



# Terry Canales

ACTUALIZACIÓN DEL CAPITOLIO

Otoño 2015

Distrito 40



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Diputado Terry Canales  
Distrito 40

Estimados Amigos y Vecinos,

Antemano les doy las gracias por la oportunidad de servir a Texas y al Distrito 40 durante la sesión 84 de la legislatura. Desde Enero hasta los principios de Junio, mis compañeros legisladores y yo trabajamos en la capital del estado para poder asegurar de que Texas continúe creciendo rápidamente como estado.

En esta sesión, logramos contribuir \$1.5 billones de dólares adicionales para nuestras escuelas públicas, incluyendo \$130 millones de dólares para un Pre-kinder de mejor calidad. Los legisladores de Texas al igual contribuyeron con una grande inversión para el Valle Del Rio Grande. La nueva Universidad University of Texas Rio Grand Valley (UTRGV) recibió en general un financiamiento de asignación para este bienio de \$253,529,606, que solo es segundo de la universidad de Texas en Austin. La educación es un equalizador, y estas inversiones hacen que los estudiantes del Sur de Texas reciban la educación que necesitan para poder triunfar en la vida.

La única medida que la constitución de Texas requiere para los legisladores es aprobar cada bienio con un presupuesto equilibrado. Sin embargo, hemos revisado y discutido muchas otras cuestiones y propuestas de leyes que afectan a este estado y las vidas de todos los Tejanos. Más de 6000 propuestas de ley fueron presentadas en la sesión 84 de la legislatura, y los políticos encargados pasaron innumerables horas deliberando y examinando las propuestas legislativas, en un esfuerzo para hacer de Texas aun un mejor lugar para criar una familia, tener un negocio propio y vivir. Mientras teníamos éxito en la reunión muchos de los retos que enfrentan los tejanos, aún hay más por hacer especialmente en cuanto a educación, salud y desarrollo económico.

Espero que encuentren útiles estos resúmenes. Si tienen algún comentario, duda o sugerencia por favor haganos saber sus comentarios. Una vez más, muchas gracias por la oportunidad que me dan de servirles como su portavoz en la Cámara de Representantes de Texas.

Dios los bendiga y Dios bendiga a Texas!

Muy atentamente,

State Representative Terry Canales



COMMITTEES: Criminal Jurisprudence; Energy Resources



Rep. Canales with wife, Erica and sons, Terry Andres and Caleb, at Swearing-in Ceremony



# Terry Canales

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## ★ What Your Representative's Office Can Do For You: ★

The day to day operations of a legislative office are never set in stone, but the primary goal is to serve constituents. From working in the community to resolving an issue with a state agency, the Capitol and District offices of Representative Terry Canales are here to help you with issues small and large.

- If you are having difficulty working with a state agency, please let us help to ensure your voice is heard, and your matter is considered promptly and fairly.
- If you have an idea to improve state government, contact the Capitol office to determine the feasibility of new legislation
- If you are visiting Austin as an individual or as part of a group, contact our office in advance to arrange a special tour of the Texas Capitol and other historic location around the Capitol complex.

The offices can be reached by email at Terry.Canales@house.state.tx.us, or by phone at (956) 383-7444 in Edinburg and (512) 463-0426 in Austin.

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# Terry Canales

CAPITOL UPDATE

Fall 2015

District 40



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Representative Terry Canales  
District 40

Dear Neighbors and Friends,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve Texas and House District 40 during the 84th Legislative Session. From January through the beginning of June, my fellow lawmakers and I worked at the State Capitol in order to ensure that Texas continues to meet the constant needs of our rapidly growing state.

This session, we were able to invest an additional \$1.5 billion dollars into our public schools, including \$130 million into high quality Pre-K. The Texas Legislature also made a large investment in higher education for the Rio Grande Valley. The new University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) received a general revenue appropriation for this biennium of \$253,529,606, which is second only to the University of Texas at Austin. Education is the great equalizer, and these investments make it possible for South Texas students to receive the education they need in order to succeed in life.

The only measure that the Texas Constitution requires lawmakers to pass each biennium is a balanced budget. However, we reviewed and debated many other issues and proposed laws that affect this state and the lives of all Texans. More than 6000 bills were filed in the 84th Legislative Session, and policymakers spent countless hours deliberating and examining the legislative proposals in an effort to make Texas an even better place to raise a family, own a business, and live. While we were successful at meeting many of the unique challenges facing Texans, there is still more to be done, especially regarding education, healthcare, and economic development.

I hope that you find these summaries helpful. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please know that I welcome your feedback. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to serve as your voice in the Texas House of Representatives.

God bless you and God bless Texas!

