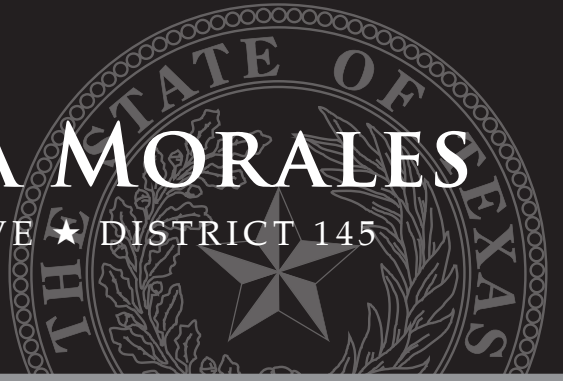




CHRISTINA MORALES

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ DISTRICT 145



CAPITOL UPDATE

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



DISTRICT 145

Constituents of House District 145:

Now that the 88th Regular Legislative Session and two special sessions have come to an end, I want to share an update on what legislation passed and the things that will impact our community over the coming months. All three Legislative Sessions were no doubt difficult, and many harmful bills passed through the Legislature and went to the Governor's desk. Nevertheless, we managed to pass bills that will help our community and communities across Texas. There was much that we did to defend our rights, fight for funding for our communities, and do the work that the people of Texas called upon us to do.

I am proud to serve another term on the International Relations and Economic Development Committee and to now serve on the Criminal Jurisprudence Committee and Resolutions Calendar Committee. We heard from many stakeholders on bills ranging from capital punishment to bolstering workplace protections. Committees were busy this session, and we did good work such as adding changes to a bill that will now give additional opportunities to historically underutilized businesses - small, minority, and women owned, in rural communities.

During the 88th Legislative Session, I authored 11 bills with a focus on addressing constituent issues. After refilling my Ethnic Studies bill as HB 45 to bring Ethnic Studies courses to all students in Texas and to ensure that all high school students have an opportunity to learn their history, we heard from students and teachers across the state. Professor Tony Diaz, Dr. Angela Velazuela, and many activists came to the Texas Capitol to advocate for the bill and their continued support is greatly appreciated.

The 88th Legislative Session was five hard months of fighting to protect rights in Texas. My priorities continue to be access to and funding for the highest quality public education, bolstering our economic security, and providing high-quality healthcare for every Texan. These are the areas in which to focus for the next legislative session. Though it is 15 months away, the work begins today.

The House of Representatives also had two special sessions to work on plans for distributing the \$18 billion allocated to property tax relief. The Governor has now signed the plan, including raising the homestead exemption to \$100,000, 20% cap on appraisal increases for non-homesteaded properties, and reducing the school property tax rate by 10.7 cents per \$100 of value. Unfortunately, the body chose to leave out priorities of renter relief, teacher pay raises, and increased school funding.

This fall, our office will be providing many legislative updates at civic clubs and community events. Please be sure to follow our social media and sign up for our e-newsletter to keep up with our events and these updates. If there is anything we can do to help, please remember that our district office is always open to serve constituents. Thank you for all that you do, and for making District 145 the vibrant and loving community that it is.

