



STATE REPRESENTATIVE TAN PARKER

CAPITOL REPORT

DISTRICT 63

FALL 2010

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The State of Texas
House of Representatives
District 63

Dear Fellow Texans,

It is an honor to represent our district in the Texas Legislature. As a long time resident of House District 63, I greatly appreciate the uniqueness of our diverse area which symbolizes all the best attributes of Texas. It should come as no surprise that House District 63 is one of the fastest growing areas in the state and with your input and guidance, I will continue to work hard to be a strong advocate in Austin for our North Texas communities.

The 81st Legislative Session resulted in many key accomplishments for our citizens, including: balancing the state budget during an economic recession, reducing state spending and lowering taxes. New laws providing additional funding for education and transportation were enacted; as well as education reform bills that better align high school curriculum with college ready standards and legislation that places Texas on the path of gaining another Tier 1 University. Additionally, one of our biggest successes was cutting taxes for small businesses, bringing them much needed assistance.

Even after the session, the Legislature has continued to work on your behalf to address the major issues that Texas faces, and I also want to update you on the Adoption Review Committee and Boater Safety Panel, which were both created through legislation I authored last session. Also included in this newsletter is a review of the critical issues facing the next Legislature, a snap shot of my voting scorecard and a look at some of our community's recent accomplishments.

Despite our successes as a state, such as creating more private sector jobs since 2005 than the rest of the nation combined, we are living in a critical time and the decisions made during the next legislative session will have a lasting impact on Texas' continued prosperity. Again, thank you for the opportunity to be your voice at the State Capitol and know that my door is always open if I can ever be of service to you.

Best wishes,

Tan Parker
State Representative



Update on Citizens' Panels

During the 81st Legislative Session, I was privileged to have created two citizens' panels that are currently studying and making reform recommendations on key issues facing Texas. Both the Adoption Review Committee and the Advisory Panel on Recreational Boating Safety have the opportunity to make a meaningful impact on their respective areas of policy since next session lawmakers will be looking at ways to improve upon our adoption process and make our beautiful public lakes a safer place for our families to enjoy.

Adoption Review Committee

Ever since its creation during the 81st Legislative Session, the Adoption Review Committee has been working hard to accomplish their goals outlined in statute. Specifically, the committee is charged to examine the adoption process in Texas and present recommendations to the state on ways foster care children can be moved out of the state's conservatorship and into permanent loving homes more quickly. Each member of the committee was appointed by the Governor or the Health and Human Services Commissioner.

The Committee has held monthly meetings where they have thoroughly examined state policies and statutes pertaining to foster care adoptions. They have focused on ways to increase accountability amongst all parties involved in a child's adoption, promote the best interest of the child, create more efficient methods for family recruitment and training and ensure proper post-adoption support services for families and children. In December, the committee will submit a report to the Governor, Speaker of the House, Lt. Governor, the House Human Services Committee and the Senate Health and Human Services Committee with specific legislative recommendations for the adoption process in Texas.

Members of the Adoption Review Committee receive testimony on how Texas can better structure its process in order to facilitate the placement of more foster children into permanent homes.



Advisory Panel on Recreational Boating Safety

Many Texans enjoy using our public waterways and as interest in this outdoor recreational activity continues to drastically increase, so has the emphasis on providing an environment where boaters and their families can safely enjoy their time on the water. The Advisory Panel on Recreational Boating Safety has been studying just that, convening to look at ways to enhance water safety through such ideas as: stronger public awareness campaigns, encouraging individuals to seek out a certified course on water safety and a more efficient use of our parks and wildlife resources.

Mr. Tim Lindt, a Highland Village resident who carries a wealth of knowledge on this topic, was picked by the Speaker of the House to serve on this panel. Mr. Lindt's addition to this panel is of great value to Texas. Before the start of the next session, the Advisory Panel on Recreational Boating Safety will be issuing their report to the Legislature.

