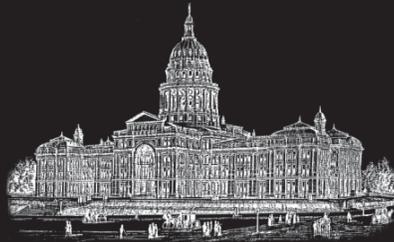


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Election Day: Tuesday, November 7

in this issue
**Constitutional
Amendment
Voting Guide**
cut out and take with you to the polls

Early Voting:
Monday, October 23
through
Friday, November 3

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE



KYLE KACAL

DISTRICT 12

BRAZOS, FALLS, LIMESTONE, MCLENNAN, ROBERTSON



85TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION & CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT INFORMATION



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
KYLE KACAL
DISTRICT 12

Dear Friends,

During the 85th Legislative Session and the subsequent special session, I worked as your elected voice in the Texas House to advocate for good public policy and to pass comprehensive legislation in an effort to enhance the quality of life for all Texans, but especially those of House District 12.

In January, at the start of the regular session, Governor Greg Abbott outlined several priorities that legislators would need to promptly address. The Legislature immediately turned to action: tackling the banning of so-called "sanctuary cities", overhauling the Texas Child Protective Services, implementing ethics reform, and passing a resolution calling on Congress to convene a convention of states to amend the U.S. Constitution. In addition to these emergency items, the Legislature was also successful in passing a conservative balanced budget as well as numerous pro-life reforms.

Highlighted in this newsletter are some of the critical issues that we were able to address during the regular session as well as the first called special session. Please do not hesitate to contact my office should you have any questions or need for additional information on any particular issue.

In closing, I'd like to express my sincere appreciation to those that called and corresponded with our office, sharing their priorities and concerns. It is with humility and immense gratitude that I pursue the issues and values that are important to the hard-working citizens of our district and I simply could not do it without your input and prayers.

Thank you for the continued honor and privilege of serving you and this great state in the Texas House.

May God bless you and yours, and may God bless the great State of Texas.

Sincerely,

Kyle Kacal
State Representative

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DISTRICT 12 ★ LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ★ FALL 2017

★ Budget ★

Legislators in Austin are constitutionally required to pass a balanced budget for every two year biennium. With that stated, the 85th Legislature exercised strong fiscal discipline in passing a conservative balanced budget and in keeping state spending flat while making significant investments in the critical priorities for our state. Furthermore, the limited spending retained a balance of \$11 billion in the Economic Stabilization Fund to be used for future budget shortfalls. With the previous session's tax cut of \$4 billion and continued weakness in the oil & gas sector, we knew that the state was facing a tight budgetary situation. Balancing the budget required us to analyze each proposed item as well as a mixture of cuts and deferrals. Ultimately, the Texas Comptroller certified the budget passed by legislators and we guaranteed that Texas met many of its essential obligations.

★ Public Education ★

While attempts were made by the Texas House to begin a wholesale overhaul of the public school finance system and reduce the burden on property taxpayers during the regular and special session, the Legislature was unable to agree on a fair and sensible approach. Simply put, school finance and property tax reform are issues that are intertwined and a "one size fits all" approach does not work. True property tax relief will come from reforming how schools are financed in Texas. The Legislature did approve a smaller funding bill which will have a critical impact on our district because it helped state funding for rural schools, created grant programs for children with certain disabilities, and aids retired teachers in the TRS-Care system.

★ Border Security & Immigration ★

With the passage of Senate Bill 4, Texas can now ensure that federal immigration laws are followed and lawfully enforced by prohibiting local entities from adopting "sanctuary city" policies which threaten public safety. Local officials found violating this law may face financial penalties up to \$25,500. Furthermore, Senate Bill 4 allows the Attorney General to petition to remove any local official found in violation of this statute. This legislation was passed as a direct response to certain governmental entities in Texas adopting "sanctuary city" policies that purposefully hinder or prohibit local law enforcement cooperation with U.S. Immigration detainers. Additionally, House Bill 1 maintained the \$800 million funding level for border security, including 250 new troopers along the Texas-Mexico border, and fully funding the 50-hour workweek for all troopers statewide.

★ Child Protective Services Reform ★

Heading into the 85th legislative session, the Child Protective Services (CPS) was due for a much needed overhaul and would be one of the first items addressed. Recent documentation of abuse and the death of children within the system demanded improved childcare, quality investigations, and increased accountability. The 2018-2019 appropriation to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) was increased to \$4 billion from \$3.5 billion, allowing for pay raises for current caseworkers and the hiring of additional caseworkers, among other needs. Additionally, DFPS was made into an executive-level agency, providing for increased flexibility for the agency to make timely decisions providing much needed responsiveness to children and their families within the CPS system.

