



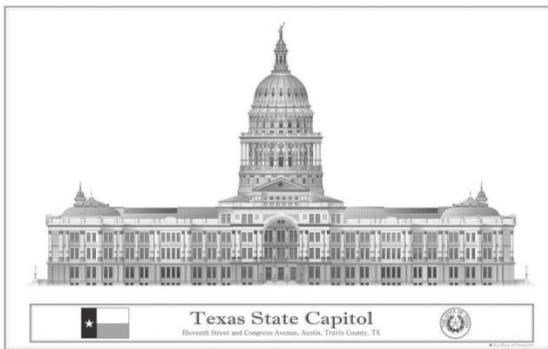
GARY

VanDeaver

STATE REPRESENTATIVE



House District 1 - Bowie, Franklin, Lamar & Red River counties  
District & Capitol Report - 85th Legislature  
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others who offered prayers for unity and blessings for our area, its residents and the entire country. The National Day of Prayer has its roots in the beginning of the country when our founding fathers at the Continental



Congress provided time to pray in forming a new nation. President Harry S. Truman signed legislation in 1952 establishing a national day of prayer, and President Ronald Reagan signed a bill in 1988 amending the original law to designate the first Thursday in May as the National Day of Prayer.

**4-H Council.** I enjoyed speaking to middle and high school 4-H students in Red River County earlier this month. Texas 4-H is part of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas A&M System. Founded in 1908, 4-H is the largest youth development program in Texas, reaching more than 550,000 youth each year. For more information on the Texas 4-



**Around the District. Stop the Bleed.** Stop the Bleed is a nationwide campaign to empower people to act quickly and save lives. On May 1, several groups in Texarkana



sponsored a local *Stop the Bleed* training for school personnel to know how to respond in emergencies when

injured or wounded people are bleeding. This initiative was spearheaded locally by Dr. Matt Young of the Texarkana Emergency Center and supported by the Wadley Regional Medical Center, LifeNet and Christus Saint Michael Health System.

**National Day of Prayer.** I was honored to participate in this year's New Boston National Day of Prayer held on May 3, at the Trailhead Pavilion Park along with many

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H, here is a link: <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/about/what-is-4-h/>.

**REMINDER: June 1, deadline to submit application for the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program (TASSP).**

The TASSP allows me, as a state representative, to nominate one student from House District 1 to receive a \$4000 annual scholarship for college ROTC students. An eligible student must commit to serving four years as a member of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Merchant Marine or a commissioned officer in any branch of the armed services. The deadline to submit information to my office is June 1. For more details, contact my Legislative Aide, Becky Calahan, at 512-463-0692.

**Around the Capitol. Water Efficiency & Energy Star Sales Tax Holidays set for May 26-28.**

According to the comptroller's office, Texas families and businesses can save on the purchase of certain water- and energy-



efficient products during the state's Water-Efficient Products and ENERGY STAR® sales tax holidays. Both take place Saturday, May

26, through Monday, May 28. There are only certain products eligible to be tax exempt, so be sure to research the eligible items at these links:

<https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/publications/96-1331.php> (for eligible Energy Star products) and <https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/publications/98-1018.php> (for eligible water efficiency products).

**Respect the heat - kids and cars!** Now that summer-like temperatures are here, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is reminding everyone to be vigilant and never leave children (or pets) in parked cars where temperatures can quickly become deadly. DPS offers the following tips for preventing vehicular heatstroke deaths and injuries:

- **Never** leave your child unattended in the vehicle.

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- Call 9-1-1 if you see a child alone in a car, and emergency personnel will provide guidance.
- Teach children not to play in vehicles, and make sure to place the keys out of reach when not being used.
- Always check the back seats or cargo areas of your vehicle before walking away.
- Establish reminders that help ensure you remove children from the vehicle. For example: leave your bag, lunch or cell phone in the back seat with the child's car seat.
- If a child goes missing, open the doors and trunks to every vehicle in the area. Many heatstroke deaths occur when a child accesses a parked car unnoticed.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, heatstroke is one of the leading causes of non-crash-related fatalities among children. Temperatures inside a car can rise more than 20 degrees in only 10 minutes; and even with an outside temperature of 60 degrees, the temperature inside a car can reach 110 degrees. Leaving windows partially rolled down does not help. In addition, young children are particularly at risk since their bodies heat up faster than an adult.

**DPS enforcement over Memorial Day Weekend.**

According to DPS, its troopers and other state law enforcement agencies will ramp up efforts to keep drivers safe over the Memorial Day holiday weekend by looking for intoxicated and speeding drivers, as well as drivers and passengers not using their seatbelts and not driving safely. Over the 2017 Memorial Day weekend, DPS troopers issued nearly 60,000 citations and warnings, including more than 1000 seat belt and child safety restraint tickets. DPS enforcement efforts also resulted in 372 DWI arrests, 251 fugitive arrests and 190 felony arrests.

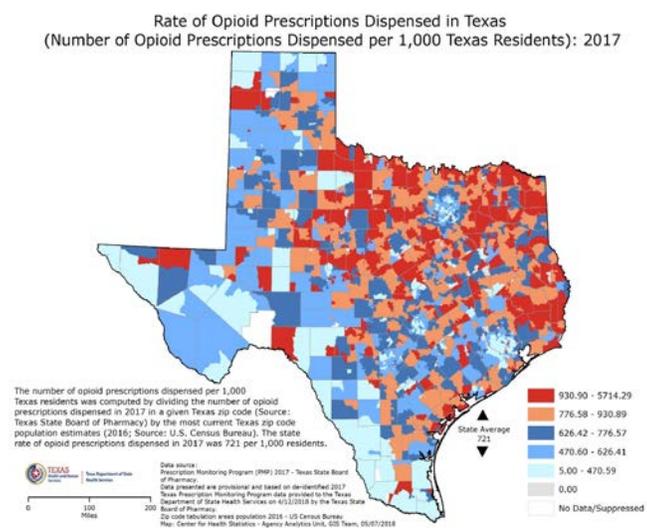
**Texas Historical Commission (THC).** According to the THC, it is currently accepting applications for under told Texas historical markers that address historical gaps and promote diversity of topics and cultures. The THC can

assist local sponsors and historical commissions with selected topics by paying for the foundry cost of a historical marker, or by assisting with the research necessary to submit and complete a qualified application. For more information about this program, contact the THC's History Programs Division at 512-463-5853 or visit [www.thc.texas.gov](http://www.thc.texas.gov).

**May hearings for House Committees.** Three committees that I serve on held meetings at the Capitol this month. Here is a brief summary of those meetings:

**Select Committee on Opioids and Substance Abuse.**

This month's meeting focused on the state's online Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) that is designed to help physicians and pharmacists to see if their patients or customers are "doctor" shopping to obtain multiple opioid prescriptions. The following map shows the distribution of opioids across Texas in 2017:



The Texas PMP also allows these practitioners to access patients' prescriptions for narcotics in 18 other states, including all the states that border Texas that really helps areas like House District 1 bordering Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana. There are currently over 57,000 registered users in the Texas PMP. Beginning in September 2019, all prescribers, other than veterinarians, will have to access the PMP prior to prescribing opioids, benzodiazepines, barbiturates, or

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carisoprodol for patients. More information about the committee's work can be found at <http://www.house.texas.gov/committees/committee/?committee=C394>. Future meetings are scheduled for June 26 and August 7 & 8.

**House Committee on Appropriations (HAC).** The HAC met on May 24 to discuss several interim charges including the ongoing impact of Hurricane Harvey in the disaster area and projections of its impact on the state budget in the 86th legislature that convenes in January 2019. Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp who was appointed by Governor Greg Abbott to lead the rebuilding efforts told the committee that as of May 24, there are over 18,000 people still living in hotels who are not able to return home. Chancellor Sharp, and other people who testified included the county judges for Harris, Fort Bend, and Refugio counties, said that despite Congress passing billions of dollars in disaster relief packages for Texas in 2017, the state is still waiting to receive funding and other disaster aid from Washington, D.C.

**House Committee on Public Education (HPE).** The HPE also met on May 24 to discuss two interim charges; one of which discussed student assessments and state standards, while the other discussed student achievement for students with disabilities. The committee discussed a writing portfolio assessment pilot program that is ongoing as a result of House Bill 1164 that I authored in the 84th legislature. In place of a 26-line formulaic standardized writing test, the writing portfolio assessment allows students to develop writing skills over time. Additionally, the committee discussed ways to reduce standardized testing by noting that I authored House Bill 515 in the 85th legislative session that was overwhelmingly passed in the House of Representatives. This bill would have eliminated unnecessary tests that together cost the state nearly \$7 million. The committee also discussed ways to improve student achievement for students with disabilities, with a particular emphasis on students with autism, dyslexia, and dysgraphia.

**Memorial Day 2018.** As we all get ready to kick back and enjoy the start of summer with the upcoming holiday weekend, please take a few moments to remember the solemn reason for Memorial Day.

Memorial Day is a chance for us to remember all of the



men and women who died while serving in our armed forces. Originally known as "Decoration Day," people use this day as a time to visit cemeteries to decorate tombstones of

deceased service members as a way of honoring these fallen heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our great country. I hope that you will join with me in remembering and giving thanks for all of these service members and their families who served and gave all for our country.

**Social media.** Please follow me on both my Facebook and Twitter accounts!

**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.