





TEXAS HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

Terri Leo Wilson, State Representative

District 23 | Galveston and Chambers Counties

89TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Dear Friend and Neighbor,

It is an honor to serve the people of House District 23. As a member of the House Committees on Public Education and Intergovernmental Affairs, and its Subcommittee on State/Federal Relations, there is a steadfast commitment to advancing the values and interests of our strong Gulf Coast and Southeast Texas communities.

The 89th Legislative Session offered an opportunity to build productive relationships with colleagues and navigate the careful and deliberate process of lawmaking. While the Legislature is truly a marathon rather than a sprint, meaningful progress was made on legislation that directly supports the district and the broader region.

This update highlights the legislative efforts of the past session, when the Texas Legislature worked to pass commonsense measures to strengthen the economy, lower taxes, protect vulnerable children, and increase transparency in government. Importantly, a comprehensive state budget was adopted. This budget funds public schools, promotes higher academic achievement, and supports border security that helps keep coastal communities safe.

During the interim, I am meeting with constituents, local elected officials, teachers, business owners, faith leaders, medical professionals, and families to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing our coastal and rural counties. The insight shared will help guide legislative priorities for the next session and ensure the voices of Galveston and Chambers counties continue to be heard in Austin.

It is a blessing to represent Texans in this district. Both the Capitol and district offices remain open to anyone wishing to share ideas, concerns, or aspirations for the future. All are invited to stay engaged and help shape a stronger, brighter Texas.

For God and Texas,

Terri Leo Wilson

Terri Leo Wilson
State Representative
House District 23



Joint-authors and co-authors of SB 2 join Governor Greg Abbott at the Governors Mansion to celebrate the signing of the landmark school choice legislation.

State Representative Terri Leo Wilson was proud to vote and co-author legislative efforts in the following areas of policy:

Property Tax Relief

SJR 85: Proposes a constitutional amendment to raise the school district residence homestead property tax exemption for individuals aged 65 or older or disabled from \$10,000 to \$60,000.

SJR 2: Proposes a constitutional amendment to raise the public school district residence homestead property tax exemption from \$100,000 to \$140,000.

SB 4: Increases the school district residence homestead exemption from \$100,000 to \$140,000, provides state aid to offset district revenue losses, and establishes transitional tax procedures for 2025, contingent on voter approval.

SB 23: Raises the homestead exemption for elderly or disabled homeowners from \$10,000 to \$60,000.

School Finance

\$8.5 Billion Boost for Public Schools

- **Largest Teacher Pay Raise in State History:** Provides permanent across-the-board pay raises for teachers with at least 3 years of experience, providing a substantial incentive for teachers to make it to year 5 by at least doubling that pay raise.
- **Special Education:** \$850 million will overhaul special education and fund \$1,000 reimbursements for student evaluations for the first time.
- **Teacher Preparation and Certification Reforms:** Pays teacher candidates during training, rewards high-performing prep programs, funds grow-your-own programs and residencies and gives one-time incentives to districts.
- **Teacher Bill of Rights:** SB 27 protects and empowers public school teachers by limiting penalties for contract resignations, expanding leave options, waiving fees for high-need certifications, allowing removal of disruptive students, requiring threat notifications, and supporting the rehiring of retired teachers.
- **Permanent Support Staff Retention Allotment:**
 - o \$45/student to raise pay for support staff (non-teachers).
 - o Up to 50% of teachers can get new pay designations with higher raises.
 - o Free Pre-K for teachers where Pre-K is offered.
 - o Optional state liability insurance for teachers.
- **Early Learning Reforms:** Provides free literacy screeners to all districts, funds required intervention if a student fails two in a row, and invests in math training for K–3 teachers.
- **Career and Technical Education:** Boosts funding for new instructional facilities and career/technical programs, including the Rural Pathway Excellence initiative.
- **Charter School Facility Funding:** Increased support for charter schools to cover costs like facility leases, property taxes, bond payments, and facility purchases.
- **School Safety Allotment:** Provides increased funding to support both students and campuses, strengthening safety measures across schools.
- **Additional School Finance Reforms:** \$1.3B in funding; districts receive \$106 per student to cover payroll, healthcare, insurance, utilities, transportation, and hiring retired teachers.



State Representative Terri Leo Wilson is pictured at the back mic on the house floor during the legislative session.

School Choice

Creation of the Education Savings Accounts for universal school choice in Texas

- **Texas ESA Program – \$1 Billion Investment in Educational Freedom**
- Empowers parents to customize their child's education using state funds.
- Run by the Texas Comptroller.
- Open to all Texas students (priority for low-income & special needs)
- What's Covered?
 - o Private school tuition, pre-K, tutoring, textbooks
 - o Certification programs, transportation, therapies, meals
 - o Funds used through a secure online marketplace.

Bail Reform

SB 9: Reforms pretrial confinement and bail by restricting release for certain defendants.

SB 40: Prohibits cities and counties from using public funds to pay bail for criminal defendants.

