



CINDY BURKETT
TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
DISTRICT 113

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Week in Review February 27th, 2017

Please Stay in Touch



We want to hear from you. Please direct all written correspondence to:

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Also, you can reach her by [email](#) or over the phone:

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Greetings!

Updates from the Texas Legislature!

I am thrilled to announce that this past Monday, House Bill 4 was heard in the Human Services Committee and passed through unanimously. HB 4 is an important piece of legislation that will improve the effectiveness of the state's Kinship Care program. For more details, read below in the Legislative Highlight. This bill will be heard on the House floor on Wednesday and is expected to be voted out to the Senate by the end of the week.

On Thursday, I filed HB 2329, which eliminates the countywide property tax being collected by Dallas County Schools (DCS) and prohibits them from imposing new taxes. This legislation will allow an important tax break for individuals in school districts that don't even utilize DCS.

DCS is currently mired in debt and has inappropriately used taxpayer dollars to invest in private enterprises, resulting in a loss of taxpayer money on its stop-arm camera program. To watch the segment on HB 2329 by NBCDFW, click [here](#).

I had the privilege of hosting Legislative Days for the Garland Chamber of Commerce, the Rowlett Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Rowlett on February 15th-17th. Legislative Days are an opportunity for local city leadership to come to Austin and advocate for their municipalities. These men and women spent a day at the Capitol -- presented their legislative agenda, met with their elected officials, were honored on the floor of the House and Senate, saw the inner workings of the Legislative Session and even toured the dome of the Texas Capitol!

A highlight of the visit was

Texas State Capitol
Room GN.10

District Office
3200 Broadway
Suite 240
Garland, TX 75043

District Home Page
[House District 113](#)

Rep. Burkett
Legislative Info



--Bills--

Author

Co-author



The group from Rowlett Chamber posing with Governor Greg Abbott.

receiving a hand-built clock manufactured by high school students in House District 113. Students from Garland High School crafted the clock face, students from Naaman Forest High School wired the medallions and students from North Garland High School built the clock cabinet. The clock is proudly displayed in my Austin office. What a highlight to my week!

As always, it is a pleasure to serve the people of District 113.
Sincerely,

Cindy Burkett
State Representative
House District 113

Legislative Days at The Capitol

Pictured below are shots from the Legislative Days for the Garland Chamber of Commerce, the Rowlett Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Rowlett.





Legislative Highlight

Child Protective Services has been in need of true reform for far too long. While the emergency funding granted to CPS in December is a start, I believe more needs to be done to protect our most vulnerable children and ensure that tax dollars are spent in the most efficient manner possible.

Data demonstrates that children who are placed with relative caregivers receive more stability and permanency in their lives than children who are placed in non-relative Foster Care. Children in Kinship Care (the states relative caregiver program) receive fewer placement changes and exhibit higher exit rates from the system and back to their homes, which will ultimately result in long-term cost savings opportunities for the state.

Despite these demonstrably better results, Kinship Care families receive only an integration payment for initial expenses of \$1000 for the oldest child plus an additional \$495 per child. Families are then eligible for up to a \$500 yearly reimbursement per child.

In an effort to improve the effectiveness of the state's Kinship Care program, [House Bill 4](#) includes the following provisions:

- HB 4 will provide a monthly stipend to Kinship Care families who are

HB 4 will provide a monthly stipend to Kinship Care families who are below 300% of the federal poverty level and will make Kinship Care families who are between 300% and 500% of the federal poverty level eligible for the integration payment referenced above and yearly reimbursement that families currently receive through the program.

- The monthly stipend provided under HB 4 cannot exceed 50% of the basic care rate for Foster Care, which is currently \$693 per month.
- Additionally, HB 4 creates an offense for those who knowingly make a false statement that generates a situation whereby a relative takes custody of a child, solely to access state funds.

For a full list of bills I have filed in the 85th Session, click [here](#).

News from House District 113



On Friday, I traveled back to Garland to discuss Red Light Cameras and how they operate in Garland. In attendance at the meeting was Mayor Douglas Athas, City Attorney Brad Neighbor, Police Chief Mitch Bates and the PIO from Garland Police Department, Pedro Barineau. Pictured here is Traffic Lieutenant Mark Hall.



The Dallas Mayor's Intern Fellows Program celebrated its 10 year anniversary last week! Launched in 2008 by Mayor Tom Leppert and the City of Dallas, the program is designed to introduce exemplary Dallas high school students to future careers, professional employment opportunities and valuable workplace skills. Since its inception, MIFP has provided 1,773 students with internships.



John Mark, our Chief of Staff's son, gaveled in last week during Capitol Kid's Day.



I brought the grand kids to the Capitol last Sunday to show them my office and take them around the floor. They all wanted a turn sitting in my seat, both in my office and on the floor (they were particularly fascinated with the voting buttons.)

Capitol Visitor Information

Are you planning a trip to the Capitol this Spring? Be sure to stop by our new office, Room GN.10 Here's some helpful information for your visit:

- [Texas Capitol Visitors Center Information](#)
- [Capitol Visitors Parking Garage Information](#)
- [Capitol Complex Maps](#)
- [Capital Accessibility Information](#)