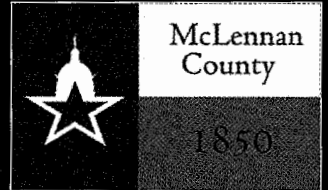




Charles "Doc" Anderson

Capitol News Report

Texas House District 56



Fall 2008 Volume 7

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



CHARLES "DOC" ANDERSON District 56

Howdy Friend –

Well, the long and numerous campaigns of 2008 are over – and now is the time for elected officials to demonstrate that your concerns are listened to and will be worked on to the very best of our ability.

Each new session of the state Legislature takes on a personality of its own. Going forward in the 81st legislative session, here are some of the things we'll be talking about in Austin – and some of the legislation I will file – that may be important to you, your family, and the vitality of this great state:

- ★ Enhancing border security
- ★ Protecting families and children from the dangers of drugs
- ★ Reforming margins tax (Franchise tax)
- ★ Enhancing clean energy and air quality
- ★ Improving education

In this pre-session newsletter, I'd like to discuss some of these issues and others coming up that we will face in the 140 days in Austin next year. Several state agencies are up for renewal in the 81st Legislature, including the Texas Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Safety, the Texas Department of Agriculture, among others. These are "must pass" bills, meaning that the state faces shutdown in these areas if we can't reach common ground. We can expect some long days putting together agency reforms that will hopefully help them serve you better.

Also included in this newsletter is a survey questionnaire to get **your opinions** on various issues facing our state. I would greatly appreciate your filling out the survey and returning it to our office.

It is my job and my sincere desire to carry your views to Austin. I value your input on these vital state issues. Please feel free to add comments about other issues that concern you as well.

It is a great honor and privilege for me to serve as your State Representative. McLennan County is a great place to live and work and raise our families and I want to keep working hard to insure that it stays that way.

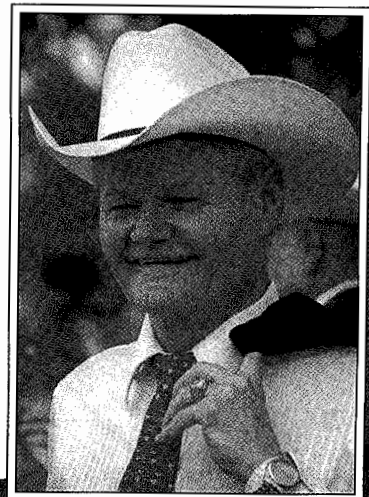
Thank you for all that you do for our community and state.

God Bless Texas!

Sincerely,

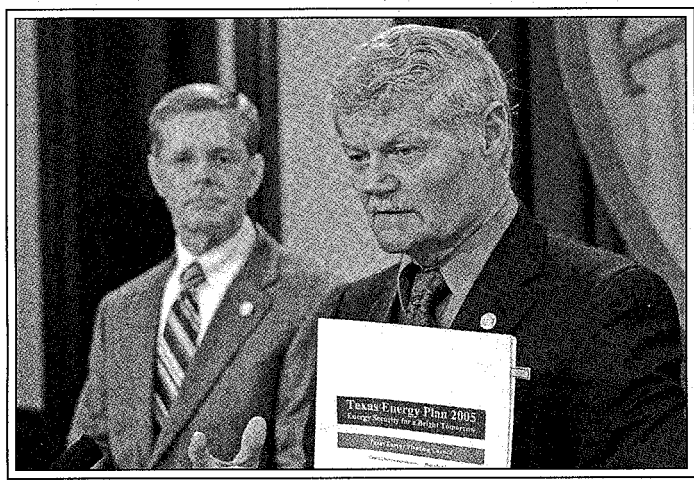
Doc

DISTRICT PHONE: (254) 754-3892
CAPITOL PHONE: (512) 463-0135
<http://www.house.state.tx.us>





A LOOK AHEAD TO THE



Rep. Anderson, a member of the Select Committee on Electric Generation Capacity and Environmental Effects, speaks at a Capitol news conference on wind energy with Rep. Phil King (District 61, Weatherford), Chairman of the House Committee on Regulated Industries.

