Dear Constituents of House District 93,

Greetings! My name is Matt Krause and I am your state representative for House District 93.

It has been a pleasure to serve you in the Texas Legislature striving to make our great state even better. During the 85th Texas Legislative Session my colleagues and I worked to do just that and passed several bills into law, affecting our district and our state. This newsletter serves to give you information on a few key bills that were passed into law so that you may be informed on what your legislators did in 2017.

If you have any questions on this legislation or if you have ideas on how we can better serve House District 93, please contact our Capitol office at (512) 463-0562 or district office at (817) 847-4900.

Sincerely,

State Representative
House District 93

Committees: Culture, Recreation & Tourism; Land & Resource Management
HB 1818 — This bill continued the existence of the Railroad Commission of Texas, a state agency that largely regulates oil and gas. One of the amendments to HB 1818 that passed with the legislation was the elimination of the Alternative Fuels Program. This program historically wasn’t receiving funding and it was thoroughly argued that it wasn’t an appropriate role of government to expend resources on such a program.

SB 1 — The state’s budget for the next biennium, this bill was successfully amended to secure an extra $20 million for the Alternatives to Abortion (A2A) program, a program that provides low-income pregnant women with pregnancy and parenting information as well as other supports such as:

- Counseling referral and pregnancy information hotline, 877-345-7734.
- Support groups in maternity homes.
- Referrals to community and social service programs such as child-care, transportation, housing, and state and federal benefit programs.
- Classes on life skills, budgeting, parenting, stress management and General Education Development (GED).
- Items such as car seats, maternity clothes, infant diapers and formula.

HB 62 AMENDMENT — This bill is Texas’ new texting and driving law. When it was debated on the House floor it temporarily allowed for an individual to be prosecuted for texting and driving by both the state and a municipality, effectively being penalized twice for the same infraction. Your representative amended it such that an individual would only be prosecuted by the state if they broke both state and local texting and driving laws.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Budget, SB 1 — $216.8 billion for two years. $80.4 billion for education, $79.5 for Health and Human Services, $31.9 billion for Transportation and Economic Development, $12.3 billion for Public Safety and Criminal Justice, $8.08 billion for general government, $4.5 billion for Natural Resources.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Spends $988,908,961 from Economic Stabilization Fund (Rainy Day Fund)
- Maintains full funding for enrollment growth for public education
- Maintains rate and level funding for institutions of higher education
- Defunded Planned Parenthood
- Provides up to $38.3 million for the Alternatives to Abortion (A2A) program.
- Total increase of $334.3 million over the past budget for behavioral health-related funding for a grand total of more than $3.3 billion for this biennium.
- $40.9 million to increase rates to foster families and providers.
- $80 million for 598 new caseworkers for CPS.
- Continued funding of $800 million for border security.

COMMUNITY-BASED FOSTER CARE, SB 11 — This bill established a “readiness review” of new contractors and adds a process to evaluate contractor performance. It set up a quality assurance division within DFPS to monitor contract compliance and quality. It also included provisions to improve delivery of medical services to foster care children through new requirements for timely medical examinations. Additionally, this bill requires DFPS to conduct an assessment of the state’s foster care needs and to develop recommendations on increasing foster care capacity throughout the state.

STRENGTHENING KINSHIP CARE, HB 4 — Placing foster children within families that they are related to has proven to be the most successful way to help children who are in state conservatorship. Kinship Care allows kids to remain within their family structure which provides greater emotional support and better long term outcomes. This bill provides additional monetary assistance for Kinship Care placements based on a family’s need.

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Sanctuary Cities, SB 4 — This bill created penalties for local entities and campus police departments who adopt or enforce policies which prohibit enforcement of immigration laws. It allows the Attorney General to petition for the removal of a violating public official from office and created a grant program with the Office of the Governor to provide assistance to offset costs for full immigration enforcement.

Pro-Life, SB 8 — This bill bans partial-birth abortions and prohibits the sale of fetal tissues and organs. Partial-birth abortions are already banned by federal law, but state prosecutors can’t enforce federal law. This bill provides an enforcement mechanism for Texas to prosecute those who perform partial-birth abortions. Additionally, SB 8 prohibits the method of dismemberment, a method of abortion in which a person, with the purpose of causing the death of an unborn child, dismembers the living unborn child and extracts the unborn child one piece at a time from the uterus.

