you want to testify on
  - Input your information
- Senate: Use kiosk OR fill out a card at hearing room
  - Enter hearing room
  - Find card to register
  - Turn it into the committee clerk (usually right next to where the legislators sit)
WHAT TO EXPECT

- Chair will call out names in order
- MUST be in the room when your name is called to testify
- 1-3 minutes to testify
  - Stay within the time limit
  - Bring enough copies of testimony for every member of the committee.
QUESTIONS?

CONTACT INFO

ALEXIS BAY
BAY@TEXASCIVIL
RIGHTSPROJECT.ORG

ROBERTO LOPEZ
ROBERT@TEXASCIVIL
RIGHTSPROJECT.ORG

JENNY HIXTON
JENNY@TEXASCIVIL
RIGHTSPROJECT.ORG