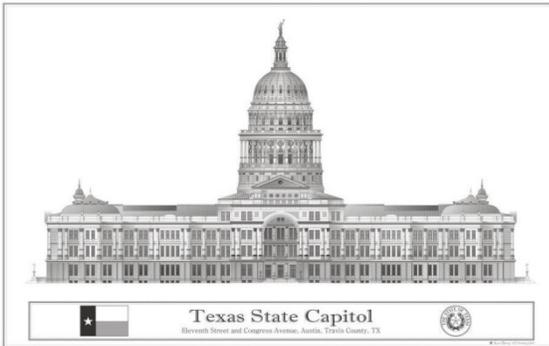




**House District 1 - Bowie, Franklin, Lamar & Red River counties
District & Capitol Report
85th Legislature - May 2017**



Upcoming Town Hall meetings. As soon as the session adjourns, my office will be scheduling Town Hall meetings in each of the four counties in House District 1. My office will send out the details of dates, times and locations as soon as those become final.

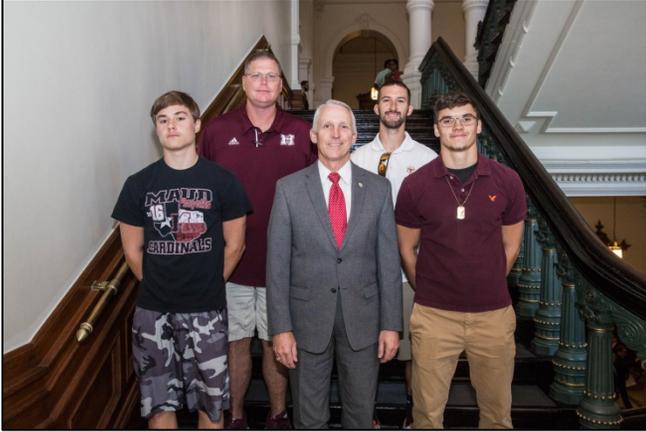
At the Capitol. *The District comes to Austin.* Over the last several weeks, several groups from HD 1 have visited the Capitol. I have been glad to see everyone and visit with them while they are in Austin. These groups include: the XYZ group from the New Boston Baptist Church; the Maud ISD track team and the track team from Clarksville ISD.

Around the District. The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Atlanta office recently announced that US 259 is scheduled to be widened near DeKalb. This work will also resurface a 2.9 mile section of US 259 from US 82 near DeKalb to 0.3 mile south of FM Road 44 South. Work on the project will begin in June and take approximately 18 months to complete.



XYZ group from the New Boston Baptist Church

"The Texas House of Representatives is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. This newsletter is available in alternate forms upon request. Please call 1-800-241-1163."



Maud ISD track team; photo by the Texas House of Representatives.



Clarksville ISD track team; photo by the Texas House of Representatives.

Time running short. There is less than one week left in the regular session of the 85th Texas Legislature and a lot of work still needs to be finished. Tensions between the House of Representatives and Senate remain high as members work to get their version of legislation passed in time for significant deadlines. This session has a very different feel to it than my freshman session in 2015, especially since the amount of available revenue this session is significantly less than two years ago.

I filed 23 bills this session and so far, 11 of those bills have passed the House awaiting action in the

"The Texas House of Representatives is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. This newsletter is available in alternate forms upon request. Please call 1-800-241-1163."

Senate. I am hopeful these bills will pass and be enacted into law. I will provide a comprehensive post-session update in June after the governor's veto period expires on June 18.

Texas.gov. The state's official website, Texas.gov, recently announced its efforts to reach out to Texans so they can easily access more than 1,000 digital government services that span personal, professional, state, and local and higher education government activities. Here is the link to this very helpful website: <https://texas.gov/>.

Priority legislation. Last fall, voters sent legislators to Austin to enact laws protecting our children and our pocket books. This weekend the Texas House took steps to meet those obligations by amending and passing **SB 669** - *The Property Taxpayer Empowerment Act of 2017* and **SB 8** - *The Partial Birth - Abortion Ban*. The differences in the House version of these bills and the Senate versions will have to be worked out this week in conference committees before the legislature adjourns on May 29.



Rep. VanDeaver voting on the House floor; photo by the Texas House of Representatives.

Texas Budget. As described before, decisions on the Texas budget for the next biennium are starting to come together. As there were differences between

the two versions of the bill, there has been a 10-member conference committee meeting almost daily over the past month. As deadlines approach, the conference committee has started leaning towards using a combination of the state's savings account and the use of funds set aside last session for highway projects to fund the state's general revenue shortfall. Another big debate is on the passage of HB21, which would provide public schools with an additional \$1.5 billion, however; the Senate version of the bill includes school vouchers for special education students. HB 3976 is another bill waiting passage in the Senate that would allocate \$480 million to the TRS-Care, which would prevent TRS-members from having to drastically increase current contributions. Other appropriation items eligible for conference committee debate include the Governor's office, higher education special items request, and border security. Final decisions will have to be made soon to allow a 48-hour "lay out" period before the bill can be voted on and sent to the Governor's desk.

am proud of the hard work our graduates have demonstrated in achieving this accomplishment. Good luck to you all in your future endeavors!

A special congratulation is due to two members of my staff this legislative session, Becky Calahan and Nick McDowell.



Becky received her master's degree from The Bush School of Government and Public Service from Texas A&M University. Nick graduated with a bachelor's degree in Radio/Television/

Film from The University of Texas at Austin and is headed to law school at the University of Houston in the fall. I have enjoyed having them on my team!



Rep. VanDeaver visits with Governor Abbott about this session's activities.



Rep. VanDeaver with former Texas Ranger great "Pudge" Rodriguez.

Congratulations Graduates. Congratulations to all of this year's graduates. House District 1 is home to many graduates, from Texas A&M University-Texarkana, Texarkana College, Paris Junior College, and all of the high schools located in our district. I

My office is here to help. I thank each of you for letting me serve you as your state representative. Please contact either the District office (903-628-0361) or Capitol office (512-463-0692) if there is anything you think we can do to help you.

"The Texas House of Representatives is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. This newsletter is available in alternate forms upon request. Please call 1-800-241-1163."