

Giovanni's Journal

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*"The only reason for time is so that everything doesn't happen at once."
-Albert Einstein*

The last few weeks have flown by quickly! I'd like to give you all a quick recap of what we have been up to but first let me start off with some exciting news. Today, I was appointed Chairman of the permanent subcommittee on State and Local Bond Indebtedness. Our charter is to consider all matters pertaining to state and local debt including the effect of issuing debt, the economic impact of that debt, and the transparency of, and information provided to taxpayers relating to the issuance of debt. State and local governments levy taxes and fees to service existing debt. Texas taxpayers need to be informed about how much debt our governments are taking on, what the debt is buying and how long it will take to repay. I look forward to presiding over this subcommittee, and I am thankful to Rep. Tan Parker for the appointment.

The process of setting the budget continues. The subcommittee I serve on, HAC / Articles 6,7, and 8, has completed its initial recommendations to the full committee and we are busy working on budget riders. Over the past few weeks we have received public testimony on agency budgets (for us that includes the Texas Department of Transportation, the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, The Railroad Commission, Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Texas Medical Board and over 30 others!). We have been using a fine-tooth comb to review the budget and the Agency's exceptional items line by line. The budget riders section includes requests by members to add and subtract certain items on the budget - we will be studying 500+ of these riders over the next few days.

In our Investments and Financials Services Committee, we heard testimony

from a variety of Texas investment professionals and organizations, from Angel Investors (early stage) to Private Equity (late stage). Our goal is to review best practices in the industry and to find ways to keep Texas the largest importer of domestic capital in the United States!



Top: Visiting with the Heritage Middle School Choir from Grapevine Colleyville ISD, who performed at the Capitol for Arts Education Day.

Bottom: Presenting a memorial resolution to Boy Scout Troop 905 of Colleyville.

But with all that we still had time to meet with hundreds of constituents who visited our offices in Austin. I had the pleasure of spending time with folks from Grapevine who were in town for a tourism event, the Leadership Southlake team, our Independent School District PTA members, business leaders from Keller and even the extremely talented Colleyville Heritage Middle School Choir. It was almost like being back home! So come visit we would love to see you down here.

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State Rep. Capriglione Partners with Art in the Square

For the second year, State Representative Giovanni Capriglione (R-Southlake) will partner with Southlake Women's Club signature event, Art in the Square, which has donated over \$2 million in grants to local charities since 2000. The festival will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year (April 24-26) and features a special section dedicated to high school student artists. The contest is open to students in NE Tarrant County with a March 27th deadline for submissions. Applications and guidelines are available at <http://www.artinthesquare.com/for-artists/youth-art-in-the-square/>.

The Grand Prize for the top student artist will receive the Lone Star Artist Award. The winner will have their artwork displayed for a week in the Texas Capitol Rotunda and will receive a trip to Austin with their family including a VIP tour and two-night accommodations, courtesy of Southlake charity Kids Matter International. Up to \$500 in prizes will go to runner-ups in the contest, provided by local realtor Roxanne Taylor.

Representative Capriglione says "I am amazed at the level of tal-



Rep. Capriglione congratulates finalists for the 1st Annual Lone Star Artist Award.

ent presented from students in my district and am honored to help showcase artwork for thousands of visitors to admire in the Texas Capitol." Last year the contest received over 300 submissions from local students and the Lone Star Artist Award winner was a senior at Timbercreek High School in Keller ISD.

Bills: Courts, Credit Cards & CDLs

HB 1694: "Municipal Civil Appeals" House Bill 1694 determines that Tarrant County criminal courts have jurisdiction over all criminal matters, whether it be criminal trials or any subsequent appeal proceedings. However, Tarrant County criminal courts do not have original jurisdiction over civil court proceedings.

HB 1695: "Family Court Dockets" This bill relates to Internet access to certain district court family dockets. It requires that a court must provide online Internet access to the family court docket on a website maintained by the court.

HB 1696: "Gas Tax Notice at Pumps" House Bill 1695 amends the Agriculture Code to add that a dealer may not sell motor fuel from a pump unless the dealer prominently displays on the pump a sign the federal and state motor fuel taxes imposed on the motor fuel.

HB 1697: "Limitation on Rate of Growth" House Bill 1697 relates to the maximum rate of growth allowed for appropriations spending in a state fiscal biennium. A companion bill has been filed by Senator Van Taylor in the Senate (S.B. 403).

HB 1698: "State Pension Information" House Bill 1698 relates to certain state pension information that may be considered non-confidential and thus be subject to public records requests. A companion bill is being filed by Senator Van Taylor in the Senate (S.B. 115).

HB 1699: "Domestic Violence Annulment" This bill amends the Family Violence section of the Family Code to add that the court may grant an annulment of a marriage to a party to the marriage if the court finds that the other party to the marriage has committed family violence against the party.

HB 1778: "Sanctuary Cities" This bill mandates the verification of immigration status of arrested persons no later than 48 hours after arrest and before the person is released on bond. This requires the law enforcement agency that has custody person to request information regarding the person's immigration status from another law enforcement or agency authorized under federal law to verify immigration status. If this information reveals the person is not a citizen or national of the United States and is unlawfully present, it is required notice be provided to the judge

authorized to grant or deny bail and to United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

HB 1881: "Private School Credit Cards" House Bill 1881 amends the Business & Commerce Code to authorize certain private schools to charge fees for processing or handling certain payment or payment transactions. This would allow private schools to charge a fee to the cardholder for paying any fee, tuition or other charge with a credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer to reimburse the school for any expense incurred by the school in processing and handling the payment.

HB 1888: "Commercial Driver's License" House Bill 1888 increase the penalty for the offense of driving a commercial motor vehicle without a commercial driver's license. This bill makes the offense a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000. The offense becomes a Class B misdemeanor if during the trial of the offense it is shown the defendant was previously convicted of this offense within a year preceding the date of the offense that is the subject of the trial.

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