



STATE REPRESENTATIVE



JOHN FRULLO



DISTRICT 84 ★ FALL 2019

86TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION & CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT INFORMATION



JOHN M. FRULLO
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 84

Dear Friends,

The 86th Legislative Session proved to be productive and successful for the Lubbock community and the State of Texas. We passed a responsible budget for 2020 - 2021 that makes key investments into our rapidly growing state, while also maintaining over \$9 billion in our Rainy Day Fund. Most importantly, we passed school finance reform legislation that will reduce the reliance to fund our public schools from local property taxes. As a result, school property tax rates will be reduced and Texans will receive over \$5 billion in tax relief. Property taxpayers will further benefit from other reforms made during the 86th Session that enhance transparency and increase voter engagement for significant increases in your property taxes.

A top priority this session was securing \$17.35 million for the Texas Tech University System to start a veterinary medicine program that is aimed to address the shortage of veterinarians in this region. I am happy to say that the full amount was appropriated to Texas Tech and we are moving forward in building and opening a School of Veterinary Medicine.


This newsletter will further outline other bills passed this legislative session along with an overview of the constitutional amendments you will see on the ballot in November. I hope you find this to be a useful tool in analyzing the propositions on the ballot, and be sure to mark your calendars for the upcoming election:

- Last day to register to vote: **Monday, October 7, 2019**
- Early Voting Dates: **Monday, October 21 through Friday, November 1, 2019**
- Election Day: **Tuesday, November 5, 2019**

If you have any questions or need information on where to vote, please visit the Lubbock County Elections Office website at www.votelubbock.org or call 806-775-1339.

Thank you for all of your support and for those who contacted me during the session to share your feedback on issues important to you, our community, and the state. It is an honor serving you in the Texas House of Representatives.

Sincerely,


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Welcoming the Texas Tech Mens Basketball Team to the Capitol.

HIGHER EDUCATION

★ A Historic Session for Texas Tech ★

After nearly 50 years of discussion and work by many, the Texas Tech System is finally getting a Veterinary School of Medicine to address the critical needs of our region and the State of Texas! The legislature granted Tech's full budget request of \$17.35 million to initiate curriculum design, begin recruiting faculty, and start the accreditation process. The Texas Tech School of Veterinary Medicine anticipates enrolling its first class in the fall of 2021.

Also included in the two-year state budget was \$20 million to establish the Woody L. Hunt School of Dental Medicine at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso. Once opened, this would make Tech System only one of nine systems in the country whose universities offer programs for undergraduate, medical, law, nursing, pharmacy, dental, and veterinary education.

The tragedy at Santa Fe High School in 2018 brought statewide attention to the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center for their Telemedicine Wellness Intervention Triage and Referral ("TWITR") Project. The TWITR Project uses telemedicine services to intervene with middle and high school students who are at risk for injury or harm to themselves or others in school settings. The 86th legislature saw tremendous value in TWITR and appropriated \$5 million to this program.

★ Higher Education Committee ★

This session, I used my seniority pick to sit on the House Higher Education Committee. Robust discussions were had on over 100 pieces of legislation in the Higher Education Committee and a strong West Texas voice was present in all of them. Additionally, I authored and passed several bills beneficial to both students and the Texas Tech System. HB 2709 removes outdated language that micromanaged actions of the Texas Tech System Board of Regents. SB 709 reallocates funding to the Texas Tech Component Institutions. Finally, SB 1276 creates a streamlined approach to dual credit advising strategies that will save students and their families' time and money.

As we heard in the House Higher Education Committee, a growing problem in the rural areas of Texas is the ability to attract experienced professionals to work in those regions. This session, I co-authored HB 1065, which creates the Rural Resident Physician Grant Program to encourage the creation of new graduate medical education positions in these areas. I also sponsored SB 1757, which incentivizes qualified math and science teachers to teach in these areas. Pieces of legislation such as these contribute to the state's economy, as well as the health and well being of all Texans.

