



Terry Canales

ACTUALIZACIÓN DEL CAPITOLIO

Otoño 2023

Distrito 40



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Terry Canales

Distrito 40

House Committee on Transportation, Chair • House Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety

Queridos amigos y vecinos,

Espero que usted y su familia se encuentre con buena salud, bienestar y buen animo. Como su representante electo para el Distrito 40 de la Cámara de Representantes, es un honor y un privilegio servirle en la Legislatura del Estado de Texas. Quiero aprovechar esta oportunidad para brindarles una actualización sobre la reciente sesión legislativa bianual y el trabajo que hemos realizado en su nombre.

Durante los últimos meses, he trabajado diligentemente junto con mis colegas no solo para abordar las diversas necesidades e inquietudes de nuestro distrito, sino también para salvaguardar el bienestar de nuestra comunidad. Me enorgullece informar que hemos logrado hechos importantes y promulgado varias leyes cruciales que tendrán un impacto positivo en nuestra comunidad y el gran estado de Texas.

En febrero, el presidente de la Cámara de Representantes, Dade Phelan, me nombró para desempeñar mi tercera sesión como presidente del Comité de Transporte de la Cámara de Representantes, que tiene jurisdicción entre otros, sobre las carreteras, ferrocarriles, aeropuertos, puertos marítimos de nuestro estado. Esta posición de liderazgo le da al Valle del Río Grande un asiento en la mesa sobre temas de transporte, lo cual es fundamental a medida que nuestra población continúa en auge y nuestras necesidades de transporte crecen.

Nuestra oficina ha priorizado el desarrollo y la inversión en infraestructura. Al asignar recursos a proyectos de transporte, mejorar el acceso de internet de alta velocidad en áreas rurales y actualizar nuestros sistemas de agua y energía, estamos construyendo una base sólida para el crecimiento económico y la sostenibilidad en todo nuestro distrito.

Sin duda, estos logros no habrían sido posibles sin su continuo apoyo y compromiso. Sus comentarios, inquietudes e ideas han sido invaluable a lo largo de esta sesión legislativa y han dado forma a las decisiones que he tomado en su nombre. Estoy comprometido a permanecer accesible y receptivo a sus necesidades y las necesidades de nuestro Distrito, así que no dude en comunicarse con mi oficina si necesita ayuda o tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud.

A medida que avancemos, continuaré trabajando incansablemente para representar sus intereses, defender los valores de nuestra comunidad y abogar por un cambio positivo. Estoy orgulloso de ser su voz en la Legislatura del Estado de Texas y permaneceré firme en mi compromiso con usted y nuestra visión compartida de un futuro próspero.

Gracias una vez más por su confianza en mí como su representante. Juntos, podemos construir un Texas más fuerte y dejar un impacto duradero para las nuevas generaciones.

Con Cariño,

State Representative, District 40



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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.texas.gov, or by phone at (956)383-0860 in Edinburg and (512)463-0426 in Austin.

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Terry Canales

CAPITOL UPDATE

Fall 2023

District 40



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Terry Canales

District 40

House Committee on Transportation, Chair • House Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family in good health and spirits. As your elected representative for House District 40, it is both an honor and a privilege to serve you in the Texas State Legislature. I want to take this opportunity to provide you with an update on the recent biannual legislative session and the work we have accomplished on your behalf.

Over the past several months, we have worked diligently to not only address the diverse needs and concerns of our district but also safeguard the well-being of our community. We are proud to report that we have achieved significant milestones and enacted several crucial pieces of legislation that will positively impact our community and the great State of Texas.

In February, I was appointed by the Speaker of the House, Dade Phelan, to serve my third session as Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation, which has jurisdiction over our state's highways, railroads, airports, seaports, and more. This leadership position gives the Rio Grande Valley a seat at the table on transportation issues, which is instrumental as our population continues to boom and our transportation needs grow.

Our office has prioritized infrastructure development and investment. By allocating resources to transportation projects, improving broadband access, and upgrading our water and energy systems, we are building a strong foundation for economic growth and sustainability throughout our district.

Undoubtedly, these accomplishments would not have been possible without your continued support and engagement. Your feedback, concerns, and ideas have been invaluable throughout this legislative session, shaping the decisions we have made on your behalf. Our office is committed to remaining accessible and responsive to your needs and the needs of our district, so please do not hesitate to reach out to our office if you require assistance or have any questions or concerns.

As we move forward, I will continue to work tirelessly to represent your interests, champion our community's values, and advocate for positive change. I am proud to serve as your voice in the Texas State Legislature and will remain steadfast in my commitment to you and our shared vision for a prosperous future.

Thank you once again for your trust and confidence. Together, we can build a stronger Texas and leave a lasting impact for generations to come.

