



# Philip Cortez

House of Representatives District HD-117

Democrat

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This legislator voted constitutionally on **17%** of the votes shown below.

### CPH: Estimated cost per household.

★ Pro-liberty    ✗ Anti-liberty    ? Did not Vote    CPH    Vote

**1. HB1243 Illegal Voting Penalty (Passed 86 to 56 on 5/28/2023).** Would increase the criminal penalty for illegal voting from a Class A misdemeanor to either a state jail felony for attempted illegal voting or second-degree felony for illegal voting. **No** ✗

**2. SB4 Illegal Immigration (Passed 83 to 61 on 11/14/2023).** Establishes penalties for unauthorized entry or reentry into the state by individuals classified as "aliens" under federal law. **No** ✗

**3. SB1158 Taxpayer-funded Events (Passed 96 to 41 on 5/6/2023).** Expands eligibility for funding under the Major Events Reimbursement Program by amending the Government Code to classify each series of World Cup games in a designated market area as separate, single events. **Yes** ✗

**4. SB3 Border Security (Passed 84 to 59 on 11/14/2024).** Allocates \$1.54 billion for border security over two years, funding law enforcement and border barriers. **No** ✗

**5. HB2 Criminal Penalties for Smuggling (Passed 90 to 53 on 5/30/2023).** Strengthens penalties for smuggling, stash houses, and evading arrest, imposing mandatory minimums of 10 years and allowing consecutive sentences for related crimes. **Yes** ★

**6. SB25 Government Nursing Scholarship (Passed 146 to 1 on 5/23/2024).** Enacts government support for nursing-related postsecondary education, including scholarships to nursing students, loan repayment assistance to nurses and nursing faculty, and grants to nursing education programs. **Yes** ✗



## TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD BASED ON THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

**Rep. Philip Cortez**  
Lifetime Score: 13%

**TX Scorecard 2023-2**  
2023 1st Special Session Score

The Legislative Scorecard is a nationwide educational program of The John Birch Society. Its purpose is to create an informed electorate on how state legislators are voting. The Scorecard is nonpartisan; it does not promote any candidate or political party. Bills are selected for their constitutional implications and cost to the taxpayers.

**Please share this Scorecard in your district to inform people about your legislator's record on key votes.**

U.S. Constitution, Amendment I --- 11 C.F.R. §114(4)(c)(4) --- 616 F.2d 45 (2d Cir. 1980)

The following scorecard lists several key votes in the Texas Legislature in 2023 and ranks state representatives and senators based on their fidelity to (U.S.) constitutional and limited-government principles.



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### The Constitution

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# Bill Descriptions for the Votes that Affect You

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## 1. Illegal Voting Penalty

HB1243 would increase the criminal penalty for illegal voting from a Class A misdemeanor to either a state jail felony for attempted illegal voting or second-degree felony for illegal voting.

The Texas State House of Representatives passed HB1243 on May 28, 2023 by a vote of 86 to 56. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because increasing the penalty for voter fraud is a step in protecting election integrity. States should do all they can to protect the ballot box.

## 2. Illegal Immigration

SB4 establishes penalties for unauthorized entry or reentry into the state by individuals classified as "aliens" under federal law, with penalties escalating for repeat offenses or previous deportations. Courts can order violators to return to their country of origin under specific conditions.

The Texas State House of Representatives passed SB4 on November 14, 2023 by a vote of 83 to 61. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because this bill takes a strong stance against illegal reentry, reinforcing immigration laws that protect American sovereignty. By imposing penalties and curbing unlawful migration, SB4 helps counter policies that facilitate mass migration and undermine our Republic's constitutional foundations. It also safeguards the rule of law by ensuring that immigration-law violations are met with consequences, rather than leniency, which would further erode border security and national integrity.

## 3. Taxpayer-funded Events

SB1158 expands eligibility for funding under the Major Events Reimbursement Program by amending the Government Code to classify each series of World Cup games in a designated market area as separate, single events.

The Texas State House of Representatives passed SB1158 on May 6, 2023 by a vote of 96 to 41. We have assigned pluses to the nays because privately-owned billion-dollar entities such as the World Cup should be expected to pay for their own facilities and events, which they can more than afford. Forcing people to furnish proliferate amounts of taxpayer money when attending games or concerts to fund crony, corporate-sponsored projects violates their individual liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

## 4. Border Security

SB3 allocates \$1.54 billion for border security over two years, funding law enforcement and border barriers. It includes \$40 million for enhanced law enforcement in Liberty County's Colony Ridge. Funds cannot be used for land acquired through eminent domain or for barriers on such land.

The Texas State Senate passed SB3 on November 14, 2023 by a vote of 84 to 59. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because the bill strengthens border security and upholds American sovereignty. By funding enforcement and infrastructure, it counters federal policies that undermine the Constitution, deters illegal entry, and reinforces the rule of law to minimize unlawful immigration. This bill addresses the challenges of illegal immigration by safeguarding the nation's borders and supporting policies that enhance national security rather than weaken it.

## 5. Criminal Penalties for Smuggling

HB2 strengthens penalties for smuggling, stash houses, and evading arrest, imposing mandatory minimums of 10 years and allowing consecutive sentences for related crimes to deter repeat offenses and protect vulnerable populations.

The Texas State House of Representatives passed HB2 on May 30, 2023 by a vote of 90 to 53. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because by imposing harsher penalties on criminal activities that endanger communities and exploit vulnerable individuals, HB2 prioritizes public safety and accountability. Additionally, it also sends a strong message that Texas will not tolerate crimes that undermine border security and the rule of law.

## 6. Government Nursing Scholarship

SB25 enacts government support for nursing-related postsecondary education, including scholarships to nursing students, loan repayment assistance to nurses and nursing faculty, and grants to nursing education programs.

The Texas State House of Representatives passed SB25 on May 23, 2023 by a vote of 146 to 1. We have assigned pluses to the nays because taxpayer-funded scholarships based on occupation or career choice amounts to government interference in the free market by picking winners and losers. Some individuals receive assistance, while others do not. Taxpayers should not carry the cost of funding personal education, and government should not interfere in such personal decisions. Allocating funds based on specific criteria infringes on personal freedom and violates the 14th Amendment's equal protection principles.