

Lalani's Legislative Letter

Interim Edition #4

Greetings!

This edition of the newsletter is dedicated to the upcoming November 7, 2023 Constitutional Amendment Election. We each have a responsibility to exercise our right to vote. I encourage you to check your voter registration, and to inform yourself on the propositions that will be on the ballot. See you at the polls!

Remember this is your District. You are the most important part of what happens here. Get engaged, get involved, help make your community a better place for all.

***Blessings,
Representative Suleman Lalani, M.D***

Important Information on the Upcoming Election

Important Dates

- October 10 – Last day to register to vote or change your address
- October 23 – First day to early vote in person
- October 27 – Last day to apply for a vote-by-mail-ballot
- November 3 – Last day to vote early in person
- November 7 – Election Day and vote-by-mail ballot receipt deadline

Check Your Registration Status

You can check the [Fort Bend County Elections](#) office to see if you are registered in Fort Bend County.

You can check the [Texas Secretary of State's My Voter Portal](#) to see if you are registered elsewhere in the state.

Voter Registration Applications can be found [here](#). It must printed, *signed* and mailed or delivered to:

Mailing Address	Physical Address
Fort Bend County Elections 301 Jackson St. Richmond, TX 77469-3108	Fort Bend County Elections 4520 Reading Road Suite A-400 Rosenberg, TX 77471-2133

Update Your Name and/or Address Online

Click [here](#) to update your name and/or address.

You may update your name and/or address online if you still live in the county in which you are currently registered to vote. If you have moved to a new county, it is necessary to re-register using the printed Voter Registration Application provided in the section above. Online name and/or address changes must be submitted by the 30th day before any election in which you desire to vote. Click the link below to submit your online name and/or address change

Apply for a Ballot by Mail

Click [here](#) to request a ballot by mail, if you meet the requirements below.

To be eligible to vote early by mail in Texas, you must:

- Be 65 years or older
- Be sick or disabled
- Be out of the county on election day and during the period for early voting by personal appearance or
- Be expected to give birth within three weeks before or after Election Day or
- Be confined in jail, but otherwise eligible

Constitutional Amendments on the November Ballot*

This is a guide to the Constitutional Amendments on the November Ballot. For more information on each of these amendments, please refer to the Texas Legislative Council's publication [Analyses of Proposed Constitutional Amendments](#) or the League of Women's Voters' of Texas's [Nonpartisan Voters Guide](#), which were both referenced to create this guide.*

Proposition 1

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment protecting the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the Texas population grows and the demand for food increases, it is important to prevent cities from overregulating agricultural production.• The proposed amendment ensures that “generally accepted” farming, timber production and wildlife management practices are allowed on properties within counties and cities.• Proposition 1 would still allow the state legislature to authorize state agencies or local governments to regulate farming practices that are necessary to protect the public from imminent danger.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposition 1 limits the power of local governments to protect the health of their communities by setting rules covering farming practices that impact animal welfare, food safety, drinking water protection, animal waste, odors and pesticide runoff.• The proposed amendment allows farms, including large, industrial farms, to operate with less accountability to the local community.• Counties and cities must follow the definition of “acceptable agriculture practices” as defined by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, whose interpretation may be too broad for urban areas.

Proposition 2

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment authorizing a local option exemption from ad valorem taxation by a county or municipality of all or part of the appraised value of real property used to operate a child-care facility.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower property taxes would reduce costs for childcare centers, so more can remain open and more can be built.• Having a larger number of childcare centers may lower costs for working parents, allowing them to stay in the workforce.• Childcare centers may use the savings from lower property taxes to improve wages and benefits for staff, helping them retain workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposition 2 would lower property taxes for one type of business, which could increase the tax burden for other property owners.• Lower property taxes would reduce taxes raised to fund counties and cities.• The benefits of this tax break may not flow to parents and childcare workers.

Proposition 3

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual wealth or net worth tax, including a tax on the difference between the assets and liabilities of an individual or family.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texans should not be penalized for creating wealth and starting businesses which help the Texas economy grow. • This tax would be difficult to administer and enforce due to the complexity of determining the fair value of a person's assets. • Some taxpayers may have significant assets, but low cash flow. For example, farmers or retired persons may have valuable property, but paying a wealth tax from their earnings may be a struggle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state needs to maintain the option of a wealth tax that would shift the tax burden to those able to afford to pay more, helping to address wealth inequality. • Proposition 3 would limit options for the state to fund its needs in the future, such as for schools, infrastructure, mental and physical healthcare, and public safety. • This proposed amendment addresses a tax that is not being considered by the state legislature.

