

# ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



## The State of Texas House of Representatives



*March 1, 2019*

Friends,

On Tuesday I was proud to stand with my fellow Dallas County colleague Representative Neave in support of HB 8 to reduce the number of backlogged untested rape kits.

This legislation will require an audit of untested rape kits to determine the number, status, and where the kit is in Texas. It creates a timeline from when the kit is submitted, tested, and sent for analysis. Additionally, it proposes stalling the statute of limitation for sexual assault until the rape kit is tested. The bill would prevent law enforcement agencies from destroying rape kits related to an uncharged or unsolved case until the statute of limitation expires, or 50 years. HB 8 aims to increase the amount of time that Public Safety maintains rape kits classified as "non-reports" from two years to five years.

### **PTA Legislative Day**

The Garland and Richardson school districts had their annual PTA Legislative Days at the Capitol this week! In conjunction, teachers also had their annual Legislative Days with the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE). I enjoyed meeting with these groups, including getting a chance to visit with the students as they had prepared some questions for me regarding legislative priorities. I was thrilled to hear about their interest in public school finance, mental health awareness, and school safety.

Issues related to public education are of vital importance and will remain a priority as we move through this legislative session. I am honored to have had these fine students and educators from home here in Austin to help educate my colleagues about issues important to public education and to learn first-hand how the process works.



**I was honored to welcome these wonderful students and educators from GISD on their legislative visit.**

### **Future Forum Panel**

On Tuesday, I was invited to speak at the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library Future Forum with my fellow colleagues Representatives John Cyrier and Sheryl Cole and Senator Jose Menendez. The Future Forum is an energetic public policy discussion forum that provides thought leadership through compelling programs and activities. There was lengthy discussion and consensus amongst all my colleagues and from those in the audience on the priority of school finance and property tax reform this session. I was glad to be included on this panel.

### **Rowlett Day and Wylie Day at the Capitol**

February 27th was Rowlett Day at the Capitol. A group of delegates from the City of Rowlett including Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian, the Rowlett Chamber of Commerce, council members, and community leaders from the city came down to the state capitol to visit with their state legislators. Rowlett has grown into a flourishing city with more than 60,000 residents, winning recognition from the *Texas Economic Development Council* and the *Dallas Business Journal* for its economic development achievements. I commemorated their success with a resolution, where their achievements will be enshrined into Texas history.

I also presented a memorial resolution honoring the life of Barry Dana-Bashian. Barry was a devoted community member, a loving husband to his wife Tammy, and a dedicated father to their two sons Clayton and Mitchell. Barry's presence will be missed tremendously.



**Presenting Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian and Clayton Dana-Bashian with a memorial resolution honoring the life of Barry Dana-Bashian.**

On the 27th, we also celebrated Wylie Day at the Capitol. Founded by Colonel W. D. Wylie in 1887, the city's unique history presents residents with a city to be proud of. Wylie's railroads highlight the importance of railroads in the development of Texas agriculture even prospering during the Great Depression and World War II. I am honored that my fellow colleagues got a glimpse of what this city has to offer.

### **Dallas Regional Chamber**

On Tuesday, I met with the Dallas Regional Chamber. As a co-chair of the delegation, I was proud to speak to the group about my legislative priorities, along with my colleague, Representative

Victoria Neave. We each laid out our legislative priorities for the region including initiatives to further invest in our cities' infrastructure, workforce and economic development, and to invest more in our schools. As chair of the Urban Affairs Committee, I also included priorities related to the committee. I am so honored to be given such a high responsibility as I continue to work hard on passing legislation that will benefit our communities.

### **Higher Education**

This week in the Higher Education Committee, we heard our first bills of the 86th session. Workers today are more burdened with student debt than ever before. Because of student loan debt, many struggle to pay bills upon graduation. We heard four bills in particular that address the problems of rising student debt. One of those bills is HB 277, which I joint-authored with Representative Oliverson, will require the "ApplyTexas" website, which students use to apply to higher education institutions, to also compare gainful employment data. This bill arms high school students with the critical information they need when deciding their degree program and career path. Additionally, bills HB 218, HB 258, and HB 466 prohibit revoking professional or occupational licenses for students who default on their student loans.

Sincerely,

*Angie Chen Button*

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