

ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas
House of Representatives

April 17, 2009

Dear Friend:

It has been a big week here in Austin. Today, all of the hard work of the appropriations committee finally made its way to the House floor as we began to debate the budget. We are currently in our 16th hour of debate and we still have a great deal of work to do before we adjourn.

State Budget

I will provide a more detailed report next week on the budget that the House adopts. As a member of the Business and Economic Development appropriations subcommittee, I presented Article VIII, the regulatory agencies, to the body of the house. For now I would like to tell you more about three amendments I filed to make the budget more responsible and ensure tax dollars are used efficiently.

The first of these amendments would help ensure that revenues collected and dedicated for a specific purpose are used exclusively for that purpose. There must be transparency in taxation and Texans have the right to know where their tax dollars are spent. Additionally, this amendment would have the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) undertake a study of dedicated funds that were used for purposes other than those for which the funds were dedicated.

The second amendment I filed concerns a study on spending limitations. This amendment states that the LBB shall study changing the state spending limits to reflect the rate of population growth and the rate of monetary inflation. I believe this will end unnecessary increases in government spending and growth.

The final amendment I filed deals with property tax relief. The legislature must keep the promise they made to taxpayers during the 79th third called session. This is why I would like the property tax relief fund to be a priority over any pork barrel spending. Texans deserve it!

Economic Development

This week my bill, HB 1277, was unanimously voted out of the Technology, Economic Development, and Workforce Committee. HB 1277 allows the Texas Enterprise Fund to be used for job **retention** purposes in times of economic stress and high unemployment in Texas. HB 1277 has no requirement that the funds be used for retention purposes but simply provides the option. For example, if a business is trying to make the decision between closing a plant in Texas versus California, we want to give them an additional reason to stay in Texas. If a business is considering closing shop in Texas and moving to Louisiana, these funds could make them think twice and stay.

Excellence in Education Award

On Thursday I filed HR 1396, honoring Richardson residents Charles and Ann Eisemann for their valuable contributions to the arts in Texas and to recognize them for receiving the Excellence in Education Award today from the RISD Excellence in Education Foundation. They have sponsored a number of North Texas performance groups and were essential in the founding of the Eisemann Center for Performing Arts in Richardson. I filed this resolution to recognize the cultural enrichment they have fostered in our district and throughout North Texas.

Address Canvassing

The United States Census Bureau is currently conducting address canvassing for the 2010 census. The Census Bureau needs the address and physical location of each living quarter in the United States to conduct the census. During the address canvassing operation, the Census Bureau verifies that its master address list and maps are accurate so we can mail or hand-deliver questionnaires to housing units and potential group quarters. A complete and accurate address list is the cornerstone of a successful census. For more information on the 2010 census, please visit <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/>.

Capitol Visits



Representatives Button, Driver, Kent and Vaught with Leadership Garland on the House floor



Representative Button with members of the Richardson Republican Women

It is a great pleasure to serve you in the Texas Legislature. Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Angie Chen Button

If you would like to be added or removed from this mailing, please e-mail District112.Button@house.state.tx.us.