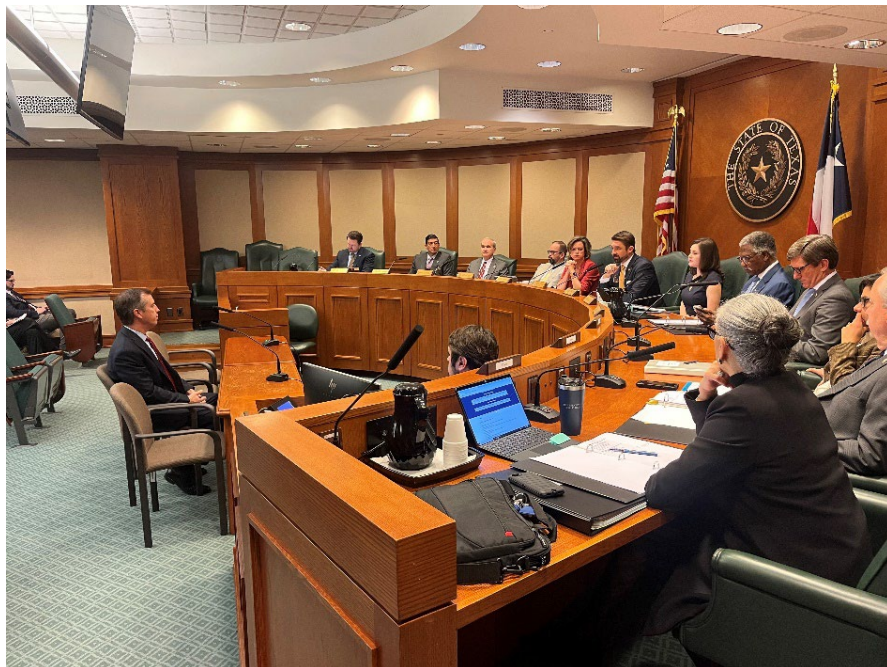


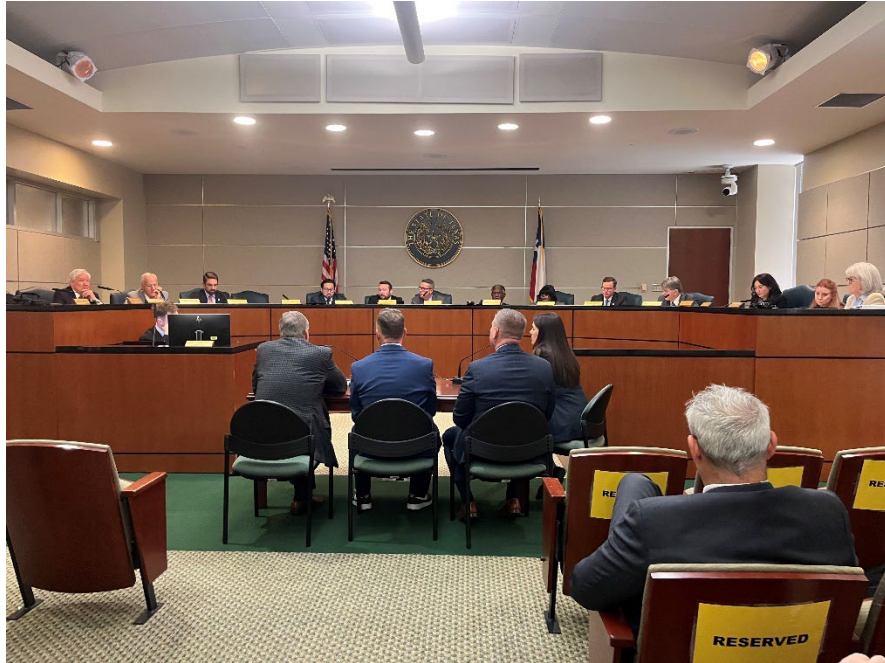
Dear Friends,

It was a busy week full of committee hearings. The committee I chair, Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence, had our first hearing this week. We heard invited testimony from the Supreme Court of Texas, the State Bar of Texas, the Office of Court Administration and more. It was great to get key updates from these important agencies and to hear the needs and challenges they face. I'm excited to keep pushing for a strong, fair and accountable judicial system this session.



