



Mental Health, School Safety and more from the 86th

Upcoming Events:

El Paso and the 86th Legislature

August 5th, 2019

Texas Tribune Event - [RSVP here](#)

Tax Free Weekend

August 9-11, 2019

Take advantage of the sales and savings to stock up for the upcoming school year!

[Click here for details](#)

Save the Date

September 4, 2019

Upcoming Eastside Summit - an open discussion forum with your elected officials. More information to follow.

Keeping Our Schools and Students Safe

Several House Bills were passed to decrease the stigma around mental health issues and increase the availability of resources to students who need help.

In memory of the lives lost at Santa Fe High School

Regarding the frequency of recent school shootings, **Senate Bill 11** strives to advance protection in both physical and psychological factors for students and faculty. The bill allows for public school districts to put in place an annual school safety allotment; this essentially provides room in the budget for necessary training.

Factors of this plan must include:

- Chain of command
- Access to a telephone for teachers within each classroom
- Particular attention to psychological needs and individuals with physical disabilities.

Senate Bill 11 focuses on the Texas Mental Health Care Consortium. This bill expands child psychiatric needs and mental health care through telehealth. In addition, it expands mental health resources through the workforce, specifically training and funding.

The **SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN:**

- ✓ STRENGTHENS CAMPUS SECURITY
- ✓ IMPROVES EMERGENCY RESPONSE
- ✓ HELPS KEEP STUDENTS & TEACHERS SAFE



House Bills 18 & 19

House Bills 18 and 19 multiplies student access to mental health resources. The legislation also requires mental health professionals to inform educators on the proper response to psychological needs, and increases available training for school staff.

The Texas Legislature appropriated nearly eight billion dollars to aid those struggling with behavioral and substance abuse issues. These funds will support training programs to increase knowledge and awareness of resources available to students.

Bringing Justice for Victims Across Texas

The Texas Legislature is extending efforts to end human trafficking, protect victims of sexual violence and strengthen our justice system.

The Stop Human Trafficking Bill

Senate Bill 20 immediately intensifies consequences for online sex trafficking and child sex trafficking, in addition to online promotion of prostitution. This bill implements laws targeting businesses which profit from such practices. In addition, the penalties for buyers are magnified. The bill also strives to protect the innocence of potential victims and establishes a program to shelter the victims who are under eighteen. Lastly, the bill provides a grant program to provide education for law enforcement, teaching them how to recognize signs of sex trafficking.

Senator Joan Huffman and Representative Senfronia Thompson have worked tirelessly over the past several years to bring an end to human trafficking in Texas, and I am proud to serve alongside 2 such influential women.



House Bill 616 and **House Bill 3809** extend the allotted time to report a sexual assault. HB 616 applies to *any* sexual assault. HB 3809 pertains to victims of childhood sexual assault, allowing for reports to happen up to 30 years after the incident.

House Bill 616 resolves the issue of costly procedures for the health care of victims. Health care providers will now be reimbursed for medical exams, which also simplifies the proper procedures for law enforcement. In order for this expense to be covered the victim must report the assault within 120 hours.

House Bill 3809 sheds light on how frequently children are sexually abused. The average age that a victim brings forward their trauma is 52, which currently is much too late to report the crime. This bill allows for the crime to be reported up to 30 years after the incident.

The Lavinia Masters Act

House Bill 8, by Representative Victoria Neave, known as the Lavinia Masters Act, ends the backlog of Texas Rape Kits. HB 8 will ensure kits are tested in a timely manner, sending a strong, unified message to all victims of sexual violence:

YOU MATTER

\$56.6 million was provided in the budget to increase resources for a proper response to accusations of sexual assault, which will aid the proper timeliness of processing a rape kit.



It is an honor to call Representative Neave, Dallas, a colleague and friend and I am proud to have co-authored this legislation.