Utilizing The Office of Your State Representative

As your State Representative, many of my duties entail providing assistance to you in a variety of areas. Read below to learn about constituent services that I encourage you to utilize:

- **Researching Legislative Information** – My Capitol office is an excellent resource for answering questions about a specific piece of legislation, learning how I voted on a particular measure or providing background on a particular issue or law.
- **Assisting With State Agencies** – I have an accomplished staff ready to assist you in navigating your way with state agencies. For example, we can assist if you are applying for a particular occupational license, seeking social services or applying for state grants.
- **Arranging Capitol Tours** – If ever in Austin, be sure to call my Capitol office (512-463-0688) prior to your visit and schedule a tour of Texas' impressive Capitol complex, complete with visits to

both the House and Senate chambers and the rich history behind our nation's tallest Capitol building.

- **Capitol Flags and Certificates of Achievement** – State flags flown over the Capitol can be purchased at a low price by calling my Capitol office. Offered in a variety of sizes, flags flown over the Capitol make wonderful gifts for all occasions.

In addition to these services that my office offers, I would like to extend an invitation to meet with me in person if there is an issue you would like to speak with me about directly, or if you would like to just stop in and say hello. **While not in session, I host open hours at my district office on the first Saturday of every month from 8 - 10 a.m. at the following address, 800 Parker Square, Suite 245, Flower Mound, TX 75028.**

Rep. Parker's 81st Session Voting Scorecard

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| Reducing State Spending | Parker Vote: Yes | Explanation: Fiscal responsibility is vital toward securing Texas' continued prosperity, that is why I supported a comprehensive state budget that reduced state spending by 1.9 percent. |
| Increasing Public Education Funding | Parker Vote: Yes | Explanation: Texas maintains its commitment to funding a strong public education system. During the last legislative session, lawmakers appropriated \$1.9 billion new dollars to public education in Texas. |
| Reducing Voter Control Over Elected Bodies | Parker Vote: No | Explanation: I believe individual elected bodies should serve their constituencies, not the Texas Legislature. Last session when legislation was presented to give the Legislature more control over the State Board of Education, at the expense of the voting public, I opposed the measure. |
| Eliminating Taxes on Small Businesses | Parker Vote: Yes | Explanation: Small business growth is the backbone of job creation and our economic prosperity. Getting the heavy hand of government taxes off the backs of this economic driver will allow small businesses in Texas to continue to flourish. |
| Growing the Size of Government run Healthcare | Parker Vote: No | Explanation: I believe strongly that the private sector, and not the government, is best suited for meeting our society's healthcare needs. That is why I voted against legislation that would have grown both the cost of and the size of government run healthcare programs in Texas. |
| Investing in Higher Education | Parker Vote: Yes | Explanation: Institutions of higher education received an additional \$1.2 billion dollars in order to enhance the quality of a degree earned within our state. Additionally, the Legislature put Texas on the path to gain another Tier 1 University in the years to come. |
| Increasing University Fees | Parker Vote: No | Explanation: The cost of obtaining a college degree in Texas must remain affordable in order for our state to continue to produce the qualified workforce necessary to meet the employment demands of our global economy. |
| Affirming Texas' Sovereignty Under the 10th Amendment | Parker Vote: Yes | Explanation: Big government mandates from Washington continue to threaten our prosperity. I believe that the issues facing Texas are best addressed by those elected from this state to govern this state. |

While voting on the House Floor, Representative Parker places great emphasis on his district's views. If you ever wish to share a thought or comment, please feel free to submit it to tan.parker@house.state.tx.us