2nd Amendment

• SB 16 — Expands 2nd Amendment rights by lowering the handgun license and application fee so as to not place an undo financial burden on Texans. The application price is lowered from $140 to $40 and from $100 to $40 for renewals.

• SB 263 — repeals the minimum caliber requirement (.32) for demonstrating handgun proficiency during the range instruction portion of the License To Carry course.

• HB 1935 — Repeals the prohibition on the possession or carrying of knives such as daggers, dirks, stilettos, and Bowies, by eliminating them from the prohibited weapons section of the Texas Penal Code.

Election Integrity

• HB 25 — Eliminates straight-party voting in Texas

• Voter ID Law, SB 5 — This bill requires the Secretary of State to establish a program using mobile units to provide election identification certificates to voters in order to satisfy voter ID requirements. It also allows for voters who are unable to meet the photo ID requirement to meet the voter ID requirements by showing one of a list of approved forms of non-photo ID and executing a declaration stating that the voter has a reasonable impediment to meeting the photo ID requirement.

Public Safety

• SB 7 — Inappropriate Teacher-Student Relationships. This bill expands the criminal liability for teacher-student relationships to include educators who target students in other schools or other school districts. It also criminalizes the failure to report such inappropriate relationships and revokes the pension of a teacher convicted of an improper relationship with a student. This bill also requires parental notification when an inappropriate teacher-student relationship is alleged.

• HB 62 — Statewide ban on texting while driving.

Increased Reporting Requirements for Abortions, HB 13 — This bill requires hospitals, emergency care facilities, and abortion clinics to report within thirty days any complication or injury resulting from abortion as a specific complication of abortion, rather than a general complication of maternal health. Any physician who performs an abortion that results in a complication must also report within three business days. Furthermore, a facility that violates this reporting requirement is subject to a civil penalty of $500 for each violation.

Minor Consent Reporting for Abortions, HB 215 — Requires physicians to document and report the method by which a minor obtained authorization for an abortion.

• If obtained by parental consent, whether the parent was present at the time of consent, and

• If obtained by judicial authorization, the physician’s role in facilitating the minor’s appearance before the court.

It also requires physicians performing a third trimester abortion due to a severe fetal abnormality to certify the type of abnormality identified.

Consumer Choice for Elective Abortion Coverage, HB 214 — This bill removes mandatory coverage for elective abortions from health insurance plans, regardless of whether it is a government plan or a private plan. It allows for optional elective abortion coverage through the purchase of a separate plan. Through this bill, Texas joins 25 other states that currently limit coverage for abortions in health insurance.

Municipal Annexation, SB 6 — Currently municipalities may annex a nearby area without the consent of those in the annexed area. This bill aims to address this issue by making the municipal annexation process require the consent of the residents being annexed through either an election or petition process when the city is located in a county with a population of 500,000 or more. Additionally, SB 6 authorizes municipalities to annex only if the property in question is in the municipality’s extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force, SB 17 — In 2013 the Legislature created the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force that researches ways to prevent and address the causes of maternal deaths and complications. The task force has since produced two reports, providing critical information on maternal mortality trends and demographics in Texas. It’s become evident that there’s more work for the task force to do, but it was set to expire in 2019. SB 17 extends the commission to 2023 and provides additional direction to further research and develop strategies to better address maternal mortality and morbidity.
District 93 * How Can We Help?

CAPITOL OFFICE:  DISTRICT OFFICE:
P.O. Box 2910, Capitol Room E2.214  6624 N. Riverside Drive, Suite #330
Austin, Texas 78768-2910  Fort Worth, Texas 76137
(512) 463-0562  (817) 847-4900
(512) 463-2053 fax  (817) 847-4902 fax
Matt.Krause@House.Texas.Gov

REPRESENTATIVE MATT KRAUSE

Representing Tarrant (part) County • 85th Legislative Capitol Update • Fall 2017

Office Services
As always, my office is here to serve you – on the House floor and off; during the session and the interim. Whether you need assistance in dealing with a state agency, have questions about state services, want to talk about past and potential legislation, or you are looking for help and you don’t know where to start, my office is ready to serve. Please feel free to contact us at any time!