

State Representative Gary VanDeaver



87th Legislature
Bowie | Franklin | Lamar | Red River

HD 1

87th Legislature Report - House District 1 Bowie, Franklin, Lamar & Red River counties

November 2022

Around the District. NE Texas tornado devastation. As many of you personally know, earlier this month several cities and counties in Northeast Texas were ravaged by up to four F-3 tornadoes with wind speeds estimated between 160 and 200 MPH. The devastation caused by these storms to homes, farmland properties and equipment, livestock and businesses is almost beyond comprehension.



My heartfelt appreciation goes out to all of the first responders from local departments, the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM), the Department of Public Safety, various agencies from the Texas A&M University System and local residents who immediately pitched in to help people in the

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path of the storms who needed immediate help.

Any deaths and injuries from these storms are tragic, and I am very sorry for the victims and their families. My deepest wish is for a speedy recovery and much comfort for everyone affected.

Cleanup, recovery and rebuilding from the storms will take time and the need for ongoing assistance is extremely great. I encourage everyone affected by the storms to submit damage information to the state's Individual State of Texas Assessment Tool (iSTAT) survey. The iSTAT damage survey can be filled out



online at: <https://damage.tdem.texas.gov/> by scrolling down to click on the active event for November 3-5, 2022: Severe Weather Event.

Please note that farmers, ranchers and others in the ag industry can also use the iSTAT damage survey link to report their losses to crops and livestock.

US Small Business Administration (SBA) opens offices across the region. The SBA has opened five regional offices to help people process applications for low-interest loans. These offices are now open in New Boston, Hughes Springs, Clarksville, Daingerfield, and Paris. SBA assistance will be available in Bowie, Camp, Cass, Delta, Fannin, Franklin, Lamar, Marion, Morris, Red River, Titus, and Upshur counties in Texas; and Bryan and Choctaw counties in Oklahoma.

Disaster loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate.



Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property. My office is currently researching other sources of financial

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aid that might be available to help with rebuilding efforts. Businesses of all sizes and private nonprofit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other business assets. SBA can also lend additional funds to businesses and homeowners to help with the cost of improvements to protect, prevent or



minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future.

Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov/>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance. For people who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services.

Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155. The deadline to apply for property damage is January 17, 2023.

The deadline to apply for economic injury is August 16, 2023. Pictures provided by District Director, Sharon Elkins.

Local artist creates HD 1 House Christmas ornament. Each year since joining the legislature, I have submitted an ornament designed and created by residents of House District 1. Local physician, Dr. Gary Bachers, created this year's ornament that will be hung in December on the Christmas tree in the Chamber of the Texas House of Representatives at the Capitol. The ornament is very expressive, and I am grateful to Dr. Bachers for his time and talent. For more information about Dr. Bachers, visit his website at: <https://www.garybachers.com/>.



Photo: House Photography.

TPWD prescribed burn. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) recently informed my office that it will conduct prescribed burns in the Pat Mayse Wildlife Management Area between January and March 2023. Prior to the burns, the Department will notify city and county officials including local fire departments,

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emergency services dispatch centers and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Additionally, the TPWD will publish a notice prior to the burn in the *Paris News*.



Governor Abbott visits Texarkana.

I was pleased to be a part of the very enthusiastic crowd that welcomed Governor Greg Abbott when he visited Northeast Texas earlier this

month. It is so important for our statewide elected officials to visit our part of Texas to see all of the good things happening in our region, but to also hear about ongoing concerns that limit our abilities to take care of our families, educate our children and run our businesses. Thank you, Governor Abbott!

Around the Capitol. Bill filing starts for the 88th legislature. We are off to the races!

Monday, November 14, started the bill filing period for the next session that begins January 10, 2023. The deadline to file bills is the 60th day of session, which is March 10. There are approximately 10,000 bills and resolutions filed each session with about a third to half of them passed. Here is a link to the Legislative Reference Library (LRL) bill statistics database: <https://lrl.texas.gov/sessions/billstatistics.cfm>.

I filed five bills on the first day and recently filed my sixth bill. Here is a link to the Texas Legislature Online where you can follow a bill's progress, watch committee hearings and see what is happening on the floor of the Texas House and Senate: <https://capitol.texas.gov/>.

Here is information about the bills I have filed so far:

- **HB 422** - allow for virtual hearings in the juvenile justice system.
- **HB 425** - prohibit employee discrimination against first responders who want to use their leave time to fulfill volunteer duties as a first responder.
- **HB 427** - relating to information required to be provided about planned excavations.
- **HB 430** - relating to the Texas Forest Services surplus property program to consider the age of the equipment being replaced.
- **HB 433** - changing the number that defines a "commercial vehicle fleet" from 25 to 12 to help ease burdens relating to the state's vehicle registration process.
- **HB 806** - directing the Texas Department of Transportation TxDOT) to study the placement of rumble strips along Texas highways.

The idea for each of these bills originated through phone calls and conversations with residents of House District 1. I appreciate my constituents bringing these issues to the attention of my office so that we can help make the state government more efficient and user-friendly for the people of Texas. I look forward to working with my legislative colleagues to have these bills heard and passed during the upcoming session. I have several other issues

that are still being drafted by the Texas Legislative Council that I will also file for consideration this session.



*Mr. Raymundo Rodriguez,
Rep. VanDeaver's new
Legislative Director.*

Rodriguez joins Capitol office staff

Mr. Raymundo Rodriguez has joined my Capitol office as my new Legislative Director for the upcoming session. Mr. Rodriguez is a native of Brownsville, Texas. He is a senior at the

University of Texas at Austin pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Government. In his undergraduate career, he served as an Honor's College Senator and a student representative for the C4 Educational Committee and the C7 Libraries Committee. He previously worked in two other legislative offices and will be a great addition to the team. I look forward to working with him this session, and I invite you to reach out to him if you have any questions about bills, issues, or concerns this session.

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 the Capitol office (512-463-0692) if there is anything you think we can do to help you.