

## Texas Representative Roberto R. Alonzo's

## Capitol Report



### Future Changes in FAFSA Program

If you have a child in high school, college or graduate school looking to receive financial aid, you'll want to pay special attention to recently announced changes in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) program. These changes will significantly affect the process of filing for federal financial aid and, for some families, the amount of aid they'll receive. Adjustments will be implemented over the course of 2016 and into 2017-2018 academic year.

The current FAFSA filing system requires students and parents to complete the federal form as soon as possible after Jan 1. This deadline is challenging because applicants and their families either have to scramble to file their tax returns or use estimates that often have to be amended later. Fortunately, the government has announced that it will start accepting FAFSA applications three months earlier for the 2017-2018 academic year. Applicants and families will be able to submit the FAFSA as early as Oct. 1, 2016, rather than waiting until Jan 1. That means that families may use information from prior year's tax return and won't have to rely on estimates. **\*\*However, it is important to understand that families submitting applications for the 2016-2017 academic year still have the Jan. 1 opening date, and will use 2015 tax return information to fill out the form. They will then use the same tax information again for the 2017-2018 school year, with an opening date of Oct. 1, 2016\*\***

Another important change to expect next year has to do with asset protection and could affect a student's financial aid eligibility. When parents report their financial information on the FAFSA, a portion of their assets are not counted by the federal government toward the amount of money they are expected to contribute to their child's education. That can mean a higher federal financial aid award than their student would otherwise qualify for. However, starting next year, that protected portion will plummet and continue a downward trend. It is estimated that every \$10,000 decrease in asset protection cuts a student's financial aid eligibility by up to \$564. Fortunately though, families in the lowest income brackets should be spared due to the fact that income carries a much heavier weight than assets do in the financial aid formula.



### City of Dallas Closures and Schedule for the Holidays

**City offices** - Closed

**Park and Recreation** - Recreation Centers and administrative offices closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Recreation centers will close at 6 p.m. Dec. 24 and 31. Golf Courses and Tennis Centers will close Dec. 25 and Jan. 1

**3-1-1 - Customer Help Line** - Customer Service Representatives will be available to take service-related urgent calls such as water main breaks, downed trees/limbs, signal lights out/down, animal control, etc.

**Police** - Administrative offices-Closed  
Will operate on normal schedule

**Dallas Fire Rescue** - Administrative offices-Closed  
Will operate on a normal schedule

**Sanitation** – Dec. 25: No garbage, recycling or brush/bulk trash collections. FRIDAY customers should place their garbage and recycling carts out for collection on WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23. Transfer Stations, McCommas Bluff Landfill, Sanitation Administrative Offices closed

**Friday Jan. 1** - No garbage, recycling or brush/bulk trash collections. FRIDAY customers should place their garbage and recycling carts out for collection on WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30. Transfer Stations, McCommas Bluff Landfill, Sanitation Administrative Offices closed.



**Rep. Roberto Alonzo and Mrs. Sylvana Alonzo wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.**