PROPERTY TAX AND SCHOOL FINANCE REFORM

★ Increasing Transparency And Slowing the Rate of Growth for Texas Property Taxpayers ★

The legislature came together this session to pass SB 2, which will empower voters and slow the rate of growth on future property tax bills. Cities and counties will now be subject to automatic elections if they intend to raise their property tax collections by 3.5% or more. Additionally, it provides real-time tax information to inform property owners of who is proposing to raise their rates, by how much, and when and where they can go to protest. As a co-sponsor of this bill, I look forward to continuing the conversation on lowering taxes for all Texans.

★ Prioritizing Students and Teachers ★

The legislature presented a united front in prioritizing the passage of meaningful school finance reform this session. The school finance bill, HB 3, contained a combined \$11.6 billion for transformational educational reforms and school property tax relief. I was proud to co-author this legislation and support it every step of the way.

Through increasing the state's share of education funding, HB 3 provides over \$5 billion in school property tax relief. School property taxes will be lowered by an average of 8 cents in 2020 and 13 cents in 2021. It also provides for an additional 2.5% tax compression starting in 2021. The bill also includes around \$6.5 billion in new public education spending to accelerate student achievement and invest in teachers. \$4.5 billion of this amount is dedicated to various educational reforms and \$2 billion of this amount is dedicated to dynamic pay raises for teachers, librarians, counselors, and nurses.



Rep. Frullo and Speaker Bonnen with students from Talkington Academy.



TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM REFORMS

★ *Providing for Retired Teachers* ★

Teachers are the backbone of our state, and it is important that they are able to rely on the state's pension system well into their retirement. Together with an appropriation of \$1.1 billion from the Rainy Day Fund, SB 12 raised the state's contribution to the Teacher Retirement System and provides retired teachers with a one-time \$2,000 supplemental payment or "13th check". The increases in funding levels will make TRS actuarially sound within the 2020-2021 biennium. I was proud to co-sponsor this bill and look forward to working with retired teachers in the future.

COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

★ *Continuing the Fight Against Human Trafficking* ★

Human trafficking is a horrific crime that continues to plague our state. This session, I authored and passed HB 2613 which creates the new offense of operating a stash house in connection with certain human trafficking crimes. It also provides for the proceeds from a civil asset forfeiture of a stash house to go directly to victim services for human trafficking survivors. A stash house is defined as property owned by the person or under the person's control.

I co-sponsored SB 20, which increases penalties on buyers, created two new offenses allowing prosecutors to go after traffickers more efficiently on the Internet, and provides greater victim protections. SB 20 codifies several recommendations from the Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force. Moreover, funding in the base budget increased nearly \$40 million from the previous biennium for the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of human trafficking related activities. The legislature took a hard stance against human trafficking this session and continues to dedicate more tools to ending this unspeakable crime.

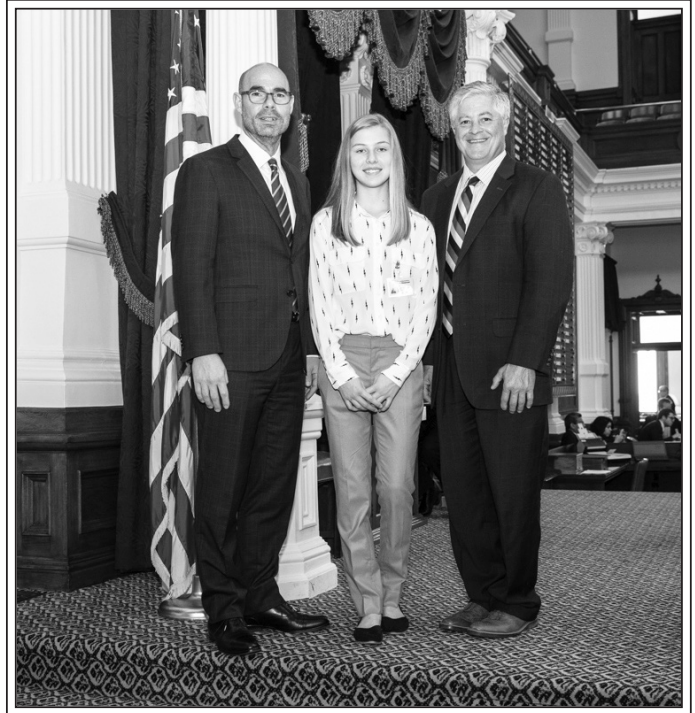
SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

★ *Protecting Your Right to Bear All Arms* ★

The 86th legislature continued our efforts to protect your Second Amendment Rights through several important pieces of legislation. I co-authored HB 302, which restores the rights of tenants to own and keep firearms and prohibits "no firearms" clauses in leases, and HB 1177, which provides for the unlicensed carrying of a handgun by certain persons following a disaster declaration.



