

2011 SESSION: Raw milk in space?

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While Texas residents anxiously await the opening of the 82nd Texas Legislature to find out if we get to keep calling Grandma on our cell while stuck in traffic, there are a few other bills already filed during the pre-filing process that we might want to keep a steady eye on.

Immigration issues will continue to be a hot-topic, with several voter identification measures already filed, including HB 112 by Rep. Patricia Harless (R-Spring) which would require election officials to verify residency of everyone who shows up to vote. The downfall? Already long lines at some polling places could be massive by the time all the information is confirmed. Also under the immigration umbrella is HB 17, authored by Rep. Debbie Riddle (R-Tomball), which would create the offense of Criminal Trespass by Illegal Alien. If someone is committing a criminal trespass violation, does it really matter if that person is a legal resident of Texas or not?

State Sen. Jeff Wentworth, a Republican from San Antonio, wants to do away with straight-party voting in the state. We would rather the state do away with any party designations for local elections. You can bet neither ever happens.

One bill that might get an early approval is HB 75 by State Rep. Dan Flynn (R-Van), which would allow raw (unpasteurized) milk to be sold directly to the public. Old-timers will tell you it is good stuff, but we can't imagine there being a huge demand for raw milk. Still, this bill could sail through both chambers.

The one bill that should get us most excited, however, is SB 115 by State Sen. Carlos Uresti (D-San Antonio). State Sen. Uresti wants a bill that limits the liability for space flight activities. Really. Apparently there is a spaceport planned in Uresti's district, to be built by the founder of Amazon.com.

Maybe, just maybe, we can take some unpasteurized milk with us on a space adventure soon! But we may have limited liability coverage on the trip.