

Committee Members

Present

Angie Panzica,
Committee Chair

Kyle Cox

Beatrice Degree

Shana Halvorsen

Sean Jackson, *DRTX*

Kate Layman, *HHSC Title
XIX/Medicaid*

Abby Maddux

Wendy Maurer

Robin Miller, *A&M CDD*

Eric Shahid

Committee Members

Absent

Debbie Carlisle

Guests Present

Dr. Evanthe Collins

Mary Durham

Staff Present

Mary Bagwell

Kai Brewer

Scott Daigle

Linda Logan

Koren Vogel

Call to Order

The Public Policy Committee of the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities convened on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza Houston Medical Center-Galleria Area 2712 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX 77098 as well as virtually using the Zoom platform. Committee Chair Angie Panzica called the meeting to order at 1:36 P.M. A quorum was present.

1. Introductions

Committee members, staff and guests were introduced.

2. Public Comments

No public comment was given.

3. Consideration of August 7, 2025, Minutes

The minutes were reviewed and a correction to the final page changing “Executive Committee” to “Public Policy Committee” was noted.

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MOTION: To approve the minutes of the August 7, 2025, Public Policy Committee Meeting with the correction as noted.

MADE BY: Robin Miller

SECOND: Sean Jackson

The motion **passed** unanimously.

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Panzica reported on the expected absence of Debbie Carlisle.

Panzica shared her quarterly activities including advocacy efforts to get to know the candidates vying for the special election in Congressional District 18. She has also been participating in an education course for students at Baylor College of Medicine on best practices for patients with IDD.

Panzica also shared information that was presented in the TCDD Executive Committee meeting, including reports, continuations, and discussion topics.

5. Member Quarterly Activities

Disability Rights Texas representative Sean Jackson shared information on the Texas Disability Project, which is a coalition sponsored by the Meadows Foundation.

Wendy Maurer shared her connection with the Starry Foundation, which provides resources for families of children with sensory processing disorders and autism spectrum disorders.

Maurer and Shana Halvorsen discussed their recent presentation to the Houston Mayor's Committee on People with Disabilities on special education services and private school vouchers.

Abby Maddux mentioned her recent work on bathroom accessibility.

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6. Selection of Nominating Committee Member

Chair Panzica explained the role of the Nominating Committee and asked for nominations from the Public Policy Committee. Sean Jackson volunteered as the Public Policy Committee Representative to the Nominating Committee.

MOTION: To accept the nomination of Sean Jackson to serve on the Nominating Committee.

MADE BY: Wendy Maurer

SECOND: Eric Shahid

The motion **passed** unanimously.

7. Presentation: Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD

Chair Panzica introduced Dr. Evanthe Collins, Vice President of the IDD Service Division of the Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD. Dr. Collins presented on the Center's work as the Local Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Authority (LIDDA), including supports required of or common to a LIDDA as well as ones unique to Harris County. She covered their strategic priorities, the impact of services on residents of the county, and the growth of programs despite a decrease in funding.

8. Legislative Update

TCDD Public Policy Director Scott Daigle discussed staff activities related to the 89th Texas Legislature's Special Session, legislative interim charges, and planning for the legislative interim.

9. State and Federal Policy Update

Public Policy Director Daigle provided updates on state and federal policy, including education savings accounts, the Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) legislative appropriations request, an upcoming presentation on the specialized telephone assistance program (STAP), turnover in elected state offices, and cuts at the federal Department of Education.

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10. Future Agenda Items

Members were advised to contact Council staff or Chair Panzica if they have suggestions.

11. Other Discussion Items

Members provided topics for future committee discussions. Wendy Maurer recommended a presentation from the Council for Autism Service Providers, and Abby Maddux mentioned special needs assistance.

The next Committee meeting will be held February 5, 2026.

Adjourn

Committee Chair Panzica adjourned the Public Policy Committee at 5:12 PM.