Congratulating Dr. Bill Dean on his retirement as President and CEO of the Texas Tech Alumni Association.



Enjoyed spending the day with Honorary Page Elizabeth Farthing.

I proudly voted to support several other bills that will strengthen Texans' ability to protect themselves. HB 1791 closes loopholes in state law used to restrict licensed gun owners from carrying in public buildings. HB 3231 cracks down on patchwork firearms ordinances at the local level by improving and modernizing the state's firearms prevention law. These are great steps forward in protecting your constitutional right to bear arms.

BORDER SECURITY

★ *Securing Texas Borders* ★

This session, I continued to support maintaining historic levels of border security funding in our state. The 86th legislature appropriated \$800.6 million to fund border security purposes across nine state agencies. This amount included \$7.5 million to the Department of Public Safety for Operation Draw Bridge Cameras, additional analysts for the Transnational Intelligence Center, and nearly \$2 million in grants for border prosecution, border zone fire departments and economic development along the border. By maintaining this funding level, the legislature is ensuring the safety of all Texans and the continued vitality of our border region.

LIMITING GOVERNMENT

★ *Protecting Individual Liberties* ★

The American Dream is alive and well in Texas with several reforms passed this session to protect private businesses and individuals from frivolous government bureaucracy. Along with Senator Charles Perry, I authored and passed HB 2223 that protects small BBQ joints and other businesses from random inspections conducted at will by the Texas Department of Agriculture. These businesses will now have an even playing field to successfully operate in the free market. I also co-authored HB 1631, which bans the use of unconstitutional red-light cameras in Texas. Additionally, the legislature passed a fiscally responsible budget that kept state spending under constitutional spending limits.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT VOTERS GUIDE