Sincerely,

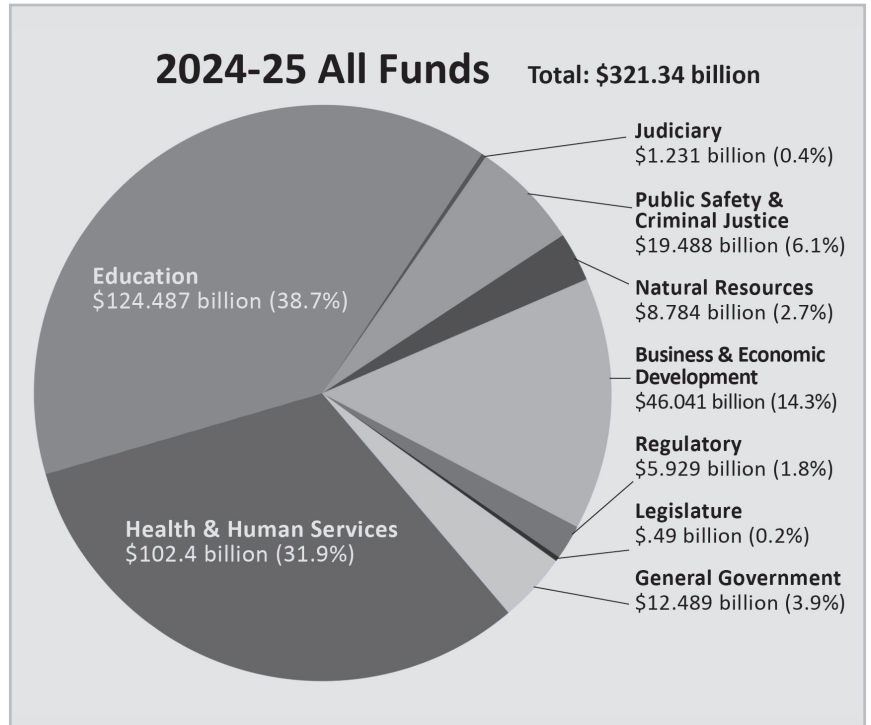
Texas House of Representatives
House District 145



Fito Olivares, the King of Cumbia, sadly passed away in Houston on March 17, 2023 at the age of 75. Fito Olivares ushered in a new era of cumbia and his influence endures to this day. I was proud to author a resolution in the Texas House of Representatives that paid tribute to the memory of Fito Olivares. His family came to the Texas Capitol to be recognized and receive the resolution.

EDUCATION

- **HB 8** establishes a public junior college state finance program that ensures community colleges have funding for instruction and operations and establishes a program to provide financial aid to high school students in dual credit courses.
- **HB 1263** ensures that HISD high schools have school zone safety features.
- **HB 3928** adds dyslexia to public schools' special education programs and expands access to dyslexia testing.
- **HB 4005** creates a financial aid program for learners in a competency-based degree program who are generally from lower income backgrounds.
- **SB 2139** establishes an Opportunity High School Diploma program for junior college students enrolled in a workforce education program to earn a high school diploma.



ENERGY/PUC:

- **SB 1094** establishes a Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) pre-approval process for purchased power agreements.
- **SB 1699** will allow consumer power generation such as home solar to feed into the state's grid.
- **SB 2627**, the Powering Texas Forward Act, establishes funding to support the construction and operation of reliable electric facilities.

HEALTHCARE:

- **HB 12** will provide 12 months of postpartum Medicaid coverage for women in Texas following a pregnancy.
- **HB 916** requires insurers to provide a three-month supply of contraceptive drugs the first time the prescription is filled and a 12-month supply each with each refill.
- **HB 1488** provides state support for initiatives that ensure sickle cell disease health care improvement and establishes the sickle cell task force.
- **HB 1575** authorizes Medicaid to provide case management services for nonmedical needs for pregnant women and their children.
- **HB 1649** requires health plans to cover fertility preservation services to cancer patients.
- **HB 2802** makes it easier for Medicaid members to receive critical information about their enrollment or eligibility renewal.

SEXUAL ASSAULT & HUMAN TRAFFICKING:

- **SB 1849** creates databases to identify workers who committed abuse in vulnerable populations such as schools, child-care facilities, juvenile justice facilities, and long-term care facilities.
- **SB 1402** adds trauma-informed approaches for sexual abuse investigations to the basic peace officer course.

OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS:

- **HB 446** revises Health and Human Services Code to use the term intellectual disability.
- **HB 567** prohibits discrimination on the basis of hair texture and styles associated with race.
- **HB 2248** designates September 30th as Vanessa Guillen Day.
- **SB 379** exempts diapers, baby wipes, feminine hygiene products, maternity clothing, breast milk pumping products, and baby bottles from sales tax.



My grandsons came to the Texas Capitol this session to spend the day on the floor. They saw how we vote, how we debate bills, and the work that happens to keep our state government running.

★ 88TH LEGISLATION BY REP. CHRISTINA MORALES ★

I proudly authored 10 bills in the 88th Legislative Session, addressing important issues in our community such as access to Ethnic Studies courses, stray animals, and child custody.

THREE BILLS PASSED THE TEXAS HOUSE:

HB 120 - Relating to the terms and conditions of a standard possession order in a suit affecting the parent-child relationship.

HB 3639 - Relating to active shooter response training for peace officers, including school district peace officers and school resource officers.

HB 4216 - Relating to certain notifications related to the rights of crime victims.

FILED SEVEN BILLS THAT WERE INTRODUCED IN THE TEXAS HOUSE:

HB 45 - Relating to ethnic studies instruction in public schools.

HB 86 - Relating to required maintenance on heating and air conditioning systems at public school instructional facilities and to the liability of certain facilities handling hazardous substances for damages caused to public schools.

HB 143 - Relating to restrictions on rent increases for self-service storage facilities.

HB 763 - Relating to a study by the Public Utility Commission of Texas on the interconnection of electric transmission service facilities with the United Mexican States.

HB 3531 - Relating to the designation of Women's Equality Day as a state holiday.

HB 3587 - Relating to the required sterilization of adult animals seized and placed in the custody of a releasing agency more than once.

HB 5119 - Relating to the provision of employment assistance services to individuals of all gender identities and sexual orientations.



This Session, we were lucky to have Peggy join us as an intern for the day. Peggy is a special olympics intern and has a successful career competing in basketball, softball, bocce ball, powerlifting, aquatics, and bowling. She has won hundreds of medals in area, regional, and state competitions. She spent the day helping in our office and filed a bill, drafted emails to other State Representatives, and scheduled meetings!

HONORED TO JOINT AUTHOR BILLS THAT PASSED THE TEXAS HOUSE:

HB 54 - Relating to the personal needs allowance for certain Medicaid recipients who are residents of long-term care facilities.

HB 2095 - Relating to the restrictions that may be included in a protective order on a person found to have committed family violence.

HB 2248 - Relating to designating September 30 as Vanessa Guillén Day.

HB 2395 - Relating to the duties of peace officers regarding interactions with victims of sexual assault.



Eduardo Trevino, the mariachi prodigy, visited the Texas Capitol on March 15, 2023. He serenaded us with his beautiful voice and we met his lovely family. Young voices like his change the world, and we look forward to following his career as he continues to sing throughout Texas.



Visit the Capitol

The State Capitol Building is open to the public all year, with the exception of major holidays. The Capitol's visiting hours are 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

on weekdays and

9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on weekends.

Professionally guided tours of the Capitol are available throughout visiting hours, free of charge.

CHRISTINA MORALES

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Committees: Criminal Jurisprudence • International Relations & Economic Development • Resolutions Calendars

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UVALDE, TEXAS



On May 24, 2022, nineteen students and two teachers were killed in a shooting at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas. Last summer after meeting with the families of the victims of the Robb Elementary Shooting, we promised them that we would make it a priority to be a voice for the lives lost that day and fight for change.

At the Robb Elementary School shooting, less than half of all local Uvalde peace officers had completed active shooter response training and failed to take action when needed. HB 3639 will ensure that Texas peace officers receive active shooter response training every training cycle. It passed the Texas House with overwhelming support and was signed by the governor as an amendment to HB 13 addressing school safety. This bill will ensure officers prepare for and respond swiftly to active shooter situations, saving lives.

Additionally, I co-authored HB 2744 and advocated to raise the age needed to purchase an assault weapon from 18 to 21. Some members chose guns over people and refused to put it up for a vote in committee until it was too late, and the full Texas House failed to vote on HB 2744. Now, it has been one year since the Uvalde tragedy and another year that the Texas Legislature has failed to implement common sense gun safety reform and protect people over guns. HB 2744 did not pass, but we will never stop fighting for these families and for all the lives we have lost because of gun violence in this state.

As the leading cause of death of children in Texas, gun violence knows no boundaries.

It transcends race, age, gender, and socioeconomic status. The loss of life and devastating impact that gun violence has is immeasurable and tears families and communities apart. Change is not easy; it requires great amounts of perseverance to challenge the status quo. By fostering empathy, compassion, and a commitment to proactive change, we can work towards a future where students can feel safe and secure in the classroom.



Community vigil honoring the 21 Uvalde shooting victims one year after the shooting at Robb Elementary School.