

POLITICS

Lobbying for the Texas Budget

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http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/kut/files/201104/TPPF_Budget_Lobby.png

The Texas Public Policy Foundation has thrown its [Enlarge image \(javascript:void\(0\)\)](#) support behind the House budget

Graphic courtesy the Texas Public Policy Foundation

The [Texas Senate](http://www.senate.state.tx.us/) is expected to vote on its version of the state budget this week. Their plan [spends about \\$12 billion](#) [more than the House](http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/Bill_82/3_Senate/prtHB1_2011_Senate.pdf), including increased spending in education and healthcare. A raucous House/Senate conference committee is expected, as the two sides try to work out the differences.

Republicans in the Texas House say they're not interested in spending more money, especially if that money comes from the state's Economic Stabilization Fund (aka -the Rainy Day fund). The GOP-led Senate says it doesn't have the votes to pass a bill that spends *less* than what senators will consider this week.

As that showdown draws closer, outside groups are continuing their push to make each side hold its ground.

The Texas Public Policy Foundation, a conservative state policy think tank, is launching an ad campaign called "Texans for a Conservative Budget." The [two 60-second video](#) ads and accompanying website have a straightforward message for lawmakers:

- The Texas state budget should reflect the state's fiscal means, and make hard choices on necessary cuts.
- The Texas state budget should not use a penny of the Economic Stabilization Fund.
- The Texas state budget should not burden Texans with new taxes, however presented.

The website also has a form letter people can use to urge their local lawmaker to "make the hard choices on cuts."

The [Center for Public Policy Priorities](http://www.cppp.org/index.php), a progressive state policy think tank, honestly doesn't like either budget. The group has called for lawmakers to empty the Rainy Day Fund and to raise new revenue to pay for healthcare and education priorities. But the CPPP does like the Senate version more than the House, and has been [sending e-mails](#) congratulating the Senate on trying to come up with a better plan than the House.

The Legislative session ends May 30th.

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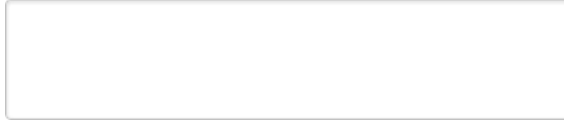
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