SJR 5: Proposes a constitutional amendment to allow judges to deny bail for certain violent offenders, when evidence shows it's necessary to protect public safety.



State Representative Terri Leo Wilson is captured presenting Rev. Dennis Diana Voris and Rhonda Richardson a copy of HCR 12 naming September Deaf Awareness Month.

Constitutional Amendments on the November 4th, 2025 Ballot

- Proposition 1 / SJR 59:** The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the permanent technical institution infrastructure fund and the available workforce education fund to support the capital needs of educational programs offered by the Texas State Technical College System.
- Proposition 2 / SJR 18:** The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of a tax on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or trust.
- Proposition 3 / SJR 5:** The constitutional amendment requiring the denial of bail under certain circumstances to persons accused of certain offenses punishable as a felony.
- Proposition 4 / HJR 7:** The constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the revenue derived from state sales and use taxes to the Texas water fund and to provide for the allocation and use of that revenue.
- Proposition 5 / HJR 99:** The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation tangible personal property consisting of animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail.
- Proposition 6 / HJR 4:** The constitutional amendment prohibiting the legislature from enacting a law imposing an occupation tax on certain entities that enter into transactions conveying securities or imposing a tax on certain securities transactions.
- Proposition 7 / HJR 133:** The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a veteran who died as a result of a condition or disease that is presumed under federal law to have been service-connected.
- Proposition 8 / HJR 2:** The constitutional amendment to prohibit the legislature from imposing death taxes applicable to a decedent’s property or the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift.
- Proposition 9 / HJR 1:** The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation a portion of the market value of tangible personal property a person owns that is held or used for the production of income.
- Proposition 10 / SJR 84:** The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire.
- Proposition 11 / SJR 85:** The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district of the market value of the residence homestead of a person who is elderly or disabled.
- Proposition 12 / SJR 27:** The constitutional amendment regarding the membership of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, the membership of the tribunal to review the commission’s recommendations, and the authority of the commission, the tribunal, and the Texas Supreme Court to more effectively sanction judges and justices for judicial misconduct.
- Proposition 13 / SJR 2:** The constitutional amendment to increase the amount of the exemption of residence homesteads from ad valorem taxation by a school district from \$100,000 to \$140,000.
- Proposition 14 / SJR 3:** The constitutional amendment providing for the establishment of the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, establishing the Dementia Prevention and Research Fund to provide money for research on and prevention and treatment of dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, and related disorders in this state, and transferring to that fund \$3 billion from state general revenue.
- Proposition 15 / SJR 34:** The constitutional amendment affirming that parents are the primary decision makers for their children.
- Proposition 16 / SJR 37:** The constitutional amendment clarifying that a voter must be a United States citizen.
- Proposition 17 / HJR 34:** The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the market value of real property located in a county that borders the United Mexican States that arises from the installation or construction on the property of border security infrastructure and related improvements.



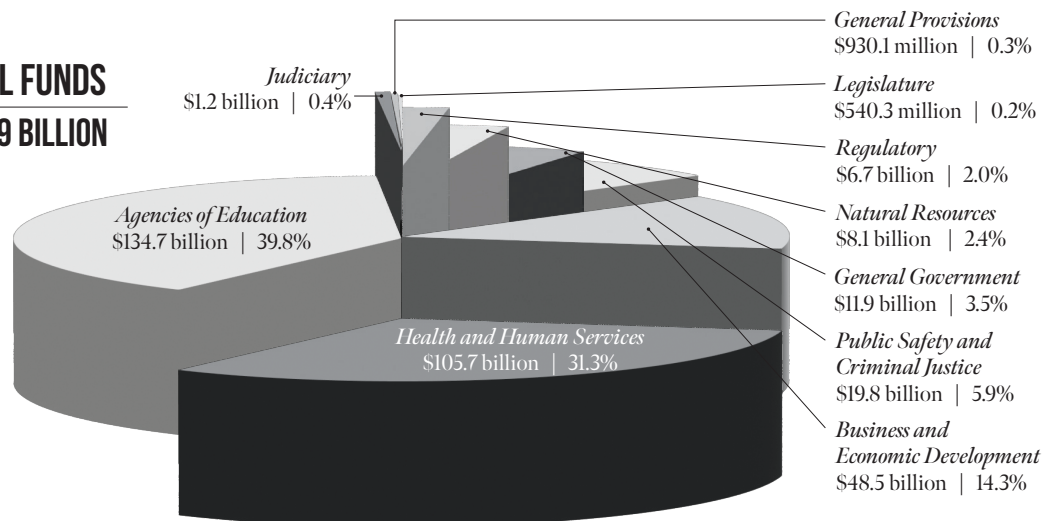
State Representative Terri Leo Wilson is proud of the staff members who helped make her second session a successful one. (Pictured: Samuel Yates - Legislative Aide, Andrew McKiernan - Legislative Aide, Saul Mendoza - Chief of Staff, Elizabeth Alford - Legislative Aide, Rebecca Currie - Legislative Intern, Camille McWhorter - Legislative Aide, Caleb White - Legislative Director; Not Pictured: Interns - Caroline Brown, Mark Lucas, and Mackenzie Foster; District Director - Susan LeBlanc)



The Anahuac High School Honors Society visiting their State Capitol.

