



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DeWAYNE BURNS
House District 58

STATE OF TEXAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



FALL 2017

Dear Friends,

First let me thank you for the opportunity to serve you in the Texas House of Representatives. It is an honor to be your state representative, and I am excited to share with you some important legislation that we passed this year to benefit the folks of Bosque and Johnson Counties, as well as all Texans.

There are new laws on the books which will help secure our border, protect our second amendment rights, and expand the rights of private property owners. We also added protections for the unborn, eased the burden of healthcare for retired teachers, and took the first steps to reducing the skyrocketing property taxes that are crippling hardworking families across the state.

Please feel free to take a few minutes to read through the rest of this newsletter at your leisure. While it only provides a snapshot of the legislature's work in 2017, I believe it is representative of our efforts to deliver real, tangible results on important issues along with one of the most fiscally conservative budgets in Texas history.

Aside from guiding state policy, one of the most important functions of a state representative is to provide assistance to constituents in dealing with state agencies. Unfortunately, we cannot compel an agency to act, but we can make sure that your case does not fall through the cracks, and that you receive prompt service. If you, or someone you know, is having difficulty with a state agency, please contact my office at any time.

I also welcome any and all feedback about issues that impact you and your family. Hearing from neighbors in our community is crucial to understanding the challenges we face and to creating legislation to directly address those challenges.

Thank you again for the honor of serving you in the Texas House of Representatives. It is truly my privilege.

God bless,

DeWayne Burns



CAPITOL

P.O. BOX 2910
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768
(512) 463-0538

JOHNSON COUNTY

115 S. MAIN STREET,
STE 202
CLEBURNE, TEXAS 76033
(817) 645-3685

BOSQUE COUNTY

115 N. AVENUE D
CLIFTON, TEXAS 76634

COMMITTEES

NATURAL RESOURCES

—

HOMELAND SECURITY
& PUBLIC SAFETY

—

HOUSE RULES
& RESOLUTIONS

85th Session Budget

This past May, the 85th Regular Session came to a conclusion with the passage of yet another conservative state budget. The two budgets that I have played a part in writing during my tenure in the State House have been the most conservative in Texas history, and we are pleased to report that this year's budget passed with the support of 90% of my colleagues.

Even though we began the budget-writing process in January with a substantial revenue shortfall, we finished with a balanced budget that is well below all constitutional spending limits and

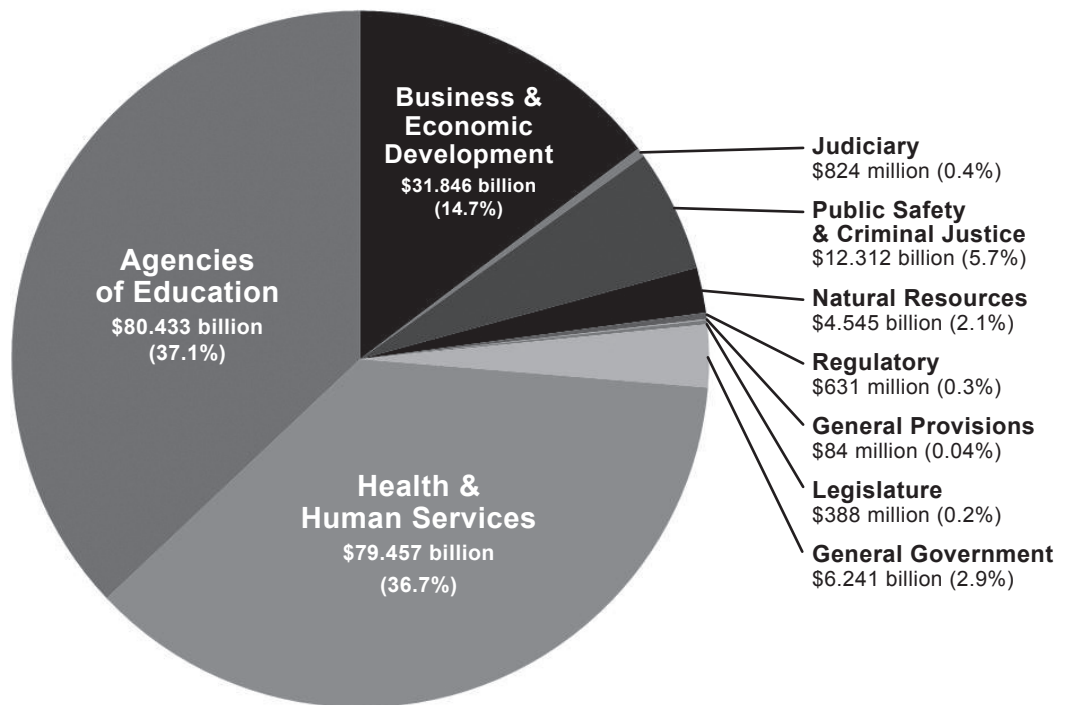
keeps increases under population growth plus inflation. At the same time, we ensured that we provided the funding necessary to address the core functions of state government as well as some of the serious challenges facing Texas families.