TEXAS IN THE CURRENT ECONOMY

Although the economic outlook is grim for many parts of the nation and government budgets have been thrown into chaos, a review of financial and economic structures in Texas reveals a significantly better picture as a whole.

In Fiscal Year 2008, the gross state product grew by 4.1 percent, compared to 1.5 percent for the national economy. Also, in the 12 months preceding September 2008, Texas gained almost 248,000 jobs, more than that of the next highest 14 states combined. Texas's unemployment rate, currently at 5.1 percent, has been lower than the national rate for 21 consecutive months. Home foreclosures in Texas are right now running about 1 in every 1,000, compared to ratios in other states of 1 in every 100 to 200.

Texas's track record of low taxes, no personal income tax, a stronger economy, and a constitutional ban on deficit spending appear to be the key factors in positioning Texas more favorably than most other states when it comes to budget management.

TEXAS LEADS THE NATION IN WIND POWER

AUSTIN – Last summer, myself and other state leaders dedicated to increasing Texas's energy supply and diversification called for the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to undertake steps toward better connecting Texas wind farms to the growing population centers of our state.

The population of Texas is expected to more than double by 2050, and current projections by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) show that energy generation also may have to double by 2026 to keep up with demand, taking into account a growing population and aging power plants. In anticipation of these growing needs, the PUC is moving forward on plans to connect West Texas and Panhandle wind farms with the state's primary electric grid.

Joining Regulated Industries Committee Chairman Phil King and myself at a Capitol news conference, Railroad Commission Chairman Victor Carrillo said, "The emergence and growth of wind energy is coming at just the right time for Texas, the nation's leader in energy production, population and economic growth. It is critical for Texas to have a strong, vibrant and diversified energy portfolio including oil and natural gas, clean coal, nuclear, wind and other renewables."

Today, Texas leads the nation in wind power. At the end of 2007, about 4,300 megawatts of wind-generated electricity was in service, enough to power about one million Texas homes.

Texas wind energy improves our energy supply and improves our air quality at the same time. Wind has zero emissions, and creates jobs and economic opportunity for rural Texas. The Legislature was right to address wind-related power transmission, and I applaud the Texas Public Utility Commission for their hard work on this issue.

Representative Anderson understands and supports education and the very important role that substitute teachers have in educating our children. Here, Doc undergoes substitute teacher training and certification with Kathy Gentry at the Region XII Educational Service Center headquarters in Waco.

What About Public Retirement Systems – TRS, ERS?

There are two types of funding retirement accounts – defined benefit, and defined contribution. A **defined contribution** is straight-up, get out of it what you put in – plus your interest. These are mostly your 401(k)s, IRAs, and other such investment instruments. If you are a state employee or teacher, your ERS/TRS contributions are a **defined benefit**. That is, your retirement payments are based upon a formula established by the legislature and not directly tied to individual member contributions or stock market performance. Furthermore, these retirement funds are diversified to keep any one sector of underperforming returns from jeopardizing the overall stability of the retirement systems.



81ST LEGISLATURE



KEY LEGISLATIVE ISSUES FOR THE 81ST LEGISLATURE

- ★ Enhance Border Security
- ★ Reform Margins Tax (Franchise Tax)
- ★ Develop State Energy Plan
- ★ Eminent Domain Reform
- ★ Require Photo ID For Voting
- ★ School Administration Paperwork Reduction
- ★ Empowering Teachers In The Classroom

AGENCIES UP FOR SUNSET REVIEW IN THE 81ST LEGISLATURE

In 1977, the Sunset Act became law in Texas, which puts a rotating set of state agencies up for renewal **every 12 years**. If legislation renewing an agency is not passed, the agency automatically "sunset", or goes out of existence. Oftentimes, an agency's functions will be transferred to or consolidated with another state agency. In the last 30 years, this has happened numerous times – also, several smaller advisory boards and temporary functions have been abolished outright.

