Overview

1. Facing the Facts
2. Our agenda / your agenda
3. How can we succeed this session?
4. What do we need to do next?
5. Resources & opportunities
Let’s go back to 2021 for a minute...
Republican leadership is not supportive of climate action.
The Texas Legislature is still mostly male.

Women and men in both 2023 Texas legislative chambers

- **Men:** 127
- **Women:** 54
- **87 Republicans** and 40 **Democrats**
- **18 Republicans** and 36 **Democrats**

If the Legislature accurately reflected Texas, it would look like this ...

- **Men:** 90
- **Women:** 91

Source: Texas Tribune survey of the Legislature, U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2021 estimates
Credit: Carla Astudillo
The Texas Legislature is still mostly white.
The Texas Legislature is still mostly white.

If the Legislature accurately reflected Texas, it would look like this ...
Let’s Face It

Chances of passing landmark climate justice bill in 2023 = 0%

That doesn’t mean we’re powerless or we can’t get anything done.
Sierra Club Agenda (Water)

- TCEQ and TWDB Sunset
- Protecting Water Quality from nutrient pollution, plastic pollution, and salinity gradient degradation.
- Restoring TPWD’s authority to contest permits when they harm state land, water resources, or wildlife.
- Responsible produced water pilot projects
- Requiring analysis of climate change impacts in state planning processes.
Sierra Club Agenda (Energy, Air, Land)

- Spend federal monies to clean up our grid, pollution, water, grid
- Fix the Grid: Public Utility Commission sunset bill, Raise Energy Efficiency Goals, Create Demand Response Programs, Raise Building Code Standards, Allow distributed generation to participate in market, Create low-income payment assistance.
- Protect the Community from Pollution: TCEQ Sunset Bill, Cumulative Impacts, Air Monitoring, Oil and Gas Well Plugging and Methane Clean-up
- Land Conservation: Support Parks Acquisition and Land/Habitat Conservation
- Support voting rights and oppose efforts to remove local control
The Abbott/Patrick/GOP Leadership Agenda

- Lots more gas plants (paid for by you)
- Restrict/ban sustainable investment policies (aka, anti-ESG)
- Fines for people who repeatedly report permit violations
- Making it harder to ditch gas and go electric
- In addition to continued attacks on LGBTQ community, voting, access to reproductive healthcare, border militarization, public schools, and more.
Your Agenda! Let’s discuss...

- What do you wish the Texas Legislature would do?
- What are the issues or bills you’d like to see addressed and/or stopped?
How can we build more power in Austin and across Texas?

For this session and for the next one?
The 88th: Focus on stopping the bad, making progress on the good.

- Volunteer teams for lit drops at the Capitol and district offices, committee hearings/rallies, help bring in new volunteers
- Constituents meeting legislators in their districts
- Letters to the editor in key newspapers throughout the session
- Constituent bird-dogging on social media
Immediate Volunteer Opportunities

- Jan 30 or TBD: Outreach to Sierra Club members and supporters
- Feb 2: Lit drop at the Capitol and district offices.
- Legislative office visits in district offices
- Coming Soon:
  - TRAINING: How to show your elected official you’re here and not going away.
  - EDUCATION: Dive deeper on issues at the Capitol and their relevance to everyday Texans.
  - NETWORK: Join with Texans across the state that share your values, villians, and vision for a better Texas.
What do we need to build more power long term?
The Path to More Influence at the Capitol

**Grassroots Power**
Demonstrate growth of influence

**Expanded Base**
Educate, communicate, relate

**Sustained Pressure**
Continue efforts during the interim

**Coalitions**
Build ties with orgs that share values, villains, vision

**Decentralize Organizing**
More tools & resources to organize/act locally

**Funding**
This can’t be done for free.
How could the long-term campaign look moving forward?

- Multiple modes of contact with lawmaker
- Growing number of constituents contacting Reps multiple times
- Sustained outreach to new people via Groups, events, social media ads, etc.
- Interconnected, supportive, and supported local teams
- Equitable, inclusive, and trust-centered coalitions
Before we wrap up...
Resources (the Legislature section of our website)

- Sign up for email updates!
- TX Lege 101 videos
- How to write a letter to the editor
- Bill tracker, key dates, timelines, written testimony
- Factsheets! Factsheets! Factsheets!
- Shout out to allied orgs
Thank you!

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