

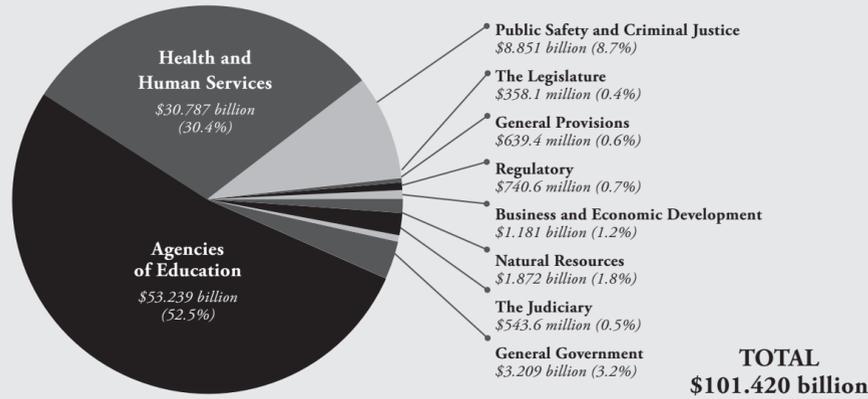
TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Budget Highlights

The 2014-2015 State budget is 101,420 Billion Dollars.

As you can see, Texas spends the most of its money in two areas, Education and Health & Human Services. Together, they total more than 80% of the State's budget.

2014-15 ALL FUNDS BUDGET



Teacher Retirement System

\$530 million in new funding. Increased contributions from 6.4% to 6.8% helping ensure that there is enough money in the system to cover current and future retirees in the Teacher Retirement System.

CPRIT

\$600 million in bond proceeds for continued cancer research to the Cancer Prevention Research Institute.

Public Education

We provided funding to anticipate enrollment growth of up to 85,000 to 87,000 additional students. This is an increase of \$3.4 billion from the FY12-13 budget cycle.

Community Colleges

Community colleges will receive an additional \$33 million, a 1.9% increase through the first two years of the next budget cycle.

Medicaid

Medicaid obligations were covered including growth at \$3.37 billion for increased caseloads and cost of services. The Medicaid dollar increase also includes funding for the CHIP program.

Family Protective Services

Spending for foster care and abuse protection programs was increased by 17.6% to \$1.5 billion.

TDHCA

Texas Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs received an additional \$10 million to sustain programs that provide housing and other services for the homeless.

Mental Health

Spending on agencies within the Department of Health and Human services increased by over \$250 billion for mental health services.

Transportation

Upon passage of a constitutional amendment, Transportation spending will increase by \$878 million by 2015.

Water

\$2 billion for water improvements was set aside from the State's "Rainey Day Fund" that will lead to the financing of over \$26 billion for needed improvements, if passed by voters in the November 2013 election.



Representative Collier presided as House Speaker of the Day on January 29, 2013.

CONTACT REPRESENTATIVE COLLIER

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P.O. Box 2910 • Austin, Texas 78768-2910
NICOLE COLLIER
State Representative



HOUSE DISTRICT 95 HELPFUL NUMBERS

Emergency, Fire and Phone 911
Statewide Non-Emergency 211
Poison Control 800-222-1222

County Helpful Numbers
Tarrant County Sheriff Dept. 817-884-3099
Crime Victim's Hotline- Sheriff Dept. 817-392-4390
Birth & Death Certificates 817-531-6764
Elections Clerk 817-831-8683
Tax Office 817-531-5635
Vehicle Registration 817-294-1075
Human Services- Food and Shelter 817-321-4700
Rent and Utility Assistance 817-531-5640
Tarrant County Health Department 817-531-6738

State Helpful Numbers
State Rep. Nicole Collier 817-330-9095
Attorney General's Office- Child Support 817-884-1475
Dept. of Public Safety- Driver's License 817-285-1900
Texas Workforce Commission 817-336-3727

City Helpful Numbers
City of Fort Worth 817-392-2255
City of Fort Worth- Water 817-392-4477
City of Forest Hill 817-568-3000
Everman City Hall 817-293-0525
Kennedale City Hall 817-985-2100
Edgcliff Village City Hall 817-293-4314
Arlington City Hall 817-459-6777

School Districts Helpful Numbers
Fort Worth ISD 817-740-5520
Everman ISD 817-568-3527
Kennedale ISD 817-572-1812
Arlington ISD 682-867-4611

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TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Tarrant County
District 95

NICOLE COLLIER

Dear Friend,

During my first session as your State Representative, I was honored to represent you and your family at the State Capitol in Austin. After my swearing in on January 8th, it was my privilege to be appointed to three powerful committees in the House. I served on the Local and Consent Calendars Committee, the Defense and Veteran Affairs Committee as well as the Public Health Committee, which accounts for one of the largest expenditures of our State Budget.

