Bill Impact Summaries

Human Resources-Related Bills

H.B. 121 **S.B. 563**	Employment Benefits
Summary	The bills provide that: (1) a city may not adopt or enforce an ordinance, order, rule, regulation, or policy requiring any terms of employment that exceed or conflict with federal or state law relating to any form of employment leave, hiring practices, employment benefits, scheduling practices, or other terms of employment; (2) any provision of an ordinance, order, rule, regulation, or policy that violates (1), above, is void and unenforceable; and (3) the provision in (1), above, does not apply to minimum wage or a contract relating to the terms of employment voluntarily entered into between a private employer or entity and a governmental entity.
Impact to Denton	As written, the bills would not allow the City of Denton to offer employment benefits greater than those allowed by state or federal law. The City of Denton faces extensive public and private-sector competition for qualified employees within the DFW area and relies on an attractive benefits package to recruit and retain employees. Benefits programs that allow the City of Denton to attract and retain qualified employees, such as paid parental leave or tuition reimbursement, would be prohibited under this legislation.
Request	Oppose this bill as written. Support an amendment that guarantees the City of Denton may provide competitive employee benefits that go beyond the state or federal minimum.

H.B. 471 **S.B. 799**	Public Safety Personnel Leave/Benefits
Summary	The bills provide numerous requirements relating to public safety personnel leave of absence and benefits for an illness or injury related to a person's line of work. Notably, the bills states that a firefighter, peace officer, or EMT who suffers an acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) or stroke resulting in disability or death is presumed to have suffered the disability or death during the course and scope of employment if they were engaged in a situation that involved stressful or strenuous physical activity and the heart attack or stroke occurred not later than 24 hours after the end of a shift in which they were engaging in the activity described above. A similar provision in S.B. 799 extends critical illness benefits to retirees who experience a heart attack or stroke 5 years after retirement.
Impact to Denton	Both bills create a light duty requirement for up to a year; however, the bills are unclear if the City can deny or challenge the necessity for the light duty in a rebuttal. This is important as illness, injuries, and disabilities are uniquely different and may not require a full year of light duty. Both bills also create a new statutory provision that, should a public safety officer suffer a heart attack or stroke within 24 hours of a shift that included "strenuous" or "stressful" activity, it is presumed to have been caused at the workplace. This blanket provision does not take into account events taking place after the work shift that could

	more directly result in said heart attack or stroke (such as exercise, personal stressors, or other relevant factors). H.B. 471, as written, appears to confer lifetime income benefits to employees of the City whose impairment or disability is the result of service as a volunteer first responder for some other jurisdiction. This is a matter in which the City has no control and would be paying the costs for service that does not benefit the citizens of Denton. S.B. 799 requires that leave be part of a meet and confer agreement which removes the right of both the City and the local police associations to negotiate a mutually agreeable alternative within our Meet and Confer Agreement. The bill also creates a "critical illness" benefit that would be extended to any retirees if they experience the onset of a heart attack, stroke, and/or one of a large number of cancers. Like the 24-hour presumption addressed above, this blanket provision does not take into account events taking place after the date of retirement that directly result in said heart attack stroke, or cancer (such as significant lifestyle changes, substance abuse, exposure to hazardous chemicals, etc.).
Request	Amend both bills to clarify a right of rebuttal by the City for any guaranteed leave or benefit. Amend S.B. 799 to allow the City to negotiate changes to this part of the statute through a Meet and Confer Agreement.

H.B. 79 Employment Leave for Domestic Violence Victims

Summary	This bill, among other things, provides that an employer shall not discharge, discriminate or retaliate against an employee for taking time off to participate in legal proceedings when the employee is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The same is prohibited when said victim seeks legal relief such as a restraining order. The bill also provides that reasonable accommodations shall be made for a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, who requests an accommodation for the safety of the victim while at work.
Impact to Denton	The City of Denton supports assisting victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking and supports reasonably accommodating their safety needs.
Request	Support this bill and, to ensure the bill is consistently applied, seek clarification on the amount of time off from work that shall be provided to victims.