The other purpose of the Sunset review process is to look for ways to improve an agency's function through **efficiency and modernization**, eliminating duplication and waste, and making sure that agencies maintain their responsiveness to the Texans they serve. This coming year, **27 agencies** and boards are under Sunset review, including: the Texas Department of Agriculture, the Department of Insurance, the Office of the Public Insurance Counsel, the Department of Public Safety, and the Texas Department of Transportation, among others. I've highlighted some thoughts about two agencies below:

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

The Sunset review of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) occurred against a backdrop of distrust and frustration with the Department and the demand for more transparency, accountability, and responsiveness. Significant changes are needed to begin this restoration; tweaking the status quo is simply not enough.

Therefore, the Sunset Commission may recommend that the agency be placed under stricter legislative oversight for a four-year period, effectively returning control over transportation policy to the Legislature where it belongs. The key need for this agency is to improve its communications with policymakers and the public.

Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)

Thanks to Sunset review, this agency will undertake a complete top-to-bottom review of management structure to improve communication, modernize technology systems, and improve the agency's approach to emergency management. One such finding was that the driver license service and functions are under a law enforcement command structure rather than as a business and customer service function. This is just a small example of how management of the agency has far too long operated under circumstances where organizational structures have been isolated from one another. An outside independent review will bring much needed renewal of the agency's purpose and service to all Texans; in fact, the Department is already putting some management reforms into place.

ANDERSON PRE-FILES LEGISLATION TO RESTRICT DANGEROUS DRUG

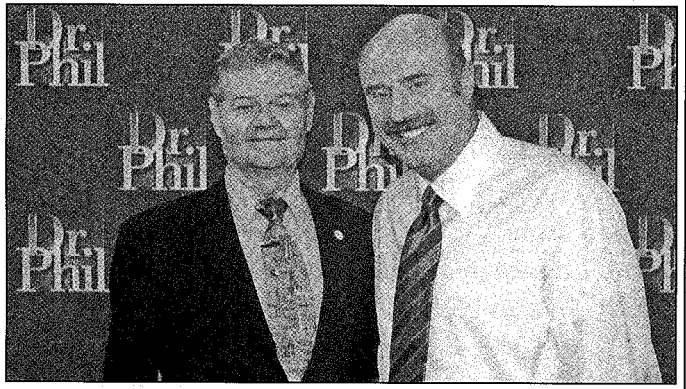
Salvia divinorum is an herb, the leaves of which contain the compound Salvinorin-A – the active agent to induce the high that people experience when they use it. The effects of salvia are usually extreme disorientation, imaginary visions, experiences of alternate realities, and other such symptoms typically associated with hallucinations.

As I've gone around the state at legislative committee hearings and appeared nationally on the Dr. Phil show, two things about this drug are reinforced: 1) people do not realize how popular this drug has gotten amongst our youth; and 2) people are startled that an hallucinogen this powerful is readily available and legal to obtain.

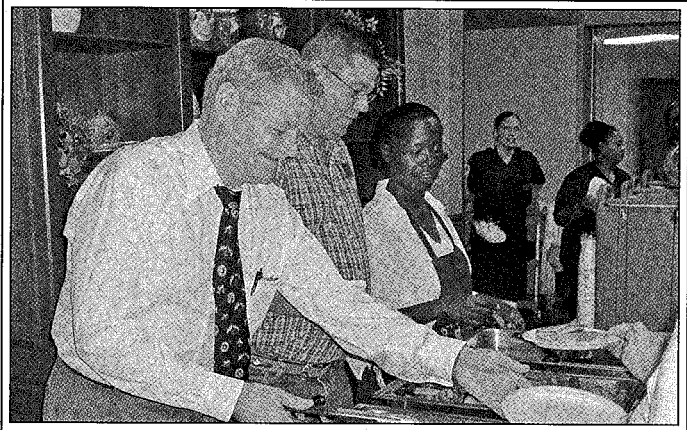
The affects of smoking the extract from this otherwise harmless plant are noticed as soon as 20 to 60 seconds after smoking, and the high can last from a few minutes to up to an hour. Disorientation may be present for as long as 4 hours.

It has been termed by medical researchers as the world's most potent naturally occurring hallucinogen, and is illegal in twelve states. I have filed legislation to make Texas the 13th (HB 126). This drug is dangerous, incapacitating, and serves no medical use whatsoever.