★ BUDGET BREAKDOWN ★

2026 - 27 ALL FUNDS
TOTAL = \$337.9 BILLION



Highlights of State Budget (SB 1 & HB 500)

Total Appropriations: \$338.2 Billion

General Revenue: \$149.2 Billion

Stays under all state spending limits & grows less than the rate of population growth and inflation, reinforcing Texas's reputation for smart, fiscal discipline that puts taxpayers first.

\$16 Billion below the limit on General Revenue spending

\$2.9 Billion below the limit on what can be spent without borrowing

\$3 Billion below the limit on tax money that can be constitutionally spent.

District Budget Items

- \$7 Million to Fund the Juneteenth Museum of Galveston
- \$8 Million per Fiscal Year to Fund the Texas A&M Galveston Maritime Academy
- \$4.5 Million per Fiscal year for Galveston County Crisis Stabilization Services

Property Tax Relief

\$51 Billion - 15% of the Budget is Dedicated to Property Tax Relief

- \$11.2 Billion more in relief from the previous biennium, including compression & contingent on the passage of other legislation
- Up from approx. \$40 Billion spent in the previous biennium
- Maintains \$100K homestead exemption and 10.6¢ rate compression
- Adds 6.8¢ in additional rate compression to buy down property taxes

Public Education

\$75 Billion in total including \$8.5 Billion in new targeted education reforms and an additional \$2 Billion in recapture reduction

- \$4 Billion for Teacher Compensation
- \$500 Million for Support Staff Compensation
- \$1 Billion for school choice via Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)
- \$430 Million for school safety upgrades
- \$850 Million towards Special Education
- \$369 Million to reduce the cost of health insurance for teachers

Health & Human Services

Strategic wage increases for personal care attendants, to keep essential care workers on the job

- Over \$215 Million for rural healthcare & grants for new ambulances
- \$1 Billion in wage increases for personal care attendants
- \$340 Million for new mental health beds, plus \$54 Million youth crisis outreach
- \$252 Million for women's health & maternal safety
- \$116.5 Million to keep foster kids closer to home with Community-Based Care
- \$49.8 Million for additional support for children and adults with disabilities

Public Safety

Prioritizes Public Safety & Backs Law Enforcement

- \$3 Billion to secure the border
- \$421 Million to add 467+ state troopers & improve driver license services
- \$330 Million to support local law enforcement & rural enforcement
- \$411 Million to expand correctional facilities
- \$378 Million to boost corrections/probation officer pay

Infrastructure & Energy

Smart & innovative investments from roads to water to nuclear energy

- \$30 Billion for road projects across Texas
- \$5 Billion for the Texas Energy Fund
- \$2.5 Billion for water & flood infrastructure (HB 500)
- \$350 Million to advance nuclear energy via Texas Energy Fund (HB 14)

- \$1 Billion for high-risk cybersecurity projects
- \$135 Million to establish the Texas Cyber Command
- \$493 Million to improve wildfire response & readiness
- \$100 Million for childcare waitlist reduction



State Representative Terri Leo Wilson is pictured with members of the Texas City - La Marque Chamber of Commerce.



Terri Leo Wilson, State Representative

District 23 | Galveston and Chambers Counties

COMMITTEES: Public Education • Intergovernmental Affairs • Subcommittee on State-Federal Relations

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BE SURE TO FOLLOW REPRESENTATIVE LEO WILSON ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM & X (formerly known as TWITTER)!

CONSTITUENT ASSISTANCE

The Office of State Representative Terri Leo Wilson is always available to constituents who need assistance with state-related issues. Constituents may call our Capitol and Galveston district office with any questions or concerns.

CAPITOL TOURS

The office is able to coordinate Capitol tours for any constituent visiting Austin. Constituents who schedule a tour will be led through the Capitol and get a glimpse at the history of the building and of the state. The tour makes stops in both the House and Senate chambers. In addition, the office is also able to coordinate Capitol Dome tours. This tour has restrictions on time availability and a 15 person group limit, and a medium level of physical activity. To schedule any of these tours please contact the Austin Capitol office.

LEGISLATIVE RECOGNITIONS

Know someone in District 23 who deserves recognition? Let us know! We frequently arrange for official House Resolutions recognizing community service, academic and extracurricular scholastic accomplishments, and other outstanding works of note in our community.



State Representative Terri Leo Wilson welcomes a new freshman legislator to the Texas House during their first bill layout.



State Representative Terri Leo Wilson was excited to have Waylon and Elijah serve as honorary pages during the legislative session during Galveston County Day.



**LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE
OCTOBER 6, 2025**



**EARLY VOTING
OCTOBER 20 – OCTOBER 31, 2025**



**ELECTION DAY
NOVEMBER 4, 2025**

CHECK YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION STATUS AT [VOTETEXAS.GOV](https://www.votetexas.gov)

