



State Representative Lyle Larson
TX HD-122

03.22.2011

Weekly Recap #10

What's new in District 122

This week, the House began debate on the Voter ID bill. Less than two hours into the debate, opponents of the bill called a point of order, indicating that wording on the bill analysis did not match the text of the actual bill. The bill analysis reads that voters have "six business days" to verify their identity after casting a provisional ballot, while the bill itself says that voters have "six days." The bill was sent back to committee, where the appropriate changes will be made. We will likely resume debate on Wednesday and vote it out of the House later this week.

Providing a photo ID is required to do many things in our daily lives, including driving a car, opening a bank account, applying for a loan, and purchasing insurance. Interestingly, there are some folks in the Legislature who don't think it's appropriate to require that individuals verify their identity before casting their vote! I look forward to voting for this legislation to help ensure integrity in elections in Texas.

As you may know, state leadership reached an agreement on paying for the \$4 billion funding shortfall in the **current** biennium. Governor Perry agreed to support the use of \$3.2 billion of the "rainy day fund" along with \$800 million in additional spending cuts. There still has not been a commitment from the leadership to use any of the "rainy day fund" for the nearly \$27 billion projected shortfall in the next biennium. It's becoming pretty clear that folks up here could have used a Dave Ramsey starter kit a few years ago!

During last week's Natural Resources Committee hearing, I joint authored Rep. Jose Menendez's BexarMet bill and we voted it out of committee. It has been sent to the Calendars Committee and we expect it will pass both the House and the Senate, barring any unforeseen issues. Voters will finally have the opportunity to decide between the status quo or allowing SAWS to provide their water and waste water service. Also during the Natural Resources Committee meeting, I presented HB 1547, which provides guidelines for developing long term groundwater planning. It was very well received and supported by many stakeholders.

In Committee This Week

Three of our bills will be heard in committee this week. On Wednesday, the Transportation Committee will hear HB 664, which would prohibit non-elected members of MPO boards from voting. Currently, 25 members comprise the San Antonio-Bexar County MPO. Of those, 12 are non-elected. With hundreds of millions of dollars flowing through MPOs, it's imperative that we retain the ability to hold these individuals accountable for the decisions they make in determining which roads are funded. We need to do all we can to ensure we don't imitate the Obama-style system in which unelected czars make major policy and funding decisions.

On Thursday, the House Technology Committee will hear HB 2340, which would create a Cyber Security, Education, and Economic Development Council. Cyber security is one of the fastest growing industries in the nation. In San Antonio, cyber security is part of an information technology sector whose local economic impact in 2008 was \$8 billion, according to a study distributed by the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce. This council will help Texas become a leader in cyber security technology and set an example for the rest of the nation.

Also on Thursday, HB 1132 will be heard in the County Affairs Committee. HB 1132 would cut the amount of time allowed for homeowners to abate a nuisance from 30 to 15 days. When owners neglect their property, it impacts the property values in the area due to the blight and unsanitary conditions. This bill will speed up the nuisance abatement process and help protect property values.

Last week, we were visited by several groups, including volunteers from the Healthy Futures Alliance, leadership of Our Lady of the Lake University, Methodist Healthcare System and the San Antonio Childrens Shelter.

At the Capitol



Rep. Larson with leadership of the Methodist Healthcare System.



Rep. Larson with staff and volunteers from the San Antonio Childrens Shelter.

If we may be of assistance to you, please feel free to contact our Capitol office at (512) 463-0646 or lyle.larson@house.state.tx.us. Please continue to let us hear from you!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ley' or similar, written in a cursive style.