

# ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



## The State of Texas House of Representatives



*May 10, 2019*

Friends,

Happy Mothers Day!

This was a big week in Austin. Thursday marked the 122nd day of session and the last day for House bills that are not local or consent bills to be considered on 2nd reading. Simply put, if a House bill was not already voted on, it is "dead" and will not become law this session. We have been working long hours all week and debated bills right up until the midnight deadline last night. For bills that are considered local bills, the deadline is May 17th.

This session, we have been working very hard to reduce property taxes. One of the proposals on the table was an increase in the sales tax to offset property taxes. If passed, HJR 3 would have raised the state sales tax a penny from 6.25% to 7.25%. As many of you already know, I did not support this legislation. While I have been working to reduce the property tax burden and I appreciate my colleagues discussing all of our options, I do not believe this is the right way to

accomplish property tax relief or education reform. I sincerely appreciate House leadership listening to my concerns and respecting the members of the House who voiced opposition to the proposal.

### **HB 2786 - Working Parents & Quality Daycare**

This week the House passed HB 2786 by a vote of 138-2 which I filed to help provide additional information to working parents and to collect data that may contribute to the quality of care our children receive in daycare. A majority of children under five will receive care from someone other than a parent and many of those children are cared for in some form of organized child care. Having access to quality daycare is important to our workforce and economy. There have been numerous studies done speculating that employee turnover rates impact the quality of care but we do not have concrete numbers in Texas to evaluate how these rates actually impact daycare centers and the care they provide.

Additionally, many daycare directors have stated that the number one question they receive from parents is about their turnover rates. Parents have no way to easily verify the information they are given. HB 2786 seeks to gather data and to make it available to the parent by requiring daycare providers to report their employee turnover rate when they renew their license and for the information to be easily accessible on the searchable database already maintained by Texas Health and Human Services.

### **SB 239 - Increasing Transparency and Access to Information**

I filed HB 1356, the companion bill to SB 239, to ensure the meetings of certain special districts take place in a location that is reasonably accessible to the residents of the district by requiring the special district to capture video and audio recordings of the district's public meetings and make the recordings available on the internet. This will give better access to open meetings for residents who pay taxes to a special district. I was happy to pass SB 239 in the House today.

### **Higher Education**

This week, my alma mater, The University of Texas at Dallas was named the best value for a public university in Texas. The list highlights schools with the highest quality and best financial outcomes. UT Dallas is tied for 15th among U.S. public universities and moved up from 61st last year to tie for 31st among public and private U.S. institutions. "While no single metric or ranking can capture the full picture of our dynamic university, this particular ranking speaks highly of our value to students and their families," UT Dallas President Richard C. Benson said. Forbes compiled its fourth annual ranking of the 300 Best Value Colleges by comparing data on 645 colleges and universities across all 50 states. The schools were evaluated in six areas: quality, net price, net debt, alumni earnings, timely graduation and access for low-income students. The 2019 list evaluates both public and private institutions offering four-year degrees and can be found by visiting [www.utdallas.edu/news/2018/4/23-32934\\_UT-Dallas-Rises-in-Forbes-Rankings-of-Best-Value-C\\_story-wide.html](http://www.utdallas.edu/news/2018/4/23-32934_UT-Dallas-Rises-in-Forbes-Rankings-of-Best-Value-C_story-wide.html).



**Celebrating our favorite universities with the Higher Education Committee. I was thrilled to represent my alma mater UT Dallas!**

As co-chair of the Dallas Area Legislative Delegation, I was proud to host a meeting this week of our delegation. We focused our meeting on the budget priorities for our area and invited key stakeholders to brief us on specific actions that our delegation can take to ensure positive outcomes. Both funding bills, HB 1 and SB 500, are currently being negotiated in conference committee. After the conference committee works out differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill, the compromise language will be back on the floor for consideration by the full House. During our meeting, we discussed protecting critical health care funding, securing funding for our public and higher education institutions, and ensuring that our cities have adequate funding and authority to support our local law enforcement and to provide economic development tools.

Serving alongside Dallas Area Legislative Delegation co-chair Rep. Victoria Neave has been a great experience and we will continue to work together as a delegation to benefit our communities.



**The Dallas Delegation Meeting held a very productive meeting this week. I was happy to join with my Co-Chair, Rep. Victoria Neave, Reps Morgan Meyer, Julie Johnson, Carl Sherman, and John Turner to discuss the priorities for Dallas County.**

Sincerely,

*Angie Chen Button*

If you would like to be added or removed from this mailing, please email [Angie.Button@house.texas.gov](mailto:Angie.Button@house.texas.gov).