Very truly yours,

State Representative Terry Canales



COMMITTEES: Criminal Jurisprudence; Energy Resources



## 84th Legislature



Rep. Canales and former Rep. Mary Ann Perez discuss the importance of education in South Texas

### THE STATE BUDGET AND TAX RELIEF

This session the Legislature provided additional funding for transportation, education, Texas parks, and child protection services while balancing the budget. With the goal of job creation and economic growth, the Texas Legislature approved nearly \$4 billion in tax relief, a 25 percent reduction in the business margins tax, as well as a \$10,000 increase in the homestead exemption, which reduced school property taxes for homeowners.

### TRANSPORTATION

As Texas continues to grow, funding for our state's highways has actually decreased over the past decades, with far too many Texans wasting their valuable time in traffic on our congested roads. This session the Legislature appropriated more money to transportation without raising taxes, fees, or tolls. House Bill 1 did away with using the gasoline tax to pay for things that had nothing to do with building, expanding, or repairing our state highway system. As a result, transportation funding increased by \$1.3 billion over the next two years. Additionally, constitutional amendment SJR 5 proposed to dedicate \$2.5 billion of sales tax revenue and 35 percent of motor vehicle sales tax revenue to the State Highway Fund. SJR 5 will be voted on by Texas voters on November 3, 2015.

### EDUCATION

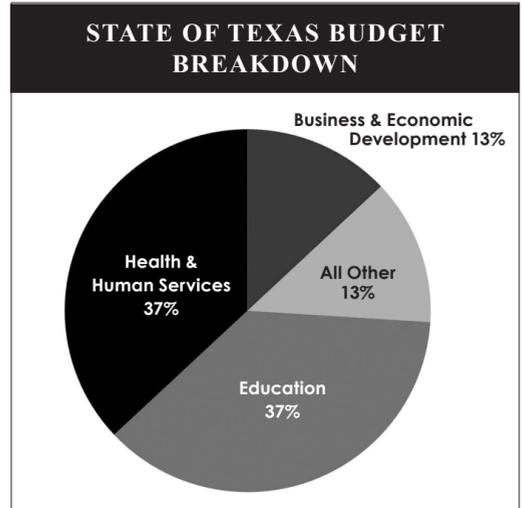
By working together, Democrats and Republicans were able to fully fund enrollment growth and place additional money into our public schools. The Legislature also stepped up to the challenge of implementing new reform measures targeted at helping low-performing schools and economically disadvantaged students.

House Bill 4 will promote high quality Pre-kindergarten by increasing available funds, recommending better student/teacher ratios, and expanding teacher certification and

continuing education requirements. House Bill 1842 will adopt new procedures for intervening in and assisting certain low-performing schools, requiring a strategic campus turnaround plan. House Bill 2804 creates a new A-F letter rating system for all public school campuses, in order to help parents and students more clearly understand their school's performance. Most importantly, HB 2804 improves the school accountability system by decreasing the overemphasis of state-mandated standardized tests.

### STATE PARKS

This session, Texas lawmakers passed House Bill 158, which ends diversions of the Sporting Goods Sales Tax. This tax was originally dedicated to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), but over the years was used by the legislature for other purposes. HB 158 will provide an additional \$89.6 million for Texas parks, which will go a long way in managing and conserving the natural and cultural resources of Texas. The added money will help provide more hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.



Rep. Canales and Rep. Senfronia Thompson discuss legislation on the House Floor



## 84th Legislature



Rep. Canales speaking at press conference announcing the filing of the landmark legislation creating the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

### FIGHTING FOR LOCAL FUNDS

With tremendous population growth in South Texas, many motorists have faced long wait times at Texas Driver License offices in Hidalgo County. This session, \$2 million was dedicated for a new high-capacity Driver License office in Edinburg to more effectively serve the residents in our region.

The South Texas International Airport at Edinburg has also continued to expand over the past decade. This session, the airport received \$3,000,000 in the state budget for hanger expansion, which is crucial to the long-term growth plan of increasing economic growth in the City of Edinburg. The Department of Public Safety also plans to build a \$2,000,000 multi-use training facility in Edinburg. This DPS facility will be used by state and local law enforcement professionals for training at a centralized South Texas location.

### BRINGING FUNDS TO UTRGV

Over the past two sessions, Rep. Canales has been a strong advocate for additional tuition revenue bonds. Tuition, rentals, rates and other charges of an institution of higher education may be pledged to the payment of these bonds. This session, Rep. Canales authored House Bill 2097 and co-authored House Bill 100, to secure funding for new construction at the University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley. HB 100 was approved by the Legislature, and provides and additional \$30,600,000 for construction of an interdisciplinary engineering academic studies building at UTRGV in Edinburg and \$36,432,000 for construction of a new multipurpose academic building at UTRGV Brownsville. This funding addresses the critical needs of the new UTRGV and helps prepare the university for projected student enrollment growth.

