

ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas
House of Representatives



February 22, 2013

Friends,

This week in Austin, the Texas House passed the first bill of the 83rd legislative session. HB 10, which I discussed in length in last week's newsletter, funds Medicaid through the end of the fiscal year and begins funding the Texas Education Agency's shortfall. This bill was adopted unanimously and moved out of the House. It should be heard in the Senate next week.

Technology

It has been a wonderful week for technology in Texas. On Monday, the Technology Committee held a hearing to discuss voting and how technology has been used to advance the way we vote as well as potential steps that can be taken to further modernize our system. We heard from the Department of Public Safety on their modern mega-centers, one of which is located in Garland. Additionally, we discussed Cloud computing. To those unfamiliar with the "Cloud," it is the delivery of computing as a service rather than a product, whereby shared resources, software, and information are provided to computers and other devices as a utility over a network (typically the internet). Cloud computing provides computation, software applications, data access, data management, and storage resources without requiring Cloud users to know the location and other details of the computing infrastructure. The state is looking at ways to ensure that the economic development that stems from this rapidly growing industry happens in Texas. There is also great potential for cost savings if Cloud computing is utilized more at the state level.

Earlier this week, I had the opportunity to ride in the Google self-piloting car. The modified Lexus hybrid is equipped with sensors that allow it to "be aware" of everything occurring around it and instantly react to those things. While in the car, I began thinking about all of our laws and regulations that would have to be modified before driverless cars could be widely used. I addressed some of these concerns when I spoke at the TechAmerica breakfast that was held for "Technology Week." Technology moves so rapidly that the Texas Legislature has fallen very far behind. As Vice-Chair of the Technology Committee, I am working hard to move our state forward and to create policy that is conducive to growth in the high-tech sector.



Pictured with Technology Committee Chairman Gary Elkins and the Google Self-Piloting Car

Ways and Means

On Tuesday, the Ways and Means Committee held its first meeting of the session. We received a biennial revenue estimate from the Comptroller's office. According to the presentation, Texas has recovered all of the payroll job losses that occurred during the recession and more. We currently have an estimated \$101.4 billion available for general-purpose spending for the 2014-15 biennium.

We also received a briefing on HB 1. As it was introduced, HB 1 totals \$187.7 billion in All Funds and \$89.2 billion in General Revenue spending. This amount is 2% over last biennium's spending levels. This budget is just a start, and the actual amounts appropriated to each area will shift over the coming weeks.



Pictured with Richardson PTA members Elaine Mishler, Dina Giles, Marni Kaner, and Dinah Miller when they visited on Thursday for their PTA Rally Day at the Capitol.



Pictured with former Garland Mayor Bob Day.

It is an honor to serve as your State Representative. Please continue to communicate your views on issues that are important to you.

Sincerely,

Angie Chen Button

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