

Texas House of Representatives



Lyle Larson

State Representative - District 122

What's new in District 122

Since session ended a little over a month ago, we've been grateful for the opportunity to spend a lot more time in the district and meet and visit with many of you. Last week we held our district office grand opening. Over 200 neighbors and friends attended, toured our office, discussed their concerns and shared their thoughts with us. We're glad to be officially up and running and look forward to serving you in our brand new San Antonio office.



Visiting with constituents at the district office grand opening

Over the past few weeks, we've worked to meet with San Antonio directors of several state agencies, including the Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD), Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Our state law enforcement officers, both the game wardens and the DPS officers, are doing a great job protecting Texans. As for TxDOT, stay tuned for upcoming announcements about new road projects including work on IH-10 near Leon Springs, the completion of Wurzbach Parkway and the time line for the 281/1604 interchanges.



With leadership of TPWD and DPS in San Antonio

Ensuring funding for nursing homes was a major concern while necessary budget cuts were being made during Legislative Session. As we worked through the process we were fortunate to hear from various individuals who would be affected by these cuts. Our office was recently invited to tour a nursing home facility in Bexar County called the Pecan Valley Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center, a premier long term care provider in our community. The owners, who are passionate about providing affordable long term care and rehabilitation to residents throughout Bexar County and south