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Lawmakers Rub Out Major Ethics Reforms Abbott's Emergency Call Goes Unheeded – Again!

Austin: For the second session in a row, lawmakers largely ignored Gov. Greg Abbott's emergency call for ethics reform. After a modest reform package cleared the Senate early in the session (SB 14), lawmakers splintered it into six separate bills and then proceeded to kill half of them. Lawmakers strangled most of the key ethics provisions sought by reform advocates (including several that sought to reform the Governor's office itself). The snuffed reforms would have reduced the amount lobbyists can spend to entertain officials, stopped legislators and statewide officials from immediately morphing into paid lobbyists, and prohibited the governor from appointing big contributors to state office.

"Lawmakers and the governor failed on ethics reform once again" said TPJ Director Craig McDonald. "After Gov. Abbott declared an ethics emergency, he and the other first responders didn't do enough to save the victim."

"It is disheartening" said Public Citizen's legislative counsel Carol Birch. "While some lawmakers strive hard to pass meaningful ethics reform, those in control pay lip service while actively working to ensure it goes nowhere."

The Fate of 10 Key Ethics Reforms

✓	Officials Convicted of Felony Lose Pension & Forfeit Office	SB 500 Sent to Governor
✓	Officials Required to Disclose Certain Financial Interests in Government Contracts	HB 501 Sent to Governor
✓	Prohibit Former Legislators from Using Leftover Campaign \$\$ to Lobby	HB 505 Sent to Governor
✗	Limit Wining & Dining Spending by Lobbyists	HB/SB 502 Died in House
✗	Prohibit Elected Officials From Lobbying	HB/SB 503 Died in House
✗	Close Revolving Door for Legislators	HB/SB 504 Died in House
✗	Post Personal Financial Statements On the Internet	HB 1377 Died in Senate
✗	Close Revolving Door for Statewide Officials	HB 3882 Died in House
✗	Prohibit Certain Campaign Contributions to Railroad Commissioners and Candidates	HB 464 Died in House
✗	End 'Pay-to-Play' for Gubernatorial Appointments	HB 3305 Died in Senate