PROPOSITION	IF APPROVED
<p>Proposition 1 (HJR 72) <i>Provides Smaller Municipalities with Qualified Judges</i> Authorizes a person to hold more than one office as an elected or appointed municipal judge in more than one municipality at the same time.</p>	<p>Adds municipal judges to the class of officeholders that are exempt from the constitutional prohibition on a person from holding more than one paid public office at the same time. Texas law already permits a person to be appointed as a municipal judge in more than one municipality at the same time. This amendment extends this treatment to allow a person to be elected as a municipal judge in more than one municipality. Supporters say: This amendment will make it easier for smaller municipalities to have qualified municipal judges to deal with increasing caseloads. Opponents say: No concerns identified.</p>
<p>Proposition 2 (SJR 79) <i>Funds Water Supply Development in Economically Distressed Areas</i> Authorizes the Texas Water Development Board to issue bonds to provide for the development of water supply and sewer service projects in economically distressed areas of Texas.</p>	<p>Authorizes the Texas Water Development Board to issue up to \$200 million in bonds for the Economically Distressed Areas Program account. The bonds would be used to provide financial assistance for the development of water supply and sewer service projects in economically distressed areas of the state. Supporters say: This would support future projects for communities in Texas that could not otherwise afford secure access to safe water. Opponents say: Texas should not constitutionally dedicate funds for specific programs and any necessary infrastructure improvements should be funded using general revenue.</p>
<p>Proposition 3 (HJR 34) <i>Supports Property Owners Affected by a Disaster</i> Authorizes the legislature to create a temporary property tax exemption that a political subdivision could adopt for property owners in a gubernatorially declared disaster area.</p>	<p>Authorizes the legislature to provide for a temporary ad-valorem taxation exemption for property located in a Governor-declared disaster area. The legislature could prescribe the method of determining the amount and duration of the exemption, as well as any additional eligibility requirements. Supporters say: The exemption would be easier and more affordable for taxing units than the current method of reappraising property following a disaster. Opponents say: This amendment would not go far enough in providing property tax relief to taxpayers following a disaster.</p>
<p>Proposition 4 (HJR 38) <i>Bans a State Income Tax</i> Prohibits the legislature from imposing an individual income tax on Texas residents.</p>	<p>Prohibits the legislature from imposing a net income tax on individuals, including on an individual's share of partnership and unincorporated association income. Supporters say: This amendment would keep the Texas economy strong by making certain that the state never could impose a state individual income tax. Opponents say: This amendment would rule out the possibility of introducing a tax that could provide a solutions to future funding problems.</p>
<p>Proposition 5 (SJR 24) <i>Supports Texas Parks and Historic Sites</i> Provides for the automatic allocation of revenue from collection of the Sporting Goods Sales Tax to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission.</p>	<p>Automatically appropriates the sporting goods sales tax to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the Texas Historical Commission (THC). The legislature would maintain the power to determine the specific uses of the funds and their allocation between TPWD, THC, and large county and municipal parks. Supporters say: SJR 24 provides for a predictable and sustained funding stream for state park construction, operations, and customer demands, while also protecting our valued historic treasures. Opponents say: Dedicating revenues from the sporting goods sales tax would give appropriators less flexibility in finding funding streams for future state programs.</p>
<p>Proposition 6 (HJR 12) <i>Continues State Support for Cancer Research</i> Increases Bonding Authority of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT).</p>	<p>Increases from \$3 billion to \$6 billion the maximum amount of general obligation bonds that Texas can issue on behalf of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT). Reauthorizes funding and continues taxpayer support of CPRIT and maintains the agency's current level of activity and Texas' support of cancer research and prevention. Supporters say: Funding CPRIT is an investment into the state economy and worthy of state dollars. Annual grant funding under CPRIT has supported world renowned scholars, including a 2018 Nobel Prize recipient and helped make Texas a biomedical center. Opponents say: This amendment would increase state debt by doubling the size of the original CPRIT bond package.</p>
<p>Proposition 7 (HJR 151) <i>Increases Distributions to the Available School Fund</i> Doubles the annual distribution to the Available School Fund for school districts to purchase instructional materials and meet other funding needs.</p>	<p>Increases from \$300 million to \$600 million the amount that can be distributed to the Available School Fund each year in revenue derived during that year from the more than 13 million acres of land or properties managed by the General Land Office. Supporters say: By raising the cap on this annual distribution, this revenue will improve funding for public schools. Opponents say: This could complicate the funding relationship of the School Land Board and the State Board of Education, each of which have responsibilities for managing this land.</p>
<p>Proposition 8 (HJR 4) <i>Funds Flood Mitigation Projects</i> Creates the Flood Infrastructure Fund to provide financing for certain drainage, flood mitigation, or flood control projects in Texas.</p>	<p>Creates the Flood Infrastructure Fund as a special fund in the state treasury outside of the general revenue fund. The fund would be administered by the Texas Water Development Board to assist in the financing of drainage, flood mitigation, and flood control projects, including planning and design activities, work to obtain related regulatory approval, or construction of flood mitigation and drainage infrastructure. Supporters say: This amendment would help create a more resilient Texas by providing a mechanism to protect from future disasters. Opponents say: By creating the Flood Infrastructure Fund as a special fund outside of general revenue, this would give appropriators less flexibility in finding funding streams for future state programs.</p>
<p>Proposition 9 (HJR 95) <i>Tax Exemption for Precious Metals</i> Authorizes the legislature to exempt precious metals held in a precious depository in Texas from property taxation.</p>	<p>Authorizes the legislature by general law to exempt from property taxation precious metal held in a precious metal depository in the state. The legislature by general law could define "precious metal" and "precious metal depository" for purposes of this exemption. Texas already exempts certain precious metals from the sales and use tax, and this constitutional amendment extends this treatment to property tax. Supporters say: This exemption would enable Texas depositories to be more competitive with other states that offer these exemptions and provide certainty to accountholders and investors of such precious metals. Opponents say: This could be perceived as allowing the government to pick winners and losers in the economy by using the state tax system to encourage people to purchase and hold precious metals in depositories in the state.</p>
<p>Proposition 10 (SJR 32) <i>Protects Law Enforcement Animals</i> Authorizes the transfer of a law enforcement animal to a qualified caretaker in certain circumstances.</p>	<p>Currently, a county animal used for law enforcement purposes is treated as salvage or surplus property and counties can only auction, donate, or destroy salvage or surplus property. This constitutional amendment authorizes the county law enforcement animal to be transferred to the animal's handler at the time or the animal's retirement or at another time if the transfer is in the animal's best interest. Supporters say: This amendment honors the bond between a law enforcement animal and its handler by allowing these animals to retire in the homes where they live. Opponents say: No concerns identified.</p>



