



Rep. Cuellar Texas State Legislature Colonias Legislation

- **SB 1280** This measure prohibits the termination of executors contracts for the sale of real property because of the placement of a lien for the reasonable value of improvements to the property. These contracts are used extensively along the border in disadvantaged communities, and they are often used to take advantage of these residents. This measure will close a loophole that affects buyers who purchase property under such a contract. This bill was sponsored in the House by Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-Laredo). Senate Sponsor, Sen. Peggy Rosson (D-El Paso); **Effective Sept. 1, 1991.** (72nd Legislature).
- **HB 2079** This bill has four objectives: 1.) To provide an alternative for local governments to confront health and safety problems by allowing them to request assistance from the Attorney General in situations where the local prosecutors may not have the resources to prosecute environmental violations and also provides an additional enforcement option by utilizing the office of the attorney general to prosecute cases. 2.) Provides local prosecutors with the incentive to take enforcement actions against developers by giving them the full range of enforcement authority and allowing them to collect attorney's fees when they prevail in these cases. 3.) It provides for clarification of criteria for water and sewage requirements in subdivisions which were not platted and recorded prior to the effective date (September 1, 1989) of the current Model Rules. 4.) Finally, it includes technical amendments to the Local Government Code to make it consistent with related penalty provisions of Ch. 16 of the Water Code. (**Effective Date: September 1, 1993**) (73rd Legislature).
- **SB 1509** colonias are substandard, rural subdivisions lacking adequate water, wastewater, and utility services. The legislation creates colonia self-help centers to provide home finance assistance, counseling, a tool library, instruction, and technical assistance on installation and financing for septic systems. This bill would generally address the need to rehabilitate substandard housing in colonias along the South Texas/Border Regions. It would establish self-help centers in El Paso, Hidalgo, Starr and Webb counties and a center in Cameron County to serve Cameron and Willacy Counties. It maintains the precedent which requires federal law to ensure the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs allocates 10 percent of Community Development Block Grants funds to colonia projects. Senate Author: Judith Zaffirini, et al **Effective: 9-1-95** (74th Legislature).
- **HB 1001** This landmark legislation is designed to remedy the public health and safety crisis caused by the proliferation of residential subdivisions in economically distressed areas lacking minimally acceptable potable water and wastewater or sewer services. The bill confers enforcement authority on the attorney general in affected counties to regulate subdivisions in economically distressed areas, imposes platting requirements and service requirements on persons selling property in economically distressed subdivisions, and

imposes civil and criminal penalties for failure to comply. The bill brings within the regulatory ambit of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission those counties offering utility services and affords remedies to affected ratepayers. Senate sponsor, Judith Zaffirini; **Effective: 8-28-95.** (74th Legislature).

- HB 1982 allows a colonia that is annexed by a municipality to remain eligible for five years after the date of annexation for the same types of assistance it would have received prior to annexation. The bill allows a colonia to be annexed into a municipality without losing access to colonia specific program funds. **05/24/1999** Author: Hill | Cuellar, et al. | Sponsor: Truan (76th Legislature).
- SB 1421 would make revisions concerning the provision of water and wastewater services to colonias, enforcement and compliance with laws to limit colonia proliferation, and coordination of colonia policies among state agencies and local governments. The act also amends subdivision platting requirements for economically distressed counties to authorize a commissioner's court to grant a delay or variance from certain platting requirements. This bill expands the list of instances in which certain public and private entities may serve or connect land in economically distressed areas with water, sewer, electricity, gas, or other utility services. **06/17/1999** Author: Lucio, et al. | Sponsor: Cuellar, et al. (76th Legislature).