HB 126 calls for a Class A Misdemeanor penalty (fine of up to \$4,000, jail time up to one year, or both) for most cases of people possessing the drug. Penalties increase for larger amounts of the drug possessed.



Rep. Anderson visits with **Dr. Phil McGraw** after taping an episode of the nationally syndicated **Dr. Phil show** on salvia. Rep. Anderson and Dr. Phil discussed their shared concerns on the use and abuse of this dangerous hallucinogen.



Representative Anderson and District 56 Director **Kurt Krakowian** were pleased to help serve breakfast for area seniors at the **Stillwell Retirement Center Annual Pancake Breakfast**.

◆◆◆◆ God Bless Texas! ◆◆◆◆

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DISTRICT 56 QUESTIONNAIRE



What do **you** think is the most important issue facing Texas today as we prepare for the 81st Legislature?

1. Do you think a person showing up at a polling place to vote should be required to show a photo ID?
 YES NO

2. There will likely be some discussion of achieving property tax relief this session through the use of sales taxes. While ours is one of the higher sales taxes in the nation, the number of things it applies to is quite a bit less than some other states. Which scenario best describes your thoughts?
 Increase sales taxes to *reduce* school property taxes
 Increase sales taxes, and make the sales tax apply to nearly all consumer purchases, to *eliminate* school property taxes
 Leave sales tax as it is

3. Which method of assessing public school student performance do you prefer?
 Standardized tests
 End-of-course exams
 Teacher appraisal
 Other _____

4. Do you support state tax incentives to increase the production of alternate sources of energy transmission?
 YES NO

5. Do you think the state should take a more proactive role in providing security along our border?
 YES NO

6. Do you think that local law enforcement officials should be required to determine the citizenship status of criminal offenders?
 YES NO

7. Do you think that state and local assistance agencies should be required to determine the citizenship status of people applying for public assistance?
 YES NO

8. Do you think that state and local law enforcement officials should utilize roadblocks for DUI enforcement?
 YES NO

9. Do you support reforms to the state's margins tax (franchise tax) on business, including a constitutional cap on the tax rate?
 YES NO

10. Do you support a sales tax holiday for the purchase of energy efficient appliances?
 YES NO



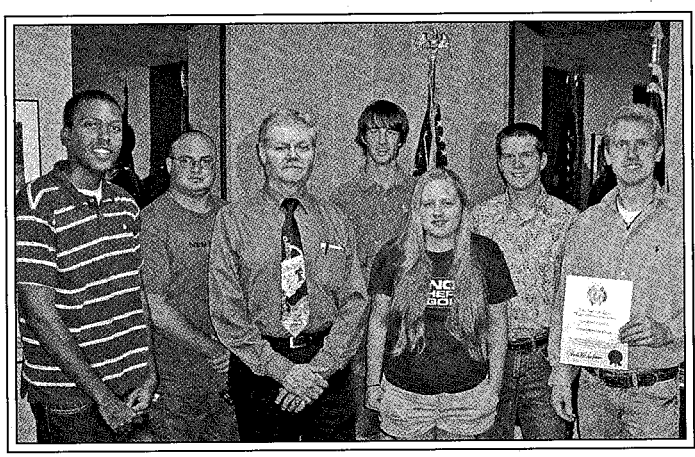
Rep. Anderson and Waco mayor **Virginia Dupuy** welcomed special guest **Coach Ken Carter** to the American Heart Association's "Love Your Heart" Luncheon in Waco. Coach Carter is the legendary and inspirational leader from the movie "Coach Carter" about his principled approach to coaching inner-city youth.



Rep. Anderson joined **Governor Rick Perry** in presenting a grant to **Waco ISD** for District Awards for Teaching Excellence, an incentive program supported by Rep. Anderson in the 79th Texas Legislature. Here with the governor and Rep. Anderson at **Cesar Chavez Elementary**, which hosted the event, are Principal **Alfredo Loreda**, Waco ISD Superintendent **Dr. Roland Hernandez**, Texas Education Agency Commissioner **Robert Scott**, and our special hosts with the \$1 million check for the district.