In terms of legislation, we had quite a successful session although there is more to be done. We were able to restore \$3.4 billion back into Public Education. We went a long way in addressing our future water needs by providing \$2 billion to fund the Water Development Board, which will provide financing for water and wastewater improvements around the State. We removed unnecessary fees from utility bills and provided utility bill relief for low income families during the hot summer months.

We passed House Bill 5 which reduces the number of standardized tests from 15 to 5 and creates more flexibility for teachers, students and parents to choose for themselves the best academic path to follow. In addition we increased access to mental health intervention and suicide pre-

vention programs in schools and made preventative information more accessible.

I was successful in passing a very important piece of legislation, House Bill 2620, which establishes a task force to examine domestic violence against pregnant and post-partum women. Pregnant women and those who have recently given birth are at a very high risk of being abused by their partner and this task force will develop and implement best practices on how to curb that violence.

I will continue to fight for legislation that will automatically expunge the arrest records of those who were wrongly arrested, expand the availability of affordable healthcare, as well as push for the examination of the overwhelming number of minority student referrals to the Special Education Programs in our schools.

I hope this Newsletter will be helpful to you as it contains several pieces of information including key legislation passed, helpful phone numbers, budget details and vital information on the upcoming Constitutional Amendment Election to be held on November 5, 2013. As always, please call or email me if I can ever be of any service to you.

Nicole

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES LEGISLATIVE REPORT

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Representative Nicole Collier was appointed to the Public Health, Defense and Veteran Affairs, and Local and Consent Calendar Committees by the Speaker of the House, Joe Straus.

Public Health Committee

Public Health was responsible for passing SB 7, which redesigns the way Medicaid services are provided for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) who are in need of both acute-care and long term services.

“SB 7 would improve critical-care, long-term services, and support to individuals who are intellectually or developmentally disabled, while eventually saving the state more than \$100 million per year,” said Rep. Collier. This will be done by implementing and expanding the Medicaid system to disabled, elderly and chronically ill residents.

More than 11,000 intellectually and developmentally disabled adults currently on waiting lists will receive the care and services that they need with SB 7. Over time, increasing numbers of disabled, aged, and chronically ill Medicaid recipients will receive maintenance care in their communities, reducing their reliance on heavy care in emergency rooms which are more costly.



Public Health Committee of the 83rd Legislature

Defense and Veterans' Affairs

The Defense and Veteran Affairs Committee has jurisdiction over veteran issues, emergency preparedness, the defense of the state and nation, and military bases.

Important legislative accomplishments of the Defense and Veteran Affairs Committee were HB 2392, SB 1158 and SB 1159.

HB 2392 gives veterans and family members access to licensed mental health professionals and grants to organizations providing these services.

SB 1158 and SB 1159 better serves veterans throughout the state in meeting their education and workforce needs. SB 1158 creates veteran college resource counselors and establishes a state award recognizing universities and colleges for veteran education excellence. SB 1159 makes it easier for a Texas veteran to receive their Hazelwood benefits.

Local and Consent Calendars

The Local and Consent Calendar Committee is responsible for scheduling a list of local or noncontroversial bills to be passed before the House. The total number of bills passed under the Local and Consent Calendar were 993.



Rep. Collier reviewing bills that were up for a vote on the house floor

Representative Collier's first bill, House Bill 2620, was passed and signed into law on June 14, 2013. It creates a task force that will study domestic violence and its impact on infant and maternal mortality, the health of mothers, and the health and development of fetuses, infants, and children. Pregnant and post-partum women are twice as likely to experience domestic violence than women who are not pregnant or nursing.

This task force will help to bring awareness to health services available to victims of domestic violence, educate healthcare providers and educators to identify victims, and make recommendations to improve early screening, detection, and public awareness efforts.

IMPORTANT LEGISLATION PASSED DURING THE 83RD LEGISLATURE

HD 95 Day at the Capitol on March 26, 2013 was a chance for residents to know the legislative process and learn first-hand what their Representative is doing for them.



HD 95 residents who visited the Capitol courtesy of Rep. Collier during HD 95 Day on March 26, 2013.

Juvenile Justice

House Bill 2058, by Representative Alma Allen, allows county juvenile probation departments to administer a high school equivalency exam online to individuals under 18 who are in the custody of the juvenile justice system. Sixteen and Seventeen year olds who are at risk of dropping out may now receive their GED.

House Bill 528 and Senate Bill 394 makes records related to fine-only misdemeanors confidential for all juveniles, whether or not they have been convicted. Background checks are used throughout the country and state for employment, housing, federal and state benefits, and acceptance into certain university programs. Juvenile records often become a barrier for a child or adult to access basic services and become a productive citizen due to a crime committed years ago. These bills help individuals to move on with their lives in the most productive and effective way by removing these barriers.