Very truly yours,

State Representative, District 40



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★ **Major Legislation** ★

SENATE BILL 2 AND HJR 2 – HISTORIC PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

This past summer, the Texas Legislature came together to pass the largest tax cut in Texas history. The legislation includes provisions increasing the homestead exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000, creating a 23.8% savings on your local school district M&O taxes, doubling the franchise tax exemption, and the creation of new elected countywide positions on your local appraisal board. By returning a significant amount of taxpayer dollars back to Texans, we are helping to reduce the impact of Texas’ burdensome property tax system.



Chairman Canales addressing the House of Representatives

HOUSE BILL 9 AND HJR 125 – INVESTING IN BROADBAND ACCESS

During the legislative session, we made a significant investment of \$1.5 billion in state funds to support the expansion of broadband and telecommunication infrastructure across the state. When combined with the additional \$3.3 billion in federal funding, the State of Texas now has an opportunity to lead the nation through bold and ambitious infrastructure investments that will increase access and affordability, while supporting critical programs and fostering greater economic prosperity through a more connected Texas.

HOUSE BILL 12 - EXPANDING HEALTHCARE FOR WOMEN AFTER PREGNANCY

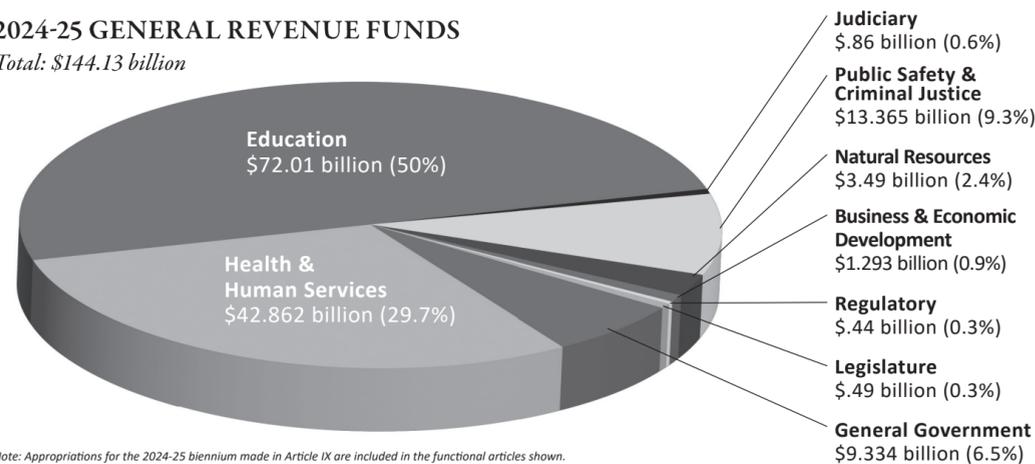
The legislation extends postpartum healthcare benefits to new mothers from two months to 12 months of coverage. Expanded coverage is needed to combat the rising Texas death rates for new moms, which is exceptionally high amongst women of color. The majority of the deaths are due to preventable medical issues, including hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and substance use disorder. This is a essential step in making motherhood safer in our community.

HOUSE BILL 3 – SCHOOL SAFETY

HB 3 creates a safety and security department within the Texas Education Agency (TEA), which will require school districts to establish and follow robust active shooter protocols. The bill also requires that TEA develop standards for notifying parents of “violent activity” on campus and set up school safety review teams to conduct vulnerability assessments of all the school campuses once a year. To further safeguard schools, the state will give each school district an additional appropriation of \$15,000 per campus and \$10 per student. In addition, lawmakers have allocated \$1.1 billion to TEA to administer school safety grants for the state’s more than 1,000 school districts.

2024-25 GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS

Total: \$144.13 billion



Note: Appropriations for the 2024-25 biennium made in Article IX are included in the functional articles shown. Not included are 2024-25 biennium transfers of General Revenue Funds to the Property Tax Relief Fund (Other Funds), totaling \$12.3 billion. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Legislative Budget Board

★ **88th Legislature** ★



Chair Canales with House Transportation Committee

FIGHTING FOR LOCAL FUNDS

- The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is slated to receive \$290,376,440 in funding through the General Appropriations Act. The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine saw its appropriations increase by nearly 20% to \$88,803,241 for the biennium. The top highlight at UTRGV was \$12 million over the next biennium for the new School of Podiatric Medicine at the UTRGV School of Medicine. The second cohort of students started school this fall working towards a four-year, graduate-level medical degree to become a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine.
- \$25 million for a new Texas A&M University System Health Science Center building in Hidalgo County
- \$120 million to build a new 50-bed mental health state hospital in the Rio Grande Valley
- \$85 million for the construction of inpatient mental health facilities with up to 100-bed capacity
- \$150 million to help complete the International Bridge Trade Corridor which will serve a critical role in diverting commercial truck traffic from local neighborhoods onto the state highway system
- \$20 million for the purpose of funding improvements to the Pharr International Bridge. The 20 million helps close a funding gap that will essentially double the capacity of the Pharr International Bridge, decreasing wait times and attracting more businesses to the Rio Grande Valley.
- \$10 million to help extend the runway at South Texas International Airport in Edinburg
- \$5 million for hangar extension at Mid-Valley Airport in Weslaco

CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

I am honored that the Speaker of the House, Dade Phelan, reappointed me to serve as the Chair of the House Committee on Transportation for the third consecutive session. The Transportation Committee has 13 Members and jurisdiction over the state’s highway system, railroads, airports, seaports, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV), and more. By the end of the Session, we vetted all 262 bills referred to the Committee, had hearings on 155 of the bills, and passed 75 of them into law.

Additionally, I have been focused on advocating for more transportation infrastructure funding for the Rio Grande Valley (RGV), which has resulted in our region anticipating the allocation of over \$3.6 billion in transportation infrastructure funds over the next 10 years. This is another significant victory for the Rio Grande Valley that will benefit all RGV residents. In August, the Texas Transportation Commission, the governing body of TxDOT, approved the 2024 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). This program is a statewide infrastructure planning document that will be used to develop Texas’ infrastructure for the next decade.

During the recent legislative session, I worked to extend two of our major transportation funding tools, which together make up over 40% of Texas’s transportation funding and will help ensure that our transportation system keeps pace with the demands of our growing population and economy. HB 2230 and SCR 2 demonstrate our state’s commitment to the ongoing improvement and expansion of our transportation infrastructure, ensuring that future generations can enjoy a reliable and efficient system that helps our communities thrive. House Bill 2230 extends Proposition 1, which dedicates a portion of existing oil and gas production taxes to Texas transportation projects. Senate Concurrent Resolution 2 extends Proposition 7, which dedicates portions of existing sales taxes and motor vehicle sales and rental taxes for Texas transportation projects. These pieces of legislation are only a snapshot of the House Committee on Transportation’s work this session. I welcome everyone to visit www.capitol.texas.gov to learn more about the measures we passed into law.

★ **Legislation by Rep. Canales** ★

During the recent legislative session, my staff and I had 28 pieces of legislation sent to the governor, where I served as the primary Author or Sponsor. Below, we have attempted to summarize some of the most important bills that we worked on for the constituents of District 40 during the 88th Legislative Session.

ESTABLISHING NEW WATER SOURCES

HB 5373 will help Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 create the first new drinking water supply source in the Rio Grande Valley in decades. Hidalgo County has seen an increase in major rain events and their intensities, which have resulted in significant property damage and have taken a heavy toll on our residents. As part of this bolstered focus on drainage, Hidalgo County is concentrating on major drainage projects, including the creation of the Delta Reservoir just northeast of Monte Alto. The reservoir will aid with flood water detention but also serve as the creation of the Rio Grande Valley’s first new potable water source in decades. Over the past several years, South Texas has come dangerously close to a major crisis due to drought and record-breaking heat.

HB 1556 reauthorizes the Texas Water Development Board, an agency that has provided almost \$4 billion in financial assistance to South Texas communities for water supply, water and wastewater treatment, flood control, and agricultural water conservation projects over the past 20 years.



Chair Canales discussing vital legislation with Public Education Chairman Brad Buckley (Salado)

PUBLIC SAFETY AND PROTECTING OUR FIRST RESPONDERS

House Bill 2314 makes it easier for the families of first responders who lose their loved ones in the line of duty to claim their loved ones’ death benefits. The current process is burdensome, and because of that, some families have not received the benefits they are owed.

House Bill 3555 amends the state’s Labor Code to add workers comp coverage for peace officers who sustain serious injuries when traveling to an emergency call, coverage that currently only applies to firefighters and EMS.

TRANSPARENCY AND OPEN GOVERNMENT

House Bill 3444 will require more local governments (cities, counties, school districts, water districts, and more) to post their meeting agendas online. This critical step toward greater transparency will empower our communities and ensure citizens can more easily find information on the actions of their local governments.

House Bill 2135 was amended onto HB 3033 by Landgraf. This language closes a loophole used by local governments to slow down the release of public information through a Texas Public Information Act (TPIA) request. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, some governments refused to respond to TPIA requests if their physical offices were closed, even if the staff was working remotely. The amendment closes this loophole and will ensure that reporters and the public can more quickly get information from our government.

SUPPORTING ADOPTION

Senate Bill 2376 creates a new “Support Adoption” License Plate and allows Texans to make a donation to support adoption services in Texas when they renew their Driver’s License. We have thousands of kids in Texas right now who are waiting to be adopted. We have to do more to support the children and families who are looking to adopt.