Critical Issues of the 82nd Legislative Session

Balancing the State Budget

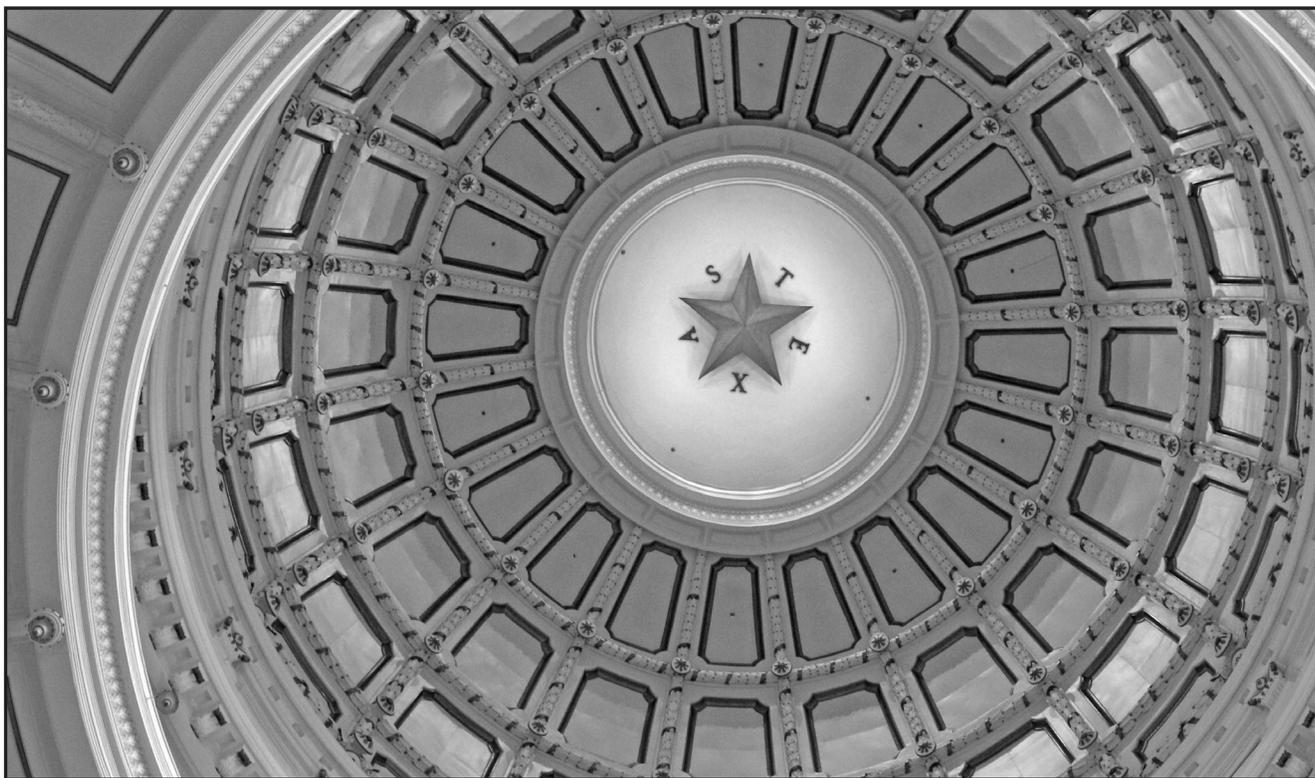
Once again, Texas lawmakers will be presented with the task of crafting a two-year state budget that adequately funds vital state services such as public education, without engaging in debt spending practices, which are prohibited by our state's constitution. Last session, lawmakers were able to pass a budget that increased funding in critical areas while simultaneously reducing state revenue spending by 1.9 percent.

While Texas has weathered this global economic downturn better than most states and nations, its effects have been felt in the Lone Star State. Sales tax revenues have begun to increase in Texas, but we still will be faced with a budget shortfall next session that will require state lawmakers to seek innovative ways to get the most out of your tax dollars and responsibly allocate those dollars so that our core components and top funding priorities continue to be met.

Accounting for Denton County's Strong Population Growth

Every 10 years, your state lawmakers are charged with readjusting our Legislative and Congressional districts in order to reflect population trends and ensure that our level of representation remains equal across the state. This process known as redistricting will take place during the next legislative session.

The US Census Bureau estimates that Denton County has grown in population by 52% since 2000. This tremendous growth has put Denton County in a great position to gain an additional seat in the Texas House, increase its presence in our 3 State Senate districts and possibly become a part of a new North Texas Congressional district. In redrawing our districts, lawmakers must seek responsible boundary lines that promote geographic continuity and also maximize our county's representation in state and federal government.