With this graph, you can see the state's funding priorities for the 2018-2019 State Budget. I am especially proud of the funding appropriated for our retired teachers healthcare program and border security.

2018-19 All Funds

★ \$216.758 billion ★

NOTES:
 (1) Includes certain anticipated supplemental spending adjustments if applicable.
 (2) Excludes Interagency Contracts.
 (3) Biennial change and percentage change are calculated on actual amounts before rounding. Therefore, figure totals may not sum due to rounding.



Border Security & Public Safety

One of the most important jobs of the federal government is to protect and secure our borders. Unfortunately, Washington has neglected its duty in recent years, so Texas has stepped up to the plate to take matters into our own hands. As a member of the Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee in the Texas House of Representatives, I have been intimately involved with the issue of border security since 2015. This year the budget provided additional funds to recruit and hire 250 more state troopers in order to expand on the \$840 million border security plan that we passed in the last legislative session.

Included in the budget was also \$25 million to purchase bulletproof vests for our police and law enforcement officers around Texas. It is equally important that we both secure our borders and protect law enforcement who put their lives on the line to create safe communities.

While ensuring that appropriate funding is provided for border security, there were a number of bills that came through this committee that deal with protecting second amendments rights. The following legislation went into effect on September 1 of this year:

- *House Bill 435, of which I was a co-author, will allow volunteer services personnel who currently carry handguns to continue carrying handguns during the performance of their duties.*
- *House Bill 873 clarifies that a peace officer or special investigator is permitted to carry their weapon in public establishments while off duty. I was also a co-author of this legislation.*
- *And finally I sponsored Senate Bill 16.*
 - *This legislation eliminates all application fees for first-time or permit renewal applicants for a handgun license in Texas. Before this legislation, a handgun license was \$140. It will now be \$40. This includes an open carry license. Renewals for these licenses were \$70 and will now also be \$40. A handgun license of \$140 was one of the highest fees in the country, with only Illinois and Arkansas being higher, so I'm pleased we've finally slashed that fee by over 70%.*

Unfunded Mandates & Your Taxes

One of my highest priorities this past session was House Joint Resolution 73. HJR 73 addressed the epidemic of unfunded mandates being handed down to municipalities and local governments from the state legislature. These unfunded mandates come in the form of directives to local governments that require some level of revenue expenditure. While the state often passes laws and regulations that require money to implement, many times they do not allocate sufficient funding from state funds to pay for these mandates. While sometimes unintentional, these unfunded mandates often require local governments to raise tax revenue to cover expenses.



Members of the Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee of the 85th Regular Session. This is my second term serving on this committee and I am proud of the work we have done to further protect Texans across the state.