★ Pro-life Initiatives ★

The preservation of all human life and the dignity of the unborn were priorities for the Legislature this session as multiple pro-life bills passed to the Governor's desk. An omnibus bill, Senate Bill 8, was signed into law and prohibits partial birth abortions, outlaws the sale of fetal tissue, and provides for the dignified disposition of fetal remains. Additionally, the state is actively looking to address the growing issue of prenatal and maternal healthcare by extending the Maternal Mortality Task Force. This statewide task force is charged with investigating maternal mortality and morbidity and preparing suggested policy changes for the next legislative session.

★ REPRESENTATIVE KACAL'S VOTING RECORD ★

LEGISLATIVE ISSUE	KACAL VOTED	EXPLANATION
Illegal Immigration Enforcement & Anti-Sanctuary Cities	YES	SB 4 will require local cooperation with federal immigration laws and ban "sanctuary cities"
Convention of the States	YES	Call for a convention of the states with the specific goals: to require a balanced federal budget, limit federal overreach, institute term limits on federal officials. All constitutional changes would need the States to ratify them.
Public Education Reform	YES	Lessen dependence on standardized testing in order to reduce pressure for teachers to "teach to the test"
Advance Pro-life Initiatives	YES	Ban partial birth abortion and increased reporting requirements on abortion facilities and their practices.
Address Child Protective Services	YES	Increased number of caseworkers, strengthened family based kinship care, and improving investigations
Defend the 2nd Amendment Rights	YES	Reduced the fee for all Texans to obtain a License to Carry and removed the minimum .32 caliber requirement
Ethics Reform	YES	Voted to end pensions for public officials convicted of felonies and expands transparency on government contracts. Created new limits on campaign funds to stop the "revolving door" of lobbyists
Support Retired Teachers	YES	Voted to increase state and district funding for the TRS Care system in order to address ongoing deficit
Support Law Enforcement	YES	Created a grant for approx. 50,000 bulletproof vests for local police departments

★ CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT VOTING GUIDE ★

Proposition 1

- YES
 NO

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 21

"The constitutional amendment authorizing the Legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of part of the market value of the residence homestead of a partially disabled veteran or the surviving spouse of a partially disabled veteran if the residence homestead was donated to the disabled veteran by a charitable organization for less than the market value of the residence homestead and harmonizing certain related provisions of the Texas Constitution."

Proposition 2

- YES
 NO

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 60

"The constitutional amendment to establish a lower amount for expenses that can be charged to a borrower and removing certain financing expense limitations for a home equity loan, establishing certain authorized lenders to make a home equity loan, changing certain options for the refinancing for home equity loans, changing the threshold for an advance of a home equity line of credit, and allowing home equity loans on agricultural homesteads."

Proposition 3

- YES
 NO

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 34

"The constitutional amendment limiting the service of certain officeholders appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate after the expiration of the person's term of office."

Proposition 4

- YES
 NO

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 6

"The constitutional amendment authorizing the Legislature to require a court to provide notice to the attorney general of a challenge to the constitutionality of a state statute and authorizing the Legislature to prescribe a waiting period before the court may enter a judgment holding the statute unconstitutional."

Proposition 5

- YES
 NO

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 100

"The constitutional amendment on professional sports teams' charitable foundations conducting charitable raffles."

Proposition 6

- YES
 NO

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1

"The constitutional amendment authorizing the Legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a first responder who is killed or fatally injured in the line of duty."

Proposition 7

- YES
 NO

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 37

"The constitutional amendment relating to legislative authority to permit credit unions and other financial institutions to award prizes by lot to promote savings."

★ SPECIAL SESSION ★

At the conclusion of the regular session, Governor Abbott announced that the Legislature would be called back for a special session beginning on July 18. At the conclusion of the special session the Legislature sent the following bills to the Governor's desk:

- SB 5 clarifies current election law, protects mail-ballot voting integrity;
- SB 6 prohibits forced annexation by municipalities over 500,000 in population, requiring voter approval;
- SB 11 requires written consent prior to changing a do-not-resuscitate order (DNR);
- SB 17 expands the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force's duties, extends the Sunset date of the Task Force from 2019 to 2023;
- SB 20 Sunset legislation that extends the existence of several regulatory boards such as the Texas Medical Board;
- SB 60 continues funding for state boards extended in SB 20;
- HB 7 requires municipalities that impose tree mitigation fees to give property owners credits for trees planted;
- HB 13 requires hospitals, emergency care facilities, and abortion clinics to report within 30 days certain abortion complications to the HHSC;
- HB 21 provides \$322 million for the next biennium: funding for the Hardship Grant, directs \$212 million towards TRS-Care, creates the Texas Commission on Public School Finance;
- HB 30 provides the appropriation for HB 21;
- HB 214 prohibits insurance plans from offering elective abortion coverage, allows for optional elective abortion coverage through the purchase of a separate plan; and
- HB 215 requires physicians to report certain information pertaining to abortions for minors.