SIERRA CLUB
LONE STAR CHAPTER

Legislative Action Team Meeting

October 15, 2026

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Priority Issues & Legislative Strategy

What we're focusing on, key issue updates, and legislative targets

Agenda

- Welcome
- Interim Hearings Overview
- Priority Issues
- Legislative Updates
- Balcony Solar Presentation

Countdown Continues

March
Interim Charges Named

April
Interim Hearings Begin

May
SC sets our draft priorities; hearings continue

June
SC releases our Legislative Policy Platform and delivered to every office

July
Hearings continue, SC begins working to draft legislation with legislators, in-district meetings

August
Hearings continue, SC continues drafting legislation with legislators

September
State budget hearings begin; interim hearings continue

Now - December
Legislative offices (with public input) submit bill ideas to Lege Council for drafting; Committees release reports

Legislative Action Team: Getting Ready for Session

- **Tuesday, November 3** - Vote, vote, vote in the general election
- **November 9** - Pre-filing of legislative bills begin
- **November 19** - November Legislative Action Team meeting
- **January 12** - Session convenes at noon
- **March 12** - Deadline to file all bills
- **May 31** - Sine die (90th Legislative Session ends)

State Budget: What Happened?

- Legislative Budget Board (LBB) held 45 hearings in August & September covering every state agency and public university
- Sierra Club submitted written testimony on 7 agencies and 2 universities + oral testimony on 8 agencies and 2 universities
- One brave volunteer showed up to testify on TPWD budget, and many took action through our action alert – Thank you!
- Next: LBB will take agency budget requests and public testimony to draft the state budget bill in late January / early February, followed by more public hearings

Interim Hearings: What Happened in the House?

- The House held 62 interim hearings between July 2025–October 2026
    - Natural Resources - 4 hearings
    - State Affairs - 7 hearings
    - Energy Resources - 3 hearings
    - Environmental Regulation - 1 hearing
- Sierra Club staff testified or provided written testimony at 14 of these hearings
- Several Sierra Club members also showed up to provide oral testimony or submitted comments through the online House Comment Portal – Thank you!

Interim Hearings: What Happened in the House? *(cont'd)*

- Rumor: State Affairs (data centers) and Natural Resources (groundwater) may have an additional hearing soon
- December/January: Expect interim committee reports summarizing findings and policy recommendations on assigned interim charges

Interim Hearings: What Happened in the Senate?

- The Senate held 35 interim hearings
    - Business and Commerce - 3 hearings
    - Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs - 3 hearings
    - Natural Resources - 2 hearings
- Sierra Club staff provided oral and/or written testimony at 8 of these hearings
- Several Sierra Club volunteers also submitted written or oral testimony – Thank you!

Interim Hearings: What Happened in the Senate? *(cont'd)*

- Rumor: Business and Commerce may hold at least one more hearing before session
- December/January: Expect interim committee reports summarizing findings and policy recommendations on assigned interim charges

Takeaways from 100 Interim Hearings: Water

- **Local groundwater protections and science** – Expect a lot of attention to this!
- **Water planning process**, including the role of the state
- **Water supply issues**: Produced water, seawater desalination, wastewater reuse
- **Water quality**: standards for nurdles, salinity, wastewater discharges, etc.
- **Flood mitigation** (may be difficult politically where it touches development)

All these issues will be discussed with or without Sierra Club, but we can absolutely help shape the conversation and the outcomes!

Takeaways from 100 Interim Hearings: Energy

- **Affordability**: Electricity, transmission and insurance costs – Expect lots of action!
- **Data centers**: Water and energy impacts, transparency and local control issues
- **Distributed Energy Resources**
- **Oil and gas wells** and regulations
- **Anti-renewable and pro-gas schemes** – We'll have to fight!
- **Transmission planning**: how to grow as a state but also respect landowner rights
- **Air quality issues** – Expect opposition from powerful interests!

All these issues will be discussed with or without Sierra Club, but we can absolutely help shape the conversation and the outcomes!

Sierra Club is already working with offices and other organizations on drafting bills:

- Seawater desalination: Salinity standards and regulations for diversion/discharge
- Water quality standards and regulations for pre-production plastics
- Fines and financial assurance updates for oil and gas drilling
- Flood mitigation
- Water protections and water rights
- Updates to building codes
- Energy and water reporting and guardrails for data centers
- Utility payment assistance and Distributed Energy Resources
- Community standards for data centers
- Transparency in industrial development: data centers and renewable energy
- Grid enhancing technologies
- Air quality: hydrogen sulfide, ethylene oxide and methane controls
- Integrated resource planning

Some Upcoming Energy-Focused Austin meetings

- American Solar Energy Society, October 19-21st, Palmer Events Center, Austin
- Texas Energy Summit, October 26-28, Capitol, Austin
- Texas Energy Waste Advisory Committee Public Meeting, Monday, November 16th, 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM

Save the Date: Earth Month Advocacy Day

- We’re looking for volunteers to help plan our flagship legislative session event - our Earth Month Advocacy Day!
- Let Jordan know if you’re interested in joining our planning committee that will begin meeting in November!
- Help us make it the biggest environmental lobby day of the session!



November Legislative Action Team

- Join us for the November meeting of the Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter's Legislative Action Team (LAT)!
- The November Election is over - now, we need to think about what comes next. Let's talk about election results and what they mean for Texas, our legislative strategy, and the environment!
- If you're looking for ways to get involved in advocacy for people & the environment, look no further! Join us on November 12, 2026 @ 7PM.

Thank you!

For further questions, please reach out to:

Jordan Goodrich
Communications Manager
jordan.goodrich@sierraclub.org, 214-733-4874

Takeaways from 100 Interim Hearings

- **Affordability**: Electricity, transmission and insurance costs. Expect lots of action!
- **Data centers**: Water and energy impacts, transparency and local control issues
- **Distributed Energy Resources:** Smart thermostats, balcony solar
- **Oil and gas wells**: Regulations and cleanup
- Expect **anti-renewable and pro-gas schemes** to crop up that we'll have to fight
- **Transmission planning**: how to grow as a state but also respect landowner rights