Proposition 4

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to establish a temporary limit on the maximum appraised value of real property other than a residence homestead for ad valorem tax purposes; to increase the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district applicable to residence homesteads from \$40,000 to \$100,000; to adjust the amount of the limitation on school district ad valorem taxes imposed on the residence homesteads of the elderly or disabled to reflect increases in certain exemption amounts; to except certain appropriations to pay for ad valorem tax relief from the constitutional limitation on the rate of growth of appropriations; and to authorize the legislature to provide for a four-year term of office for a member of the board of directors of certain appraisal districts.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proponents say these property tax cuts would save Texas homeowners an average of \$1,300 per year in property taxes, with additional cuts for property owners who are seniors and those with disabilities. • Over \$12 billion will be sent from the state's general revenue funds to school districts so that school districts can lower tax rates. This shifts the burden of school funding away from property taxes to other sources. Tax rate reductions passed by the Legislature limit how much is shifted to businesses. • The owners of moderately priced homes would get the most benefit from the increase in the homestead exemption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property tax reductions give no relief for renters, who make up more than 1/3 of Texas households, many of whom are struggling with high rents. • Opponents say the property tax changes approved do not include any new money for schools or teacher pay raises, even though Texas is ranked near the bottom in per-student spending for education. • Shifting away from property taxes to fund our public schools could result in higher sales taxes and higher taxes on businesses.

Proposition 5

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment relating to the Texas University Fund, which provides funding to certain institutions of higher education to achieve national prominence as major research universities and drive the state economy.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposition 5 helps higher education in Texas by providing stable funding for research in the four universities supported by the Texas University Fund.• Research at Texas public universities helps drive the Texas economy.• Both funds provide a path for more universities to become eligible for research grants.• Using standardized national performance metrics will allow more universities to qualify for research grant funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposition 5 continues the unequal treatment of public universities in Texas.• Proposition 5 would provide stable research funding for only four additional public universities at this time (those funded by the Texas University Fund).• The funding through the National Research Support Fund is not stable and would still require legislative approval every two years.• No additional universities will be added to the Texas University Fund unless the Legislature adds more money.

Proposition 6

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment creating the Texas water fund to assist in financing water projects in this state.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposition 6 will provide funding to help communities plan and implement projects to obtain new water supply sources to ensure future water availability for Texans.• There is a great need for projects to replace or repair aging pipes which the state estimates leak billions of gallons of water each year. Also, water and wastewater treatment plants in many communities need upgrades and/or replacements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount the Legislature has agreed to put into the fund is not enough to pay for the number of projects needed to secure Texas' future water supply needs.• Proposition 6 would allow funds to be taken from state revenues to fund local water projects.

Proposition 7

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the Texas energy fund to support the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional state funding is needed to increase the reliability of the state’s electric market, especially for power that can be quickly provided during extreme weather when demand is high. • The money loaned or granted to build the electric generating plants are from the state’s budget surplus funds, so electricity customers will not be paying for these plants. • If the plants are completed by June 2029, the builders receive a bonus under the program. This ensures that extra energy generation will be added to the electric grid soon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Texas energy fund would primarily fund natural gas-powered electric plants. These plants may be more expensive and harmful to the environment than other more cost-effective and clean solutions to make the electric grid more reliable. • Solar and wind projects are not eligible for loans or grants from this fund. They currently generate about 39% of Texas electricity and have reduced electricity costs in Texas. • Natural gas-powered electric plants were among the power sources that failed during the 2021 winter storm. Despite this, they would be subsidized by the Texas energy fund if this proposition passes.

Proposition 8

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment creating the broadband infrastructure fund to expand high-speed broadband access and assist in the financing of connectivity projects.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposition 8 would expand reliable high speed internet to Texans all across the state, including in areas where private companies do not currently operate. • Improved access to high speed internet would result in better productivity and efficiency in agriculture and energy, two of Texas’ most important industries. • This fund would enable Texas to use state funds to take advantage of available federal dollars to expand internet availability for more Texans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding high speed internet expansion is not the responsibility of the government. Private companies have already provided most Texans with access to high speed internet. • Proposition 8 does not prioritize lower income communities for high speed internet development. • The money in the fund is not enough to provide high speed internet to all Texans.

Proposition 9

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment authorizing the 88th Legislature to provide a cost-of-living adjustment to certain annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retired teachers in Texas do not have a cost-of-living adjustment built into their retirement benefits and have not received a cost-of-living adjustment in many years. Because of this, many retired teachers have difficulty covering the higher cost of living. This adjustment would help retired teachers and their survivors pay their bills. • The higher payments to retirees would increase their spending, and therefore help local communities across Texas. • The increased benefits will be funded from the current budget surplus, leaving the Teachers Retirement System pension fund financially sound. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost-of-living adjustments proposed are not enough to offset the impact of high inflation on retirees. • The higher payments to retired teachers do not address the current teacher shortage.

Proposition 10

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation equipment or inventory held by a manufacturer of medical or biomedical products to protect the Texas healthcare network and strengthen our medical supply chain.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing property taxes on biomedical equipment and inventory may encourage more biomedical companies to move to Texas, creating high-paying jobs. • Removing property taxes on biomedical equipment and inventory could strengthen our medical supply chain and may protect the Texas healthcare network. • The COVID pandemic exposed the risk of having key medical equipment manufactured outside of the country, showing the importance of supporting local biomedical manufacturers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because Texas does not have an income tax, eliminating property taxes on biomedical equipment and inventory will reduce funds available for local school districts and local government services. • The burden of the tax loss will fall more heavily on communities with biomedical manufacturers. • Reducing property taxes for one industry places more tax burden on other businesses and individuals to support their government and public schools.

Proposition 11

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to permit conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds supported by ad valorem taxes to fund the development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because Texas does not have an income tax, eliminating property taxes on biomedical equipment and inventory will reduce funds available for local school districts and local government services. • The burden of the tax loss will fall more heavily on communities with biomedical manufacturers. • Reducing property taxes for one industry places more tax burden on other businesses and individuals to support their government and public schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If approved by a majority of voters in a district, property taxes would be levied to pay interest and principal on the bonds issued. The voters in a district who voted against the issuance of such bonds would still be burdened with additional taxes. • Land allocated to parks could be more economically productive if left in private hands.

Proposition 12

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment providing for the abolition of the office of county treasurer in Galveston County.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the Chief Financial Officer of Galveston County, abolishing the county treasurer’s office would save taxpayers in the county \$450,000 annually. • Supporters say that abolishing the office would make the work formerly performed by the treasurer’s office more efficient and cost effective. • Abolishing the county treasurer’s office may reduce the risk of misappropriation of funds such as occurred in 2018. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the estimated taxpayer savings may shift to other departments’ costs. • Removing the office of county treasurer would impact current checks and balances between elected county commissioners, who control the budget, and the elected county treasurer, who makes financial management decisions. • An elected county treasurer is accountable to voters.

Proposition 13

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment to increase the mandatory age of retirement for state justices and judges.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are living and working longer, and experienced state judges should be allowed to continue to serve if they are capable and willing. • Allowing judges to serve longer may result in a more predictable and stable judiciary. • State judges in Texas are elected. Voters can determine whether a judge deserves to be elected. The Judicial Conduct Commission is available to address any issues with a judge's competence between elections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Judicial Conduct Commission may not be able to promptly address issues with older judges who experience cognitive decline and/or lower productivity. • Extending the age limit will keep the Texas judiciary from reflecting the demographics of the current Texas population. • Retired state judges are still eligible to serve as visiting judges, so retired state judges can continue to work if they choose.

Proposition 14

Ballot Language: The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the centennial parks conservation fund to be used for the creation and improvement of state parks.

Proponents	Opponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State parks provide affordable access to outdoor recreation such as hiking, hunting, fishing and camping. • State parks protect water resources and safeguard habitat for wildlife. • State parks provide an economic boost to the outdoor recreation industry and to the rural communities located nearby. • State parks educate Texans about their heritage by preserving significant cultural and historic sites, an essential legacy to future generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxpayer money should not be used to create and maintain more state parks. • There are other public needs more pressing than adding to the state park system. • Recreation is not a proper role for the government. • Having more public lands could impose restrictions on private development and limit agricultural and mineral rights.

Lalani Legislation Spotlight*

Before [HB 4250](#), when a tax sale under the Property Tax Code resulted in excess proceeds, the clerk of the court issuing the order of sale must send to the former owner a notice stating the amount of those excess proceeds, informing the former owner of their right to claim them, and including a copy or complete text of the applicable state laws. Preparing and sending these notices comes at a cost, which must be incurred by the clerk's office.

The Fort Bend County District Clerk informed me that while these mailing costs are not the lion share of her budget, the Fort Bend County District Clerk spends a large amount of money that could be spent elsewhere. In her efforts to become more effective and accountable, District Clerk Walker asked my office to file this legislation.

HB 4250 authorizes the clerk of the court issuing the order of sale to deduct from the amount of the excess proceeds from a tax sale under the Property Tax Code the cost of postage for sending to the former owner of the property a notice of sale. This will help clerks of the court across Texas to be more accountable, transparent and responsible to their constituents.

“ Fort Bend County District Clerk Beverley McGrew Walker informed me that mailing costs for notifying property owners of the ad valorem tax sale of their properties are not recouped by the county. While these costs are not the lion share of her budget, the Fort Bend County District Clerk spends a large amount of money that could be spent elsewhere. To support her efforts to become more effective and accountable I was happy to carry this this legislation.

REPRESENTATIVE SULEMAN LALANI, M.D.
HOUSE DISTRICT 76

HB 4250 TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Effective 9/1/2023

Dr. Suleman Lalani
State Representative, District 76

If you want to read about any of my legislation, please go to my House [website](#).

****If this or any other legislation, issue or policy interests you, please get engaged! If you need ideas on how to get engaged, please contact us at District76.Lalani@house.texas.gov. We can help!***

The Job Link

Moving forward the **Lalani Legislative Letter** will contain "**The Job Link**" section. This is intended to give HD 76 access to employment opportunities. In this first edition, we are sharing links to local organizations that offer workforce training, development and employment opportunities.

Kindred Hospital Walk-in Job Fair

October 25, 2023, 10am – 8pm
Kindred Hospital Houston Sugar Land
1550 First Colony Blvd., Sugar Land TX 77479

For more information, please go to [Kindred Hospital Walk-in Job Fair](#).

UH at Sugar Land Career Fair

October 26, 2023, 5pm – 7pm
Brazos Hall, Room 103 A and B, UH at Sugar Land

For more information, please go to [UH at Sugar Land Career Fair](#).

If you are an employer and want to share hiring information, please reach out to our office at District76.Lalani@house.texas.gov and use the subject line "District Employment Opportunity" and we will share it in our newsletter.

Out and About in HD 76

Flip Side Radio Show

September 19, 2023



Greater Houston Partnership's Future of Texas Legislative Panel

September 21, 2023



PAVA Legislative Update

September 28, 2023



NAACP 2023 Freedom Fund Banquet

September 30, 2023



Eternal Gandhi Museum Dedication

October 2, 2023



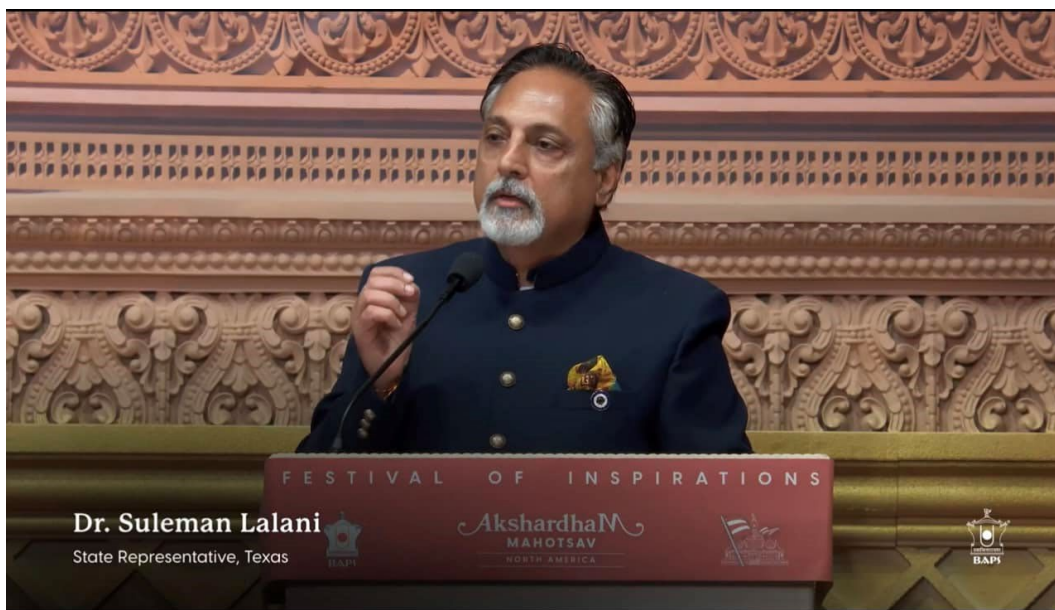
Texas Grand Mawlid Celebration

October 2, 2023



BAPS Temple Dedication, Robbinsville NJ

October 6, 2023



OutRun Hunger 5k

October 7, 2023



**Fort Bend County Job Fair
Sponsored by the Sindhi Heritage Museum**

October 7, 2023



How to Reach Us



TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

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State Representative, District 76

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