◆◆◆◆ *God Bless Texas!* ◆◆◆◆

That which cannot be altered must be borne — not blamed. - Thomas Fuller



Rep. Anderson hosted a group of students from Baylor University at the district office recently for policy discussions. Here with Doc are Tyler Landers, Kyle Bean, Johann Parrisch, Edward Tuya, Alexander Green, and Christi Coufal.

CITY OF WEST GAINS PRESTIGIOUS "MAIN STREET" DESIGNATION

The City of West has been chosen by the Texas Historical Commission as a "Main Street" city for 2009.

The Texas Main Street Program, part of the Texas Historical Commission's Community Heritage Development Division, helps Texas cities revitalize their historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts by utilizing preservation and economic development strategies.

The program began in 1981 and is affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Texas Main Street Program is among the most successful downtown revitalization programs in the nation. It has resulted in the private reinvestment of more than \$1.3 billion in Texas downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts, the creation of more than 23,000 jobs and the establishment of more than 5,900 new businesses in Texas.

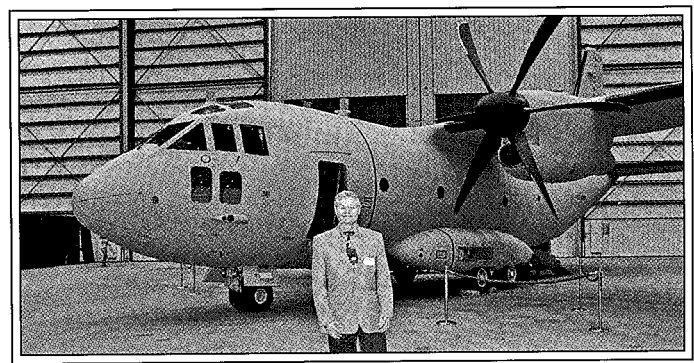
Doc was on hand for the delivery of the first C-27 plane at the L-3 Hangar in Waco. These specialty aircraft are being sent to Waco for mission essential outfitting by McLennan County's largest employer.

ARE YOU READY FOR DIGITAL TV TRANSITION?

As many of you may have heard, on February 17, 2009 all full-power broadcast television stations in the United States will stop broadcasting on analog airwaves and begin broadcasting only in digital. The FCC has taken some steps to prepare people for this, but if you still need more information, go to <http://www.dtv.gov> or call 1-888-CALL FCC (1-888-225-5322).

First, let's review the scenarios where you may need to review how your TV is set up:

- ★ **My TV is hooked up to cable or satellite; I plan on keeping it that way**
 - No action needed
- ★ **I receive broadcasts directly over the air, but my TV was purchased after March 1, 2007**
 - No action needed – all TVs purchased in the United States after that date have the required equipment
- ★ **I receive broadcasts over the air; my TV was manufactured between 1984 and 2007**
 - Check with your manufacturer or your owner's manual before buying a converter. Your set may have a built-in digital tuner.
- ★ **I receive broadcasts over the air; my TV does not have a built-in converter, or is from before 1984**
 - You will need a converter. The FCC has a \$40 coupon available to help you purchase a converter box, so be sure to contact them at the number above. Prices range greatly depending upon which one you want.



THE HONORABLE CHARLES "DOC" ANDERSON
900 AUSTIN AVE STE 804
WACO TX 76701-1946

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Rep. Charles "Doc" Anderson
State Representative
District 56
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Austin, Texas 78768-2910

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HEROES IN THE DISTRICT



Rep. Anderson was honored to visit Camp Mabry, presenting Texas Purple Heart Medals and Cavalry Medals to two Central Texans for their heroism in the field. **Sgt. Johnny Reed** (left) and **Sgt. Douglas Bennett** both served two tours of duty in Iraq, and their selflessness and bravery are incredible examples to the people whose freedoms they protect. We should thank ALL our veterans for their service.



Almost 20 years ago, small-business owner **Jesse Contreras** lost his life while heroically defending his life's work and his family from attack. His example lives on in the Contreras family, shown here celebrating the **50th anniversary of Jesse's Tortilla Factory** in Waco. Congratulations to all of them for their courage, faith, and spirit – keeping the flame alive for family businesses. Again, **congratulations from all of us!**

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