Education

Nearly one in four Texas children is classified as “food insecure” meaning they may not know where their next meal is coming from. Senate Bill 376, by Senator Eddie Lucio II, requires school district campuses or open-enrollment charter schools with 80% or more of their students qualifying for a free breakfast to offer a free breakfast to each student. While providing each student a free breakfast SB 376 also lowers administrative costs for school districts. SB 376 will be enacted starting in the 2014-2015 school year. This bill provides children in need with a healthy meal to start their day and expand the school program to more than 700,000 children, making this bill one of the most important anti-hunger victories at any state capitol in the United State in 2013.

Senior Care

House Bill 2383 enables Medicaid applicants who own a life insurance policy to convert their policy into a long-term care benefit plan. Once the policy is converted, the individual is able to receive funds rather than being forced to surrender the policy and use the proceeds from the sale of the life insurance policy for their long-term care needs. The funds are placed into an irrevocable trust or licensed financial institution that is used to spend-down the proceeds on Medicaid-eligible expenses, paid directly to a long-term care service provider. This bill also requires that a funeral expense benefit be preserved for the family and that any unused proceeds from the account be paid to the owner's estate or beneficiary if the individual dies prior to exhausting the funds in their trust.

The Texas Legislative Black Caucus held Town Hall Meetings across the state on July 24, 2013. During this meeting, legislators met and discussed the various issues that would affect their constituents.



Representative Collier addressing the audience at the HD95 Town Hall Meeting in March 2013.

Upcoming Events

Veteran's Day Breakfast

Monday, November 11th at 8:30 AM
American Legion Hall, Post 838,
1250 Mansfield Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas

Senior Christmas Breakfast

Saturday, December 7th at 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM
New Forest Hill Community Center,
6901 Wichita Street, Forest Hill, Texas

Annual Christmas Reception

Wednesday, December 18th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Please bring an unwrapped gift for a needy child.
Please call (817) 330-9095 for additional information.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION

★ TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2013 ★
Early Voting: October 21 - November 1, 2013

For additional information or questions about the Constitutional Amendments or the election, please feel free to contact our office at: (817) 330-9095 or email: Nicole.Collier@house.state.tx.us.

AMENDMENT	BALLOT LANGUAGE	DESCRIPTION
Proposition 1 H.J.R. 62	Authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a member of the armed services of the United States who is killed in action.	Allows the spouse of a serviceman/woman who was killed in action to receive a tax exemption on his/her home.
Proposition 2 H.J.R. 79	Eliminating an obsolete requirement for a State Medical Education Board and a State Medical Education Fund, neither of which is operational.	Removes unnecessary language from the Constitution regarding entities no longer in existence.
Proposition 3 H.J.R. 133	Authorizing a political subdivision of this state to extend the number of days that aircraft parts that are exempt from ad valorem taxation due to their location in this state for a temporary period may be located in this state for purposes of qualifying for the tax exemption.	Extends the time aircraft suppliers can house unused parts before being taxed on those parts.
Proposition 4 H.J.R. 24	Authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from all or part of the ad valorem taxes for the homestead residence of a partially disabled veteran (or surviving spouse) if the residence was donated by a charitable organization.	Allows for a tax exemption on homes for partially disabled veterans that were donated by charitable organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and the like.
Proposition 5 S.J.R. 18	Authorizing the making of a reverse mortgage loan for the purchase of homestead property.	Allows those aged 62 and older to use reverse mortgages to purchase a home and provides safeguards for the process.
Proposition 6 S.J.R. 1	Providing for the creation of the State Water Implementation Fund and the State Water Implementation Revenue Fund.	Provides \$2 billion for water projects around the State.
Proposition 7 H.J.R. 87	Authorizing a home rule municipality to provide in its charter the procedure to fill a vacancy on its governing body for which the unexpired term is 12 months or less.	Allows “Home Rule” cities to fill a vacancy on the Governing body without an election if the term is less than 12 months.
Proposition 8 S.J.R. 54 & H.J.R. 147	Repealing Section 7, Article IX, Texas Constitution, which relates to the creation of a hospital district in Hidalgo County.	Makes it easier for Hidalgo County to create a new hospital district that meets local needs and circumstances.
Proposition 9 H.J.R. 42	Relating to expanding the types of sanctions that may be assessed against a judge or justice following a formal proceeding instituted by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct.	Provides additional sanctions the Commission of Judicial Conduct may levy in judicial misconduct proceedings.

Speaking Engagements:

I always enjoy listening and discussing legislative issues with individuals and community groups in House District 95. I have had the pleasure of meeting with students, neighborhood association members, City Council members, County Officials, and various non-profit groups to name a few.

Please feel free to contact my office at (512) 463-0716 or (817) 330-9095 if your organization would like to schedule a date and time for me to visit.

EMAIL UPDATES ★ SOCIAL MEDIA

If you wish to receive email updates from Rep. Nicole Collier, please email Nicole.Collier@house.state.tx.us with your name and email address.
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