

ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas House of Representatives



May 5, 2017

Friends,

With deadlines approaching, Texas House members are putting in long hours. May 11th is the last day for the House to consider House Bills and House Joint resolutions on 2nd reading on the regular calendar. This means, if a House Bill is not considered a local and consent bill and has not been heard by midnight on the 11th, it will not become law this session.

Asian American Heritage Day

On Wednesday I was happy to host Asian American Day at the Capitol with State Representatives Hubert Vo, Gene Wu, and other legislators from across the state. Thank you to the hundreds of guests that participated! Asian American Day provides a welcome opportunity to celebrate the Asian American community's significant contributions to the prosperity and cultural vibrancy of our state. It was a great opportunity to visit with Governor Greg Abbott and Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, in addition to discussing the state of Asian American affairs with Comptroller Glenn Hegar and Land Commissioner George P. Bush. Many other elected officials including Senators

Don Huffines and Royce West also stopped by to speak to the group. Thank you to everyone who made this event a success.



Pictured with Governor Abbott, Representative Vo, and members from Asian American organizations across the state.



Thank you to everyone who participated in Asian American Heritage Day on Wednesday! It was a great success.

Economic Development

This week, I passed two pieces of legislation important to Texas taxpayers and our economy.

HB 3360 seeks to provide more transparency and accountability to the Texas Economic Development Act. The Act, often referred to as Chapter 313 agreements, allows a school district to offer a temporary limitation for school property tax purposes on the property value of new investment in the state.

Last session, I authored legislation to provide additional oversight to our economic development incentive programs by creating the Economic Incentive Oversight (EIO) Board. The Board is an advisory body tasked with examining many of the state's economic development incentive programs.

HB 3360 tasks the EIO Board in examining the effectiveness, efficiency, and financial impact of The Texas Economic Development Act (Chapter 313 agreements).

Currently, the state of Texas offers various economic development incentives to businesses wishing to locate or expand in Texas. The process of determining what incentives to apply for and filling out multiple applications is challenging. Many businesses have to hire consultants just to go through the application. **HB 3172** seeks to remedy this problem and make the application process more efficient and available to all employers by creating a single internet portal where a business seeking to locate or expand in Texas can find information on what incentives they may qualify for and to fill out a single application to apply for available incentives.

These bills now head over to the Senate.

Dallas Police and Fire Fighters Pension

The Texas House passed HB 3158 this week which reforms the Dallas Police and Fire Fighters Pension Fund. Without this legislation, the pension fund would be in danger of becoming insolvent within a decade. The current pension fund had questionable investments, generous benefits, and a large number of early withdrawals that have contributed to its current crisis. HB 3158 stipulates that a majority of the 11 new board members must have a background in finance, and control will be equally split between the city and the pensioners, with the final seat being a joint appointment by the city manager and Police and Fire associations. It also sets a steady rate of contribution to the fund by the City of Dallas. HB 3158 now heads to the Senate.

Ethics Reform

Ethics reform was an emergency priority from the Governor, and this week the House passed HB 500 and HB 505 to strengthen ethics requirements for elected officials. HB 500 will prohibit elected officials from collecting from government pension funds if they are convicted of a felony. HB 505 restricts elected officials from using their campaign funds when leaving office and becoming a registered lobbyist. The bill restricts the ability of a former elected official to donate unused campaign funds to another political candidate or committee. I proudly voted for both of these bills and joint authored HB 505. Both bills will now head to the Senate.

Supporting Texas Educators

On Wednesday, April 3rd, I proudly voted in support of Texas teachers. HB 3976 changes the TRS-Care design to implement a single-option healthcare plan for retirees. There is a specific option for pre-65 retirees (a High-Deductible plan), and a specific option for retirees over the age of 65 (Medicare Advantage). This bill is vital to the health of TRS-Care.

Public Education

This week your Texas House was hard at work improving public schools. HB 22 reforms the A-F grading system for public schools by giving teachers and campuses more autonomy, reducing the emphasis on standardized tests, and including important metrics like arts education and extracurricular activities. HB 515 lowers the required number of standardized tests in Texas schools. This bill also reduces testing before the 9th grade. Both bills passed overwhelmingly and have been sent to the Senate for consideration.



Pictured with my colleagues, Representatives Linda Koop and Victoria Neave along with Leadership Garland that came down this week to speak to their elected officials and learn more about our state's government. Thank you all for coming to visit your state capitol!

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.texas.gov