HJR 73 addressed this issue by requiring the state to allocate sufficient funds for all mandates imposed on local governments. This would be a crucial tool in reducing taxes and ease the weight of ever increasing taxes that continue to impact citizens across our state. While HJR 73 was ultimately successful in passing through the Texas House, the Texas Senate chose not to address this legislation. I will continue to fight to ease the tax burden for the citizens in our community in every way possible, and will also pursue this legislation again in the future.



We were successful in passing HJR 73, a resolution concerning unfunded mandates, out of the Texas House. While the Texas Senate did not pursue this property tax relief measure, I will continue to advocate for this important legislation that will lower property taxes and directly benefit our local governments.

District-Focused Bills

This session, we passed two bills that are specific to House District 58.

HB 1570 addresses the issue of unsafe vehicle operations through the City of Alvarado. This bill allows the Alvarado Police Department to conduct vehicle inspections to ensure our communities have safer roads. While this enforcement largely addresses issues such as trucks that are overweight, over height or in disrepair, it is an important tool in keeping our streets safe.

I also sponsored Senate Bill 1732 and worked hand-in-hand with Senator Brian Birdwell to ensure its passage. This bill renames a section of Interstate Highway 35W in Johnson County between its intersection with U.S. Highway 67 and East Hidden Creek Parkway as the "Deputy Clifton Taylor Memorial Highway" in honor of Clifton Taylor, a member of the Johnson County Sheriff's office who tragically lost his life in the line of duty. We felt strongly that it is important to remember and salute those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in order to protect our community.

Article V Convention of States

In the last few years, we have heard from a number of constituents and others around the state who support calling an Article V Convention of States to consider possible changes to the U.S. Constitution in order to reign in federal overreach. I began working with supporters of this movement my first term in office and this year was a joint sponsor for Senate Joint Resolution 2 which expresses Texas' commitment to this idea. Only time

will tell if it garners enough support in other states to actually call a convention, but one thing is for sure; the all-too-frequent departures from the Constitution by the federal government are destroying the rule of law. We must use every means available to end the federal government's overreach and restore the authority of local communities across the nation to make decisions that are in the best interest of their citizens.

Conservative Values: Protecting The Most Vulnerable Texans

I have a firmly held belief that as a Christian, I have an obligation to stay true to Biblical principles and the conservative values that we hold dear in every aspect of my life – particularly when it comes to creating policies that will have a direct impact on the lives of others. Because of this conviction, I supported a number of pro-life and anti-human trafficking initiatives this year that are aimed at protecting the most vulnerable members of our society.

Alternatives to Abortion

Included in this year's budget was an additional \$18.3 million for the state's Alternatives to Abortion program. Additionally, Health and Human Services is authorized to spend an additional \$20 million for more providers and resources to this program. The program itself offers a network of crisis pregnancy centers, adoption centers, and maternity homes across Texas to provide support for women in need.

Protecting Vulnerable Women

House Bill 2858 was a key piece of pro-life legislation that our office specifically filed to defend the unborn and protect innocent victims of human trafficking networks. I added this legislation as an amendment to House Bill 2552 which passed unanimously on May 11 and also focused on the growing issue of sex-trafficking. My amendment creates criminal penalties for compelling a minor to seek an abortion through force or the threat of force, as well as for killing the unborn child of a minor who is being trafficked against her will. This legislation will protect some of the most vulnerable women in our state and save innocent lives as well.

Reporting Requirements for Abortion Providers

I also co-authored House Bill 2962 which requires hospitals, emergency care facilities, and abortion clinics to give a quarterly report detailing any complication or injury resulting from an abortion. The current typical practice is to report a complication or injury resulting from an abortion as a general complication of maternal health. This bill would report these complications or injuries as specifically related to abortions. When we separate abortion complications from maternal health statistics, we get a better snapshot of maternal health and the after-effects of abortion in Texas.

