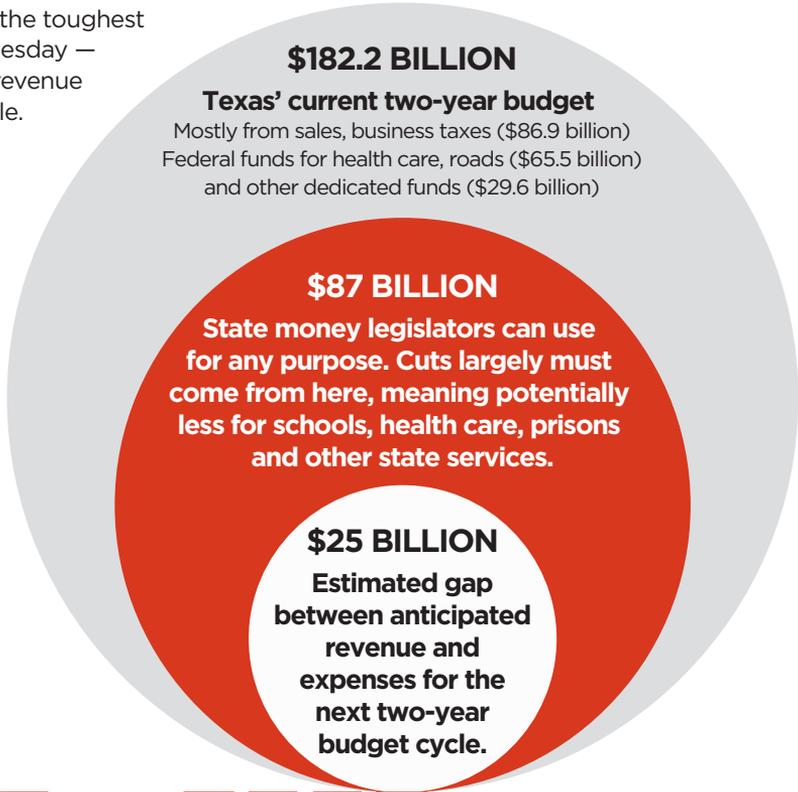


The Legislature will confront what's likely to be the toughest fiscal crisis in Texas history when it convenes Tuesday — a gap of up to \$25 billion between anticipated revenue and expenses for the next two-year budget cycle.

**TEXAS RANKS 50TH IN PER-CAPITA STATE SPENDING**, so some “fat” recently trimmed by other states never existed here.

**THE CUTS WILL BE CONCENTRATED** on select areas, because bond proceeds and constitutionally dedicated funds can't be used for other purposes.

**LAWMAKERS MAY RELUCTANTLY** use some rainy day funds and raise fees. While agencies have been ordered to cut 10 percent across the board, those reductions alone won't be enough to bridge the gap. Cuts are likely to be deep enough for ordinary Texans to notice.



# How do you cut \$25 billion from Texas' budget?

Some programs already are being targeted, but it's not yet enough to close the big deficit:

**STATE PRISONS**  
 A Sugar Land unit is likely to be closed, and all others could have fewer guards and support personnel. Two youth lockups could also be closed.

**ALTERNATIVE INCARCERATION**  
 Private prisons with 2,200 beds and 625 beds in substance abuse wards would close under the prison system's cut scenario.

**AIDS MEDICATIONS**  
 If lawmakers don't add \$23 million, Texas will cap enrollment or stop covering some drugs, potentially threatening 15,000 people with the disease.

**CLASSROOM SIZES**  
 Classes could balloon if lawmakers scrap the 22-student limit in kindergarten through fourth grade. Up to 12,000 teaching jobs could disappear.

**COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID**  
 At least two-thirds of the nearly 60,000 students who apply each year would be turned down. A program that helps 30,000 private college students could take a big hit.

**FREEWAYS AND INTERSTATES**  
 The Transportation Department could freeze building new roads. Money left would leave the agency only enough to fill potholes and check bridge safety.

**MENTALLY DISABLED AND MENTALLY ILL**  
 A state agency could close two of 13 institutions, once known as state schools for the disabled. A state mental hospital could be privatized.

**SMALL AGENCIES**  
 While all agencies will take a hit, smaller ones could be eliminated.

**LAYOFFS**  
 More than 9,000 jobs could be eliminated.