Additionally, we had not one but two, hearings in the Public Education committee. On the agenda was [House Bill 2](#) which I highlighted in last week's newsletter. We heard testimony from school districts of all sizes, school board members, teachers and parents. There was a lot of excitement around the increases to the basic allotment and the targeted funding for

special education, a boost for small-midsize districts, and much-needed increases in teacher pay. Along with a suite of other public education bills, Texas stands to invest over \$9 billion in our public schools and I'm proud to continue working with my colleagues as we perfect this bill and get it across the finish line this session.



HOUSE BILL 3 – EDUCATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Next Tuesday, March 11th, we will begin to hear testimony on [House Bill 3](#) – the educational savings accounts bill. There is a lot of information floating around about this bill so I wanted to spend some time telling you what the bill does and does not do.

Let's first talk about eligibility. Any Texas student may apply but applicants will be prioritized in this order.

1. Students with disabilities from lower-income households
2. Students from low-income households under 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines
3. Students from low-income households between 200-500% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines
4. Students from households at or above 500% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

The current appropriation proposed in HB 3 is \$1 billion. If the appropriation from HB 3 cannot fund all eligible applicants, the Comptroller will maintain a waiting list of students eligible to receive funding if more becomes available. In this event, the Comptroller will direct

a lottery system. Likewise, the funds are not disbursed directly to the family. Once the comptroller authorizes the expense, the funds will be disbursed directly to the school or vendor.

Another thing we are hearing a lot is that HB 3 will take money away from public schools. Last week we discussed in detail, [House Bill 2](#). HB 2, along with a suite of other public education bills, will invest around \$9 billion in public education. Conversely, the funds from HB 3 come from general revenue and do not decrease public education funding in any way.

Relative to the approximately 5.5 million school children in Texas, the number of students who would be able to participate in the ESA program under its proposed construct would not cause school closures or staff loss.

Additionally, there is relief in HB 2 to address this concern: a hold-harmless provision will ensure funding for up to 95% of average daily attendance of the prior school year, if enrollment falls more than 5%—regardless of the cause.

I hope this information is helpful and, as always, my staff and I are happy to answer any additional questions you may have. Likewise, I encourage you to tune in next Tuesday as this bill is heard in committee. You can watch live beginning at 8am through [this link](#).

HOW TO TESTIFY

With House Committees in full swing, I wanted to provide you with a step-by-step guide on how to testify in front of a committee. Personal testimony is pertinent for committee members as well as bill authors so they can hear firsthand how a bill might impact one's family, business or community. And as always, my Capitol staff stands ready to help you with anything you need!

HOW TO TESTIFY

AT A TEXAS LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE HEARING

1 BEFORE
THE
HEARING



✓ KNOW **WHEN**
TO TESTIFY →

visit www.capitol.texas.gov
to sign up for alerts on the bill's status

✓ MAKE SURE
YOU
CAN TESTIFY →

check the hearing notice
to see if public testimony is allowed

✓ **PRACTICE!** →

prepare your 2-3 minute speech

Parking
Visitor Parking Garage at
12th & Trinity
OR
metered street parking

Entrance
Enter through any side of
the building!

Find the Kiosks
Register to provide
testimony OR register to
support/oppose w/out
providing testimony

Get Comfortable!
Arrive early, but expect to
stay late. Session length
is unpredictable!

2 GETTING
TO THE CAPITOL



Be nice.

*Your testimony can be passionate,
but please be respectful.*

Be concise.

Make your 2-3 mins count!

Be personal.

*How will this bill impact
you, your family and friends?*

Bring copies.

For written testimony,

Be unique.

*check how many printouts are required.
We want to hear YOUR story.*

Follow up.

Email committee members additional info.



State Representative
JEFF LEACH
District 67



I want to take a moment to honor Former Plano Mayor James Muns who recently passed away. He was a great man who loved his family and his community and his legacy of service and commitment to the people of Plano will not be forgotten.

As always, it's an honor to serve you at the Texas Capitol and if my office can ever be of assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out.

All My Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Leach". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" and last name "Leach" clearly distinguishable.

Jeff Leach

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