

ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas
House of Representatives



May 6, 2016

Friends,

I hope everyone is able to enjoy time outside in the beautiful North Texas Spring we are experiencing. As students and teachers wrap up the school year, the legislature is busy preparing for the upcoming legislative session.

Economic Development

On April 6th, the Committee on Economic and Small Business Development, which I chair, held a hearing in Garland to evaluate what local governments are doing to attract businesses to their communities and to examine ways the state can leverage these practices and provide support. We heard from area chambers and cities on what they were doing to recruit business. We also discussed Texas's competitiveness with other states in recruiting and cultivating high-growth, high-tech industries, fostering economic development, and creating new jobs. We explored if current incentives and regulations assist or hinder the state's ability to compete with other states for economic growth and sustainability. Leslyn Blake of the Sachse Economic Development Corp., Kenneth Hutchenrider of the Richardson Chamber, Jim Grabenhorst from the City of Rowlett, Paul Mayer representing the Garland Chamber and the Dallas County Manufacturers, Barbara Baffer with Tech Titans, and Charlie Chen all took time from their busy schedules to ensure our area's interest were heard at the hearing.

Last week the Committee on Economic Development met in Austin on a joint charge with the Committee on Energy Resources to study the impacts of the declining price of oil and the continuously depressed price of natural gas on the Texas economy and the fiscal implications for the Texas budget. We considered impacts on local communities most dependent on oil and gas activity, including impacts on supporting economies such as retail, manufacturing, housing industries, etc. Additionally, our subcommittee on Small Business held a hearing to study opportunities and financial incentives for expansion and growth of small businesses in Texas.

Earlier this week, the Economic Development Committee joined with the Committee on Public Education to examine partnerships between higher education institutions, public school districts, and workforce that promote postsecondary readiness. We took a look at current rules and laws limiting employers from providing meaningful internships, apprenticeships, and other opportunities. The committee considered new methods to finance workforce training programs and associated assets in high schools and postsecondary schools, including ways to reduce or eliminate these costs and options to incentivize businesses to invest in training equipment for schools. Dr. Philip Gillbreath, Director of Career and Technical Education, GISD and Mark Hays, Vice Chancellor of Workforce and Economic Development, Dallas County Community College District, made the trip to Austin to talk about the work our local educators are doing.

These were very productive hearings and provided wonderful information that the committee will use to form its recommendations to the entire legislature.

Article V

Early this year, Governor Greg Abbott announced his support for the use of the Article V process to advance such things as congressional and judicial term limits, a balanced budget amendment, and other measures that would restore the powers of the states and to curtail the power of the federal government. Under Article V of the Constitution, constitutional amendments may be proposed by a two-thirds vote in both houses of Congress or by a special convention called by Congress on the application of two-thirds of the state legislatures. In short, Congress controls one path for proposing amendments while state legislatures control a second one. On Monday I had the opportunity to attend an Article V Leadership Conference with our governor to learn more about the process.



Around the District

This month I spoke to the Richardson Chamber Advocacy Team about our state's economic development status and where we are likely to head in the future. I also had the opportunity to visit with the Dallas Regional Chamber members at their legislative power-hour along with my colleague Rep. Jason Villalba. I met with members of Springcreek Community Church in Garland earlier this month as they shared their concerns over predatory lending and several other concerns. I met with Kelly Selman, the Dallas District Engineer for TxDOT, where we discussed the I-635E project.

Garland celebrated its 125th anniversary in April and I was honored to be able to present a resolution, along with my House colleagues that represent Garland, to the city commemorating it on such a momentous milestone. Rowlett also had a significant event last week with their groundbreaking ceremony of Bayside. This will be an enormous project and I am excited to see this vision come to fruition. Lastly, I attended UTD's Awards Gala where I was honored to receive the Green and Orange Award for Alumni Service.



Pictured with Mayor Doug Athas, Councilwoman Anita Goebel and Rep. Cindy Burkett at Garland's 125th Anniversary Celebration



At the Bayside groundbreaking along with Rowlett Mayor Todd Gottel, Sen. Don Huffines and Rep. Cindy Burkett

It is an honor to serve as your State Representative. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can ever be of assistance. I look forward to seeing you around House District 112.

Sincerely,

Angie Chen Button

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