Texas is a state with endless potential and great prosperity. However, we still face our own unique challenges which state lawmakers will be addressing during the upcoming 82nd Legislative Session.

Addressing Business Taxes

Last session was a great victory for small businesses in Texas. State lawmakers raised the small business exemption to the franchise tax to \$1 million, effectively taking 40,000 small businesses off the franchise tax rolls. However, this issue will have to be visited again during the next legislative session since the current exemption level of \$1 million is set to expire in January of 2012 unless state lawmakers vote to extend this critically important tax exemption.

Reauthorizing and Restructuring State Agencies

Agencies of this state extend the public services that the Legislature authorizes. Examples of the services carried out through state agencies include: police and fire protection, public education services, road construction, CHIP administration and many more.

Next session, lawmakers will have to reconsider, re-tool and either eliminate or reauthorize 27 state agencies. In doing so, it will be vital to evaluate each agency on the basis of whether or not their stated goal is being met and structure them in a way that will more efficiently deliver necessary state services.

Our Community At Work

Lewisville ISD and Northwest ISD Receive Texas Education Agency Recognitions

In April 2010, two of District 63's independent school districts were recognized by the Texas Education Agency for exemplary public education programs. Lewisville ISD and Northwest ISD were amongst the top school districts in Texas chosen by the agency for their innovative programs in the areas of college readiness, high school retention and curriculum alignment.

Trophy Club Brings The Patriot Flag To Texas

On September 24, 2010 the massive 30 x 58 foot Patriot Flag was proudly flown in Trophy Club. The ceremony brought together North Texas residents who were able to participate in a tribute to the men and women who were killed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks and our courageous men and women who serve in our armed forces. The flag is scheduled to fly in all fifty states between September 2010 and September 2011; and on the 10th anniversary of 9/11, it will be displayed at the three sites of the 9/11 attacks, Shanksville, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C. and New York City.

CASA of Denton County Named Non-Profit of the Year

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Denton County was named Non-profit of the Year at the annual 2010 Unity in Communities Luncheon in Highland Village. CASA of Denton County dedicates its time and resources to training members of the community to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children who have been removed from unstable homes. CASA received this honor for its hard work and constant pursuit for the well-being of those most vulnerable in North Texas.



Rep. Parker participates in the unveiling of the Patriot Flag in Trophy Club.



Rep. Parker and several local elected officials celebrate the opening of FM 2499's extension

FM 2499 Connection Officially Opened

The City of Highland Village and the Denton County Commissioners Court gathered with area residents and other local officials to announce the official opening of Section 4 of Farm-to-Market Road 2499 on October 30, 2010. This ribbon cutting event celebrated the new roadway that will spur economic growth, provide additional infrastructure capacity and further link Denton County to DFW airport.

Flower Mound Shows Strong Support for Research Down Syndrome

This past summer, the first Research Down Syndrome Charity Golf Classic was held at Bridlewood Golf Club in Flower Mound. Residents from across North Texas gathered together to show their support for Research Down Syndrome, a non-profit organization that seeks to enhance the quality of life of individuals with Down Syndrome by funding scientific research. The event raised \$70,000, far exceeding their goal of \$50,000.

District 63 High School Marching Bands Win State Championships

The Marcus High School Marching Band and the Argyle High School Marching Band both had strong victories at each of their state championships this year, where both bands walked away with the state title. Marcus High School won its third consecutive Class 5A marching band championship and also finished first in the 2010 Bands of America Super Regionals. Argyle High School successfully defended their title in San Antonio where they won the Class 3A state title. They also previously won two championships in Class 2A in 2003 and 2005.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Tan Parker

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

TAN PARKER

**LEGISLATIVE
REPORT**



*Representative Tan Parker with his wife, Beth,
and two daughters, Lauren and Ashley.*

*My door is always open to
your thoughts and feedback.
If you ever wish to visit with
me in person, please contact
my district office and I will be
happy to schedule a meeting
with you.*