

Capitol Comments

DENTON COUNTY DAYS

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Denton County Days reception- Tuesday, February 24th

The 84th Legislative Session continued to roll on this week with more bills filed, visits from constituents for Denton County Days, and my first Business and Industry committee hearing as Vice-Chairman. In the House, Appropriations Chairman John Otto announced plans to have a fully-funded TRS-Care program for our deserving retired teachers. This week, I filed bills dealing with county and pro-life issues and was named **Chairman of the Subcommittee on Long-Term Transportation Infrastructure Planning**. As your State Representative, it is an honor to keep you updated with this week's events at your State Capitol.

News around the Capitol

Business & Industry Committee Hearing

The House Business & Industry Committee held its first hearing of the session on Tuesday. The committee heard testimony on the state of the Texas economy. Those who testified included Comptroller of Public Accounts Glen Hegar, representatives from the Division of Worker's Compensation, Office of Injured Employees Counsel, the State Office of Risk Management, and the Texas Taxpayers & Research Association.



At the Business & Industry Committee hearing

Subcommittee on Long-Term Transportation Infrastructure Planning

During Thursday's House Transportation Committee hearing, Chairman Pickett established the House Subcommittee on Long-Term Transportation Infrastructure Planning. This permanent subcommittee is required to consider all matters pertaining to the transportation needs of the state over the next ten years. The committee will also consider funding mechanisms to provide for those needs. I was honored to be named the Chairman of this subcommittee. I look forward to working with my fellow subcommittee members to find solutions for Texas' long-term transportation demands.



At the Transportation Committee hearing

Events Here in Austin

Concerned Women for America

This week I was honored to attend an event for the Concerned Women for America of Texas. These women do wonderful work for our state and nation by supporting elected officials through prayer.



*With Concerned Women for America Texas State Director
Ann Hettinger*

With the Denton County Day delegation.



District 65 Connections

Denton County Days

On Monday and Tuesday the delegation from Denton County braved the icy roads to visit their Denton County legislators in Austin. Many groups came by the Capitol including the Lewisville Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of Highland Village, and Denton County officials. Thank you to everyone who was able to drop by the office.



Meeting with the Lewisville Chamber of Commerce

With Mayor Charlotte Wilcox and the Highland Village Delegation



The four Denton County House Members (Reps Parker, Crownover, Fallon and myself) presented House Resolution 546 recognizing the Denton County delegation present in the House gallery. Though many of the folks who planned to drive down were sidelined by the unexpected ice storm in DFW, it was great to see constituents and officials from all over the county.

Bills Filed This Week

House Bill 1941 - *Relating to the designation of the structure on Interstate Highway 35 East crossing Lewisville Lake in Denton County as the Commissioner Bobbie J. Mitchell Bridge.*

Barbara "Bobbie" Mitchell has been an instrumental leader in Denton County government for more than 20 years. She served as the Mayor of Lewisville from 1992-2000 and currently serves as Commissioner for Precinct 3 of Denton County. Mrs. Mitchell has broken down racial barriers by becoming the first African-American mayor of Lewisville and Denton County Commissioner. If passed, HB 1941 would name the I-35 East bridge over Lewisville Lake after Bobbie J. Mitchell for her years of service to Denton County.

House Bill 1942 - *Relating to the judicial authority to issue orders allowing minors to consent to abortions and disclosure of that authority.*

Texas requires parental consent for an unmarried minor (under 18) to have an abortion procedure. If a minor does not receive parental consent, she may seek a judicial bypass, where a judge may grant permission for said minor to have the abortion. The judge that hears and rules on the application (and/or appeal) is often a "traveling judge", and therefore not elected as are all other judges in Texas. Unlike any other case that is heard in their court, the judge and their decision are anonymous and therefore cannot not held accountable. This is not the way our system was designed to work.

HB 1942 seeks to bring accountability to the judicial bypass process by allowing only *elected* judges to grant judicial bypass, and to make the judge's decision and their name public information, as it is in all other cases. This bill does **not** seek to identify the minor applying for the judicial bypass.

House Bill 1943 - *Relating to the indexing of correction instruments in a county index to real property records.*

HB 1943 will provide a simple fix for county clerks when correcting recorded documents related to real property. By clarifying that clerks must index the instrument according to the grantor and grantee in the real property transaction, HB 1943 will lead to a more efficient county government.

Upcoming Events and Dates

Texas Independence Day

This Monday, March 2nd will be the 179th anniversary of the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Take time and celebrate the unique history and heritage of the great state of Texas!

Border Security Press Conference

I will join my colleagues and Speaker Pro Tem Dennis Bonnen at a Press Conference on Monday, March 2, 2015, 3:30 pm, as we roll out border legislation of which I have coauthored that is vital to the entire State of Texas.

Bill Filing Deadline

All bills must be filed by 6:00 PM on Friday, March 13th. After this point, members may not submit bills for consideration. The following week, the House and Senate can begin considering bills in their respective chambers.



As always, please stay in touch with me and feel free to drop by my District Office, follow me on Facebook or find me on the House Website to hear about upcoming events.

Thank you, it is truly an honor and a privilege to serve as your State Representative.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron".

Ron Simmons
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