Therapies for Disabled Children

In 2015, a number of cuts were made in the funding for Medicaid therapy rates for providers who work with disabled children across the state. House Bill 25 will completely restore the rates and allow disabled children to continue to receive therapies that help them eat, walk and even communicate.

The Texas House unanimously voted, 141-0, to use funds from the Governor's office, instead of using \$70 million in Rainy Day Funds, to restore these rates. As always, Governor Abbott is able to call in the Legislature to replenish these funds. This not only is fiscally responsible, but it also keeps intact the Rainy Day Fund that should be used for just that, a rainy day.



We worked closely with the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, Texans for Life Coalitions, and Texas Alliance for Life on the anti-human trafficking amendment added to HB 2552.



I take great care to meet with fellow representatives and express to them our conservative values and the problems facing members of the District 58 community. This discussion is important in understanding how we can work together to make Texas a better place to live, work and visit.

Special Session

On July 18th, Governor Abbott called a Special Legislative Session to ensure that the Legislature had more time to pass pertinent legislation regarding our medical boards, voter fraud, protecting the rights of property owners from forced annexation, and pro-life issues. I wanted to share a few highlights below from this past Special Legislative Session.



Local input is absolutely necessary on legislation we see throughout the legislative session. I appreciate the Mayor of Joshua, Joe Hollarn, and Cleburne Mayor Scott Cain for taking time to share their thoughts on the issues our cities are facing.



I was lucky to have Ryan Evetts, a constituent from our district, join me as our "State Rep for a Day" on May 22nd. I loved having his help on the House Floor!

Sunset

The Governor's highest priority for the special session of the 85th Legislature passed the House unanimously. Senate Bills 20 and 60 remedy the Sunset issues affecting five state agencies - the Texas Medical Board, the Texas State Board of Examiners and Psychologists, the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists, the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, and the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners. Without passing this legislation, these agencies would have been abolished September 1st of this year.

School Finance and TRS Care

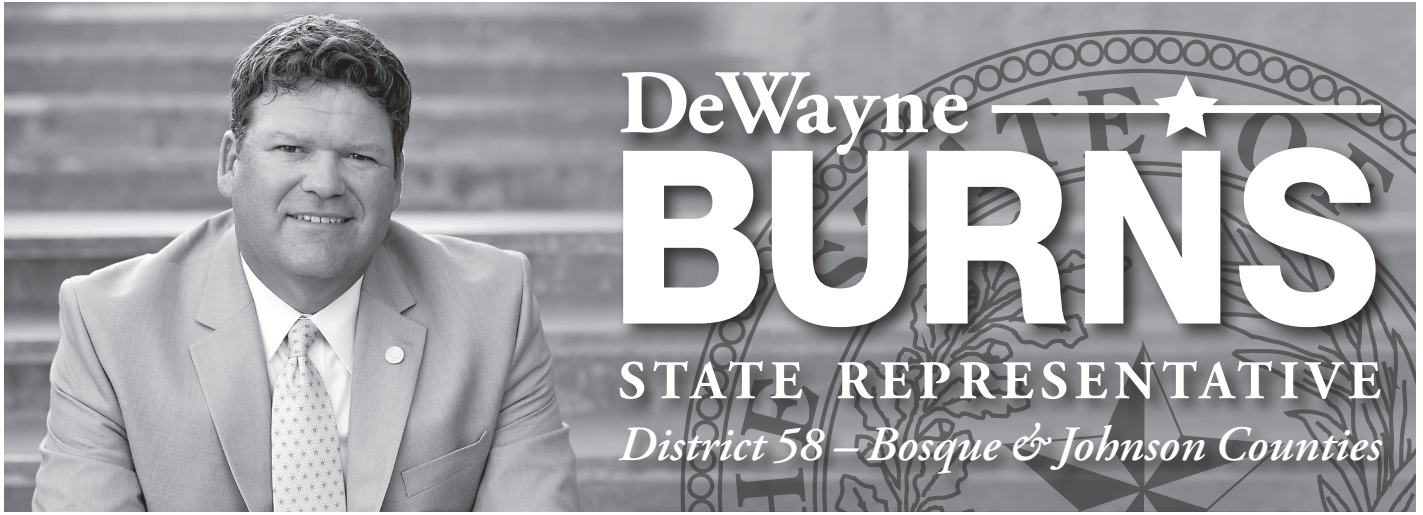
House Bill 21 is a multi-faceted bill that will greatly improve our local public schools and the teacher retirement program. In terms of school finance reform, \$351 million will be allotted from the General Revenue Fund to finance the following:

- \$150 million to fund financial hardship grants relating to the continuation of Additional State Aide for Tax Reduction (ASATR) for school districts who would see a substantial reduction in funding
- \$60 million to fund payments to open enrollment charter schools
- \$60 million to support the existing foundation school program debt allotment
- \$41 million to fund the increase in the small district adjustment and \$40 million to fund grant programs for services to students with autism and dyslexia.

TRS-Care, the health care system for retired teachers, has been a huge issue facing the State of Texas the past few years, and we took action to fix those mounting issues for our retired school employees. House Bill 21 appropriates \$212.7 million to help reduce the deficit that the group insurance fund faces and keep our retired teachers from facing dramatic increases in their premiums. Additionally, House Bill 21 creates the Texas Commission on Public School Finance, which will study, develop, and recommend improvements to our current school finance systems.

Important Special Session Legislation

- **Voter Fraud-** Senate Bill 5 will help prevent and prosecute mail ballot fraud by giving local election judges and prosecutors tools to properly identify those who seek to disrupt our democratic system.
- **Private Property Rights -** Senate Bill 6 will end forced annexation in Texas. Instead of allowing municipalities to overtake surrounding communities, this legislation allows citizens to have a voice in the annexation process.
- **Additionally, House Bill 7 will require any municipality that imposed a tree mitigation fee for removal of a tree on personal property to allow that person to apply for a tree planting credit in order to offset the fee.**
- **Pro-Life Issues-** House Bill 13 will expand the reporting requirements for complications resulting in abortion procedures, as to create and promote policies that continue to reduce abortions and keep women safe.



2017 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Official Business
 STATE of TEXAS
 State Penalty
 For Private Use

PRSR1 STD
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Austin, Texas
 Permit 2803

Austin, Texas 78768-2910
 P.O. Box 2910

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DEWAYNE BURNS



REP. DEWAYNE BURNS

Capitol Office: Room E1.322
 P.O. Box 2910 • Austin, Texas 78768
 (512) 463-0538 • (512) 463-0897 *fax*

Johnson County Office:
 115 S. Main Street, Suite 202
 Cleburne, Texas 76033
 (817) 645-3685 • (817) 645-3690 *fax*

Bosque County Office:
 115 N. Avenue D • Clifton, Texas 76634

District58.Burns@house.texas.gov

Want to stay updated on what's happening in Austin? Follow me on Facebook.

★ HELPFUL NUMBERS ★

- Aging & Disability Services, TX Dept. 512-438-3011
- Child, Disabled & Elder Abuse Hotline..... 800-252-5400
- Child Support Info & Payment Inquiry..... 800-252-8014
- Consumer Protection 800-621-0508
- Crime Victims' Services 800-983-9933
- Environmental Quality, TX Commission on 512-239-1000
- Housing & Community Affairs, TX Dept. 512-475-3800
- Income Assistance & Food Assistance..... 877-787-8999
- Injured Workers' Hotline 800-252-7031
- Legal Referral Service, State Bar 800-252-9690
- Medicaid 800-252-8263
- Medicare 800-633-4227
- Nursing Home Complaints & Info 800-458-9858
- Public Safety, TX Dept. 512-424-2000
- Roadside Emergency 800-525-5555
- Workforce Commission (Unemployment)..... 800-939-6631