

ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas House of Representatives



May 3, 2019

Friends,

After today, there are 24 very long days left in the 86th legislative session. On Monday, all House bills that have not been reported out of committee are considered dead and will not become law this session unless they have a Senate companion that is moving through the process. My colleagues and I are hard at work pushing bills through the process and helping to usher legislation through in the Senate.

The Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act

The House passed SB 2 on Tuesday. Our current property tax system lacks transparency. SB 2, the Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act, provides critical transparency mechanisms that empower taxpayers and voters by giving them a say in the property tax rate-setting process. A more open process is beneficial to everyone, and taxpayers deserve every opportunity to weigh in on how their taxes are being raised and spent.

The Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act encourages taxpayers and local governments to work together in setting a budget and adopting property tax rates that meet the needs and obligations of their community. This bill gives property owners the tools they need to make informed decisions by disclosing online and on tax notices who is proposing a rate increase, by how much, and when and where they can go to make their voice heard at a public hearing. It also gives taxpayers the option of filling out a short online form to provide their opinion on the proposed rates, which is then sent directly to the taxing unit.

The Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act is not a revenue cap, it is a trigger. Current rollback election requirements put an unnecessary burden on taxpayers by requiring them to gather enough signatures to petition for an election. This bill empowers voters because it automatically triggers an election to ratify a property tax rate if it is raised above the rollback rate.

The Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act provides property tax reform. The budget and school finance legislation provides \$2.7 billion for property tax relief. All three work together. Meaningful property tax reform can not be achieved without school finance reform which is why the final passage of the Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act is contingent upon the final passage of the House's landmark school finance bill, HB 3.

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Day at the Capitol

The month of May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Texas is home to generations of Americans who take great pride in their heritage. On Wednesday, I was proud to sponsor a celebration at the state Capitol for individuals who trace their ancestry to Asia and the Pacific Islands. I authored a resolution honoring the history and contributions of the Asian community to Texas. It was a great opportunity to visit with Governor Greg Abbott and Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, in addition to discussing issues of importance with Speaker Dennis Bonnen, Comptroller Glenn Hegar, Land Commissioner George P. Bush, Secretary of State David Whitley, and other legislators. Thank you for all those that helped make this event possible and for the hundreds of guests who participated!



Kicking off Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Day at the Capitol with legislators and attendees

Healthy Texas Woman

Today, I passed SB 2132 to help ensure new mothers receive proper follow-up care. The Healthy Texas Women (HTW) program provides health services and family planning at no cost to eligible women in Texas. Reports on statewide trends in maternal death and morbidity identify a need to increase access to health services during the year after pregnancy and in between pregnancies to improve outcomes and better facilitate continuity of care.

I filed HB 1641, the companion bill to SB 2132, to address this issue and help ensure women receive proper care after childbirth by requiring the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to send information to qualifying women, who are automatically enrolled in the program, about HTW. The information will explain the services provided and will give a list of participating medical providers in the area. SB 2132 is a step in the right direction to help better inform eligible women of the HTW program's services.

Visitors from the District

This week we were visited by Leadership Garland as they traveled to Austin to learn more about their state capitol. These emerging leaders are participating in a wonderful program designed to develop their personal, organizational, and community leadership skills. It was wonderful to have this group in Austin to help educate legislators on the issues that are important to Garland.



Governor Abbott joined Sen. Nathan Johnson and me to welcome Leadership Garland to the Capitol.

On Wednesday, students from Naaman Forest High School's Varsity A Capella Choir came to visit their state capitol. These talented students led by their choir director, Terrence Jennings, traveled down to Austin to meet with their state legislators and to showcase their hard work with some of their songs. It was wonderful to meet with these exceptional students.

Sincerely,

Angie Chen Button

If you would like to be added or removed from this mailing, please email Angie.Button@house.texas.gov.