LEGISLATION PASSED INTO LAW DURING THE 86TH SESSION



★ LEGISLATION AUTHORED OR JOINT AUTHORED BY REPRESENTATIVE FRULLO ★

HB 305	Creates greater transparency by requiring certain political subdivisions to post online information regarding elections and meetings
HB 369	Promotes well being of children by clarifying jurisdictional concerns for adoption petitions
HB 446	Simplifies the carrying of brass knuckles
HB 986	Authorizes certain non-ERCOT utilities to recover costs incurred in deploying advanced metering and meter information networks
HB 1074	Strengthens protections against age discrimination in training programs in the workplace
HB 2188	Provides a predictable, safe, and healthy environment for consumers and manufacturers of electric bicycles
HB 2223	Protects business owners from frivolous regulation by the Texas Department of Agriculture
HB 2613	Provides harsher penalties for operating a stash house in connection with human trafficking
HB 2709	Removes an outdated provision that micromanaged the actions of the Texas Tech Board of Regents
HB 3463	Authorizes the Lubbock County Hospital District to employ physicians
HB 3780	Designates FM 41 in Lubbock County as the "David Nelson Memorial Highway"

★ LEGISLATION SPONSORED OR CO-SPONSORED BY REPRESENTATIVE FRULLO IN THE HOUSE ★

SB 2	Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act of 2019
SB 12	Increases state contributions to the Teacher Retirement System and provides retirees with a one-time supplemental payment
SB 20	Codifies several recommendations of the Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force
SB 21	Raises the minimum age for buying cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or tobacco products
SB 25	Facilitates the transfer, academic progress, and timely graduation of students in public higher education
SB 26	Requires allocation of money generated from the sporting goods sales tax credited to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission
SB 38	Revises the definition for the act of hazing and strengthens institutional reporting of such misconduct
SB 319	Authorizes the Lubbock County Hospital District to employ and commission peace officers
SB 709	Reallocates Higher Education Fund (HEF) dollars for HEF component institutions, including Texas Tech System Institutions
SB 1055	Establishes an adult workforce diploma pilot program at the Texas Workforce Commission
SB 1264	Prohibits health plans from sending surprise balance bills to consumers
SB 1276	Streamlines dual credit advising strategies to save students and parents time and money
SB 1474	Reforms the Texas Private Activity Bond program
SB 1757	Provides necessary updates to attract more qualified math and science teachers to rural areas of the state
SB 1938	Amends the process for building new transmission power lines
SB 1978	Prohibits a governmental entity from discriminating against persons or businesses based on their support of a religious organization

★ LEGISLATION CO-AUTHORED BY REPRESENTATIVE FRULLO ★

HB 3	Public School Finance Reform
HB 5	Requires the Texas Department of Emergency Management to develop a catastrophic debris management plan for local governments
HB 6	Establishes a Disaster Recovery Task Force to assist local communities after a major disaster
HB 16	Infant Born Alive Act
HB 39	Extends state support of life-saving cancer research
HB 302	Restores the second amendment rights of tenants to own and keep firearms
HB 1065	Creates a grant program to attract physicians to rural areas of the state
HB 1177	Provides for the unlicensed carrying of a handgun by certain persons following a disaster declaration
HB 1397	Reduces regulatory lag for generation build outs and cuts down on the costs of non-ERCOT utilities' rate cases
HB 1576	Authorizes contracting with ride-share companies for non-emergency Medicaid transport services
HB 1590	Creates the Sexual Assault Survivors' Task Force in the Governors' Office
HB 1631	Prohibits red light cameras in Texas Provides greater protections against payment card skimming at gas stations
HB 2945	Provides greater protections against payment card skimming at gas stations

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DISTRICT 84 ★ LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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Rep. Frullo with students from All Saints Episcopal School.



Rep. Frullo honoring the Lubbock and South Plains Colon Cancer Prevention Task Force.

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