### UTRGV LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Leading up to this past session, Rep. Canales worked with the University of Texas-Pan American (now the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley) to establish the first Valley Legislative Internship Program. With the generous support of the UTPA Foundation, five UTPA students received a

salary, college credit, and an invaluable learning experience. They served with distinction in the offices of Hidalgo County lawmakers for the five-month regular session of the Texas Legislature.

The internship gives the students a unique opportunity to interact with officials from all levels of state and local government while providing first-hand knowledge of the critical issues facing our community and molding them into the leaders of tomorrow.

### SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE ACCESS FOR THE DELTA REGION

Working in collaboration with officials in the Delta area. House Bill 382 requires the creation and implementation of a plan by South Texas College to expand higher education programs leading to an associate degree in the Delta area. HB 382 is a vital step in the right direction because it will increase access to higher education, especially in Elsa, Edecouch, La Villa, Monte Alto, and San Carlos.



Inaugural Valley Internship Program Class

### COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

This session, Representative Canales was once again appointed to the powerful House Committee on Energy Resources. The committee oversees all of our state's oil, natural gas, and renewable energy production, which contributes billions of dollars to our state's budget each year and has created many of the highest-paying jobs in Texas. He remains focused on harnessing our state's incredible natural resources in an environmentally-safe and responsible manner, while protecting the ability of local communities to regulate local oil and gas drilling.

Rep. Canales was also reappointed to the House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence, where they led the charge towards a "Smart on Crime" approach. He is a strong advocate of expanding diversion, treatment, and probation programs that serve as effective alternatives to incarceration. The "Smart on Crime" approach is designed to lower the number of repeat offenders going back to prison while saving taxpayer money.



## 84th Legislature



### PROTECTING TEXANS FROM UNSCRUPULOUS PROPERTY DEALS

House Bill 311 dramatically improves a specific kind of real estate transaction, called contracts for deed. Contracts for deed are a way of selling real estate, which gives the buyer very few protections. Typically, these real estate deals are only used in colonias or economically-disadvantaged areas. They are basically the "rent-to-own" or "payday loan" version of property deals. This legislation makes a great step towards protecting homebuyers from unscrupulous sellers by strengthening legal protections for the buyer.

### PROTECTING TEXANS FROM ILLEGAL SEARCH AND SEIZURE

House Bill 644 addresses the abuses of the Panama Unit, a narcotics task force in Hidalgo County, which became corrupt and was convicted of their crimes. The Panama Unit created falsified search warrants and then scribbled illegibly on the judge's signature line. HB 644 requires that a search warrant in Texas include the legibly written magistrate's (judge's) name. This will help bring transparency to the process and make it more difficult for individuals to abuse our warrant process.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

With help from the Edinburg Economic Development Corporations (EEDC), Rep. Canales passes House Bill 2305, which will put more funds into local economic development programs throughout Texas. Economic development corporations are governmental entities that collect a portion of the local sales tax and use that money to keep, expand, or attract companies into the area, in exchange for those businesses creating more jobs. Yet, because of uncertainty in existing law, these economic development corporations were paying property taxes. No other governmental entities pay property taxes in Texas. This legislation will help the more than 700 economic development corporations in Texas, which collect and administer their respective one-half cent economic development sales tax.

### JUVENILE DRUG OFFENDERS

House Bill 642 creates drug education programs for youth offenders who get caught up in the criminal justice system. This legislation, drafted with the assistance of judges throughout the state, will create a program that will pay dividends throughout Texas. Drug education for our youth can help break the criminal cycle that can start in their teenage years and continue into adulthood. Our youth deserve drug education programs tailored to their needs and this is an important first step in combatting this all-too-common problem.

### EXPANDING COLLEGE SUCCESS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Many high schools across the Rio Grande Valley have students who are graduating from high school with 30 or more hours of college credit, due to the growth of dual enrollment programs. Previously, the law had prevented most high schools from taking more than two dual enrollment classes during a semester. HB 505 lifts that restriction and allows our students to get a jump on their college careers. If high school students are ready for college-level classes, we should support and encourage them to take advantage of these programs.



Rep. Canales with the Edinburg Retired Teacher Association

### RIGHT TO POTENTIALLY LIFE-SAVING DRUGS

Currently, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has a "compassionate use" exemption that allows terminally ill patients access to medications that are in the clinical trial phase. But as a result of House Bill 21, coauthored by Rep. Canales, the FDA's lengthy and unduly burdensome application process is replaced with a more efficient mechanism that results in a patient receiving the needed medication in a faster and more efficient manner. The time saved can make the critical difference - in living instead of dying - for a patient, because it allows them to start treatment when they are stronger and their bodies are healthy enough to fight and succeed with safe, ground breaking treatments.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

House Bill 283 requires more county commissioners courts, city councils, school districts and other local government entities to record public meetings and archive them online. Everyone deserves a chance to participate in our democracy. Technology costs have decreased rapidly and it is important that all elected bodies remain transparent and open to the public.