

# ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas  
House of Representatives



*May 15, 2015*

Friends,

The House was in session late every night this week. House Bills that did not pass before yesterday's midnight deadline are considered dead for this legislative session. Now the focus will be on passing Senate bills and on reconciling differences in legislation that have passed the two chambers.



**Discussing Pending Legislation with Governor Greg Abbott on the Floor of the House**

### **Passing the Presidential Debate Bill for Texas**

The Major Events Trust Fund is an existing program that provides reimbursement to localities hosting major events. Current statute lists several specific events such as the Super Bowl, the NCAA Final Four, a World Cup Soccer match, the Olympics, national political party conventions, etc. that qualify for the fund. Earlier this week, the House approved HB 1318 to add a presidential general election debate to the list of events eligible for the use of the Major Events Trust Fund.

I filed this bill because with nearly 60 million viewers, a presidential debate is one of the most nationally viewed events, ranking only behind the Super Bowl and the Olympics. Additionally, it provides more opportunities for Texans to engage in the national election process, if Texas were to host a presidential debate.

A study commissioned by Lynn University regarding the final presidential debate in 2012 found resounding economic effects on the surrounding area:

- \$13.1 Million in immediate economic impact for Palm Beach County, Florida
- \$1.7 million in elevated spending by local residents
- 22% increase in hotel tax revenue
- A national phone survey revealed that after watching the debate, approximately 4.7 million adults "absolutely" wanted to visit the area
- \$63 million in publicity value

I am pleased to say that Texas is one step closer to bringing this kind of economic activity to our state. The bill is now on its way over to the Senate where Senator Van Taylor will sponsor the bill.

### **Passing the Data Center Bill to Attract Major Investment in Texas**

Currently states are competing for data center business because it represents one of the most vibrant, growing, and resilient sectors worldwide with billions invested annually. This is a rapidly growing sector of our economy with mid-level and colocation companies driving the majority of the growth.

Last session, we passed a bill that created tax policy that was favorable to large data centers. While that bill created good policy, large single user companies will make up less than a third of new development activity; as a result, current policy will only benefit these few large single user companies.

Texas currently ranks 23rd in the country on total tax cost of ownership for mid-level users. I was proud to author HB 2096 to make Texas rise to number 3. I passed this bill in the House earlier this week and it is now over in the Senate for their consideration.

### **Honorable Pages of the Day**

This week, I was happy to host 4 young pages from the district that made the trip to Austin to help out at the Capitol. Sophia and Lucia Costantino and Caroline and Hailey Duggan graciously gave up their Wednesday to assist me and the House Sergeants by running messages on the floor of the House, delivering supplies to offices around the Capitol, and helping to preside over the chamber by banging the gavel on the Speaker's dais. They were a big help to us and I know that they had an exciting time as well. This is a great learning experience for any child that is learning about the state legislature. If you have a child between the ages of 8-18 who would like to experience firsthand the state legislative process, please contact our office whenever we are in a legislative session to set up a day for them to be an honorary page of the day.



**Thank you to all of our pages that helped us out on the floor of the Texas House this week!**



**Happy to be able to visit with some retired educators from the district, John Shirley of Richardson and Ray Ernst, outside of the House Chamber**

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](mailto:Angie.Button@house.state.tx.us).