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Representative Dan Huberty



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Representative Huberty Refiles Legislation for Student Testing Relief

State Representative Dan Huberty today refiled legislation to alleviate overly burdensome state assessments for elementary and middle school students in grades 3 - 8. Currently, those students are required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) to take 17 standardized tests. House Bill 741 (HB 741) is identical to House Bill 866 from the last legislative session which passed unanimously in the House before receiving approval from the Senate and a signature from Governor Perry. However, a required waiver to implement the law was denied by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE).

"After Texas Education Agency (TEA) received the waiver denial from the federal government, it was determined to refile and again pass this important piece of legislation. As a parent of three children in public school, who are all subject to these tests, I know firsthand the frustration and exhaustion that comes from these excessive standardized tests," explained Representative Huberty. "My colleagues and I had high hopes that the USDE would recognize the outcry of our constituents and by allowing our state to focus testing on those students who need it most, and exempt those who simply do not. However, like so many other issues we are facing, inaction on behalf of the federal government remains a constant barrier."

According to the legislation, the Commissioner of the TEA was required to request a waiver from NCLB. TEA submitted the waiver in August 2013, and received a denial in response. If the waiver had been approved, the law would have allowed high-performing students to "test out" of subsequent STAAR tests in a particular subject by performing well on the test in the previous year. This would have greatly reduced testing for certain students and allow Texas educators and administrators to focus on those students who historically do not perform well on these assessments and may require more attention.

"I believe we can reduce testing while maintaining the highest accountability standards in the country. The purpose of testing every year is to ensure every child is learning and improving along with their grade. We do not need to be testing for the sake of testing. It is important for these tests to serve as a real gauge of our students' educational achievements and confirm that our public education system is providing every student with a great education." Huberty added "HB 741 will help us reach that goal."

HB 741 is one of several pieces of education-related legislation filed by Huberty in the 84th Session. House Bill 742 (HB 742) and House Bill 743 (HB 743) have also been filed by Huberty. HB 742 will reduce the number of required assessments for students in grades 3-8 by allowing only NCLB-required assessments to be administered to Texas students. If passed, this piece of legislation will eliminate the state mandated writing assessment in grades 4 and 7, as well as, a social studies assessment. Additionally, Huberty included a provision in the legislation that will require Texas to make changes to the assessments that are given if NCLB standards are lessened in the future.

"It is essential to continue to ensure achievement and create high standards for our students, but the sheer amount of time and the extreme number of assessments has become overwhelming," Huberty said. "One of my many goals during the 84th session is to continue to reduce the number of high stakes exams."

Similarly, Huberty's HB 743 puts a limit on the amount of time that students may be required to spend on an assessment. If passed, the bill will require TEA to ensure that an assessment instrument is designed to be completed by the majority of students in an appropriate amount of time. The bill states that 85% of students in grades 3-5 must be able to complete the assessment within 90 minutes and students who are in grades 6-8 must be able to finish the assessment in less than 120 minutes.

Texas House to Build on HB5 Education Reforms

The Texas House will continue to strengthen college and career readiness in the upcoming legislative session by providing additional training for high school guidance counselors, Speaker Joe Straus said Monday.

The initiative will build on the successes of House Bill 5, a major education reform measure that the Legislature passed unanimously in 2013. House Bill 5 changed high school graduation requirements to allow students more flexibility in their coursework. Students can now tailor their courses to better reflect their own goals for college and career success.

The legislation recognized that in today's fast-changing economy, there are numerous ways to prepare for productive careers, such as attending a four-year university, a community college or a technical college.

Two years ago, we enacted reforms that will better prepare students for success after high school," said Speaker Straus, R-San Antonio. "Now is the time to build on those achievements. This effort will help educators provide effective guidance to students as they prepare for college and the workforce. That guidance is critical because the economy is consistently and rapidly changing and because many students will be the first in their families to attend college."

In the upcoming session, the House will propose stipends for high school counselors who receive training focused on an increasingly diverse educational and career options awaiting students.

Across the state, counselors indicate they want more information to better prepare their students for success after high school, particularly in the workforce area," said House Public Education Committee Chairman Jimmie Dockock, R-Killeen. "Giving students effective, relevant guidance is a key component of helping them make the most of opportunities that today's economy presents."

The Legislature will convene for its 140-day session January 13. Leading up to the session, Speaker Straus has emphasized the need to practice responsible stewardship, prioritize education and promote economic growth. Meanwhile, House committees have studied a broad range of issues over the last year and are beginning to make policy recommendations to the full House. Speaker Straus will continue to highlight key priorities in the days ahead.

The House has spent many months preparing for this session and is ready to get to work," Speaker Straus said. "We have a responsibility to address the issues that matter most to the continued success of our private sector. Education is at the top of that list and will be a focal point for the House in 2015."

Representative Huberty Speaks to the Humble Intercontinental Rotary



**Humble Intercontinental
Rotary Club**

Public Education & State Affairs Committee Interim Reports Released

The Texas House released interim reports from 12 standing and select committees, including those on which Representative Huberty serves, Public Education and State Affairs. Other reports will be released in the days and weeks to come. The reports reflect the work of House Members over the last year and will help shape the number of policy discussions in the legislative session that begins Tuesday.

To read the Public Education report, visit:

http://www.house.state.tx.us/_media/pdf/committees/reports/83interim/House-Committee-on-Public-Education-Interim-Report-12.19.14.pdf.

The State Affairs report can be viewed at:

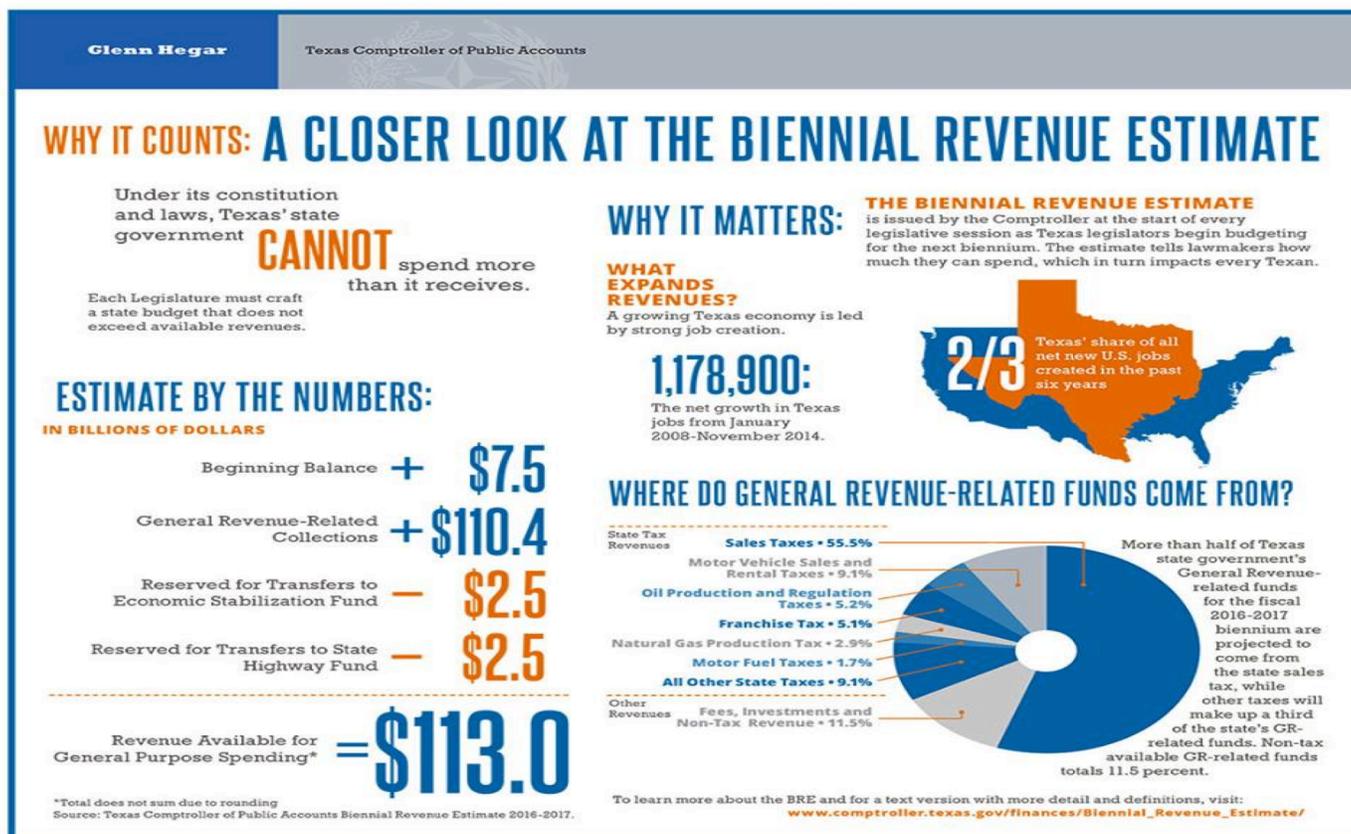
http://www.house.state.tx.us/_media/pdf/committees/reports/83interim/House-Committee-on-State-Affairs-Interim-Report-2014.pdf.

All other reports will be posted as they are released at <http://www.house.state.tx.us/committees/reports/>.

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar Announces the 2016-2017 Biennial Revenue Estimate.

Stronger-than-expected economic growth in the last biennium helped produce an estimated \$7.5 billion surplus, boosting the amount available for general-purpose spending in 2016-2017 to \$113 billion.

That report is available online at TexasTransparency.org.



Representative Huberty Interview with Laura Isensee of News 88.7

Recently, I spoke with Laura Isensee of News 88.7 about my "To-Do List for the 84th Session." You can hear my response, as well as other members of the Houston delegation here:

exas House Holds the Line on Spending

The Texas House proposed a budget Thursday that would keep spending flat over the next two years while addressing priorities such as education, transportation and border security.

The House released a two-year state budget plan that would spend \$202.4 billion during the 2015-16 budget cycle, up from an estimated \$202.1 billion in the current cycle - an increase of 0.2%. The plan appropriates \$98.8 billion in General Revenue, up from \$95.2 billion.

The initial budget lays the foundation from which House members will work over the next five months.

"This plan proves that the Texas House remains serious about fiscal discipline," said Speaker Joe Straus, Fort Worth. "We are able to hold spending in check while addressing some very important challenges related to our rapid growth."

Last August, Speaker Straus launched a process called Strategic Fiscal Review in order to ask key questions about state agencies' operations, priorities and goals. The House budget proposal incorporates a number of findings from that process, which produced major savings and identified critical issues. For example, significant management and policy issues were identified at the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, requiring members to take a fundamental look at the mission and scope of this agency.

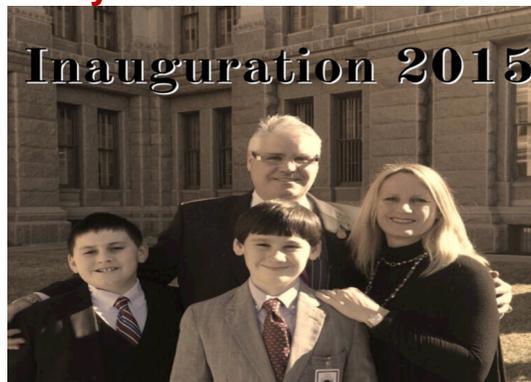
"Strategic Fiscal Review worked as intended," Speaker Straus said. "Because of that process, we begin this session with a much better understanding of how these agencies work now and how they can work better in the future. The end result will be that state government is more efficient and more effective."

Even as it controls spending, the House budget addresses a number of key priorities, such as:

- **Public Education.** It funds enrollment growth in public schools over the next two years.
- **Higher Education.** The budget expands graduate medical education in order to begin addressing shortages of medical professionals in Texas. It also increases TEXAS Grants.
- **Border Security.** Last month, the Legislative Budget Board extended and expanded Department of Public Safety operations along the border through the end of August 2015. The House budget funds those operations through August 2017.
- **Transportation.** Ends diversions of the State Highway Fund, with all of the money in that Fund going to the Texas Department of Transportation.
- **Mental Health.** The budget maintains expansions in mental health services from the current budget while committing additional dollars to mental health care for veterans.

The House Appropriations Committee will work from this initial proposal as it prepares a budget for the full House to consider later in the session. Speaker Straus is expected to name House committees in the coming weeks.

Representative Huberty and Family at Governor Abbott's Inauguration Day Festivities



Kingwood Area Republican Women Visit the Capitol for Inauguration Day Festivities



Representative & Mrs. Huberty at the Legislative Ladies Ball



2015 Family Time Hearts of Gold Gala 2015



Bills Filed in the 84th Legislative Session by Representative Huberty

Legislative Update During the 84th Session, Representative Huberty carried a robust legislative package covering issues from public education, open carry, and required ECG testing for High School athletes. Below, you will see a quick review of where his active bills are in the process. To follow these, or other bills of interest, Texas Legislature Online can serve as a very useful website. To view a list of Representative Huberty's legislative package, simply click [here](#).

[B 198](#)- Relating to the carrying of concealed handguns by certain persons attending a school board meeting.

[B 199](#)- Relating to specialty license plates for county tax assessor-collectors.

[B 291](#)- Relating to the authority of a person who is licensed to carry a handgun to openly carry the handgun; providing penalties.

[B 552](#)- Relating to the phaseout and repeal of the franchise tax; lowering the rates of the tax.

[B 741](#)- Relating to the administration to public school students in certain grades of state-administered assessment instruments.

[B 742](#)- Relating to eliminating certain state-required assessment instruments and certain end of course assessment instruments administered to public school students in certain grades.

[B 743](#)- Relating to the essential knowledge and skills of the required public school curriculum and to certain state-adopted or state-developed assessment instruments for public school students.

[B 744](#)- Relating to the purchase of certain insurance by public school districts.

[B 779](#)- Relating to cardiac assessments of participants in extracurricular athletic activities sponsored or sanctioned by the University Interscholastic League.

[B 929](#)- Relating to exclusion of certain public school student disciplinary actions from reports required by state or federal law.

TxDOT 2015 Road Projects for 2015 in District 127

The Texas Department of Transportation conducted a public meeting Tuesday, January 20, to begin collecting feedback on an initial group of [201 road projects](#) the agency is set to tackle across the state. The new construction and maintenance projects will be funded in part using [Proposition 1](#) dollars approved by Texas voters last November 2014. Of those 201 projects, six are either in or will impact House District 127:

1. This is a study of Farm to Market Road (FM) 1960 from Business Farm-to-Market Road (BF) 1960A to FM 2100.
 - o Proposed improvements include widening FM 1960 from 4 lanes to a 6 lane, divided roadway with curb and gutter.
2. This is a study of Farm-to-Market (FM) 2100 from Diamondhead Drive to Huffman-New Caney Road in Harris County.
 - o The proposed improvements would widen the existing 2-lane undivided roadway to a 4-lane divided facility
3. The City of Houston, in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Houston District, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) proposes to widen Greens Road from Aldine-Westfield Road to John F Kennedy Boulevard.
 - o Currently a two-lane undivided roadway, with parallel roadside ditches and six-foot-wide unpaved shoulders
4. The scope of this study is 4.3 miles of BF 1960A from Lee Road to Farm-to-Market (FM) 1960 east of Humble.
 - o Proposed improvements include widening BF 1960A from 2 lanes to undivided 4-lanes from Lee Road to US 59, and from 2 lanes to divided 4-lanes from US 59 to FM 1960 east of Humble.
5. The current road is undivided with two 12-foot travel lanes and open ditches for most of the length. Some sections have a curb and gutter section. A small portion is four lanes undivided from US 59 to Avenue C.
 - o Resurface the entire length of BF 1960A
 - o Construct 14-ft. raised median, with left-turn bays at intersections from Lee Road to FM 1960 East of Humble
 - o Intersection improvements at Kenswick Dr.
 - o Drainage improvements
 - o Install sidewalks throughout.
6. The scope of this study is 1.4 miles of Loop 494 in Montgomery County from Kingwood Drive to Sorter's McClellan Road in Harris and Montgomery Counties.
 - o Widening the existing 2-lane roadway into a 4-lane divided roadway with a raised median in Harris County
 - o Construction of a continuous left turn lane and a curb and gutter drainage system in Montgomery County
 - o Widening the existing 2-lane roadway into a 4-lane divided roadway with a raised median in Harris County

Maplebrook Elementary 5th Grade Manners Banquet at the Overlook

Representative Huberty recently attended the Maplebrook Elementary School's Manners Banquet with his son Ryan and his classmates. 5th graders throughout H.I.S.D. attend this banquet designed to encourage the use of proper etiquette, promote confidence, and celebrate the transition from elementary to middle school.



The District 127 Team at the Future of Texas Inaugural Bal



Upcoming Events

Friday and Saturday, January 30-31
Humble ISD Rodeo BBQ Cookoff

Friday and Saturday, February 6-7
Humble ISD Rodeo

Saturday, February 14
Valentine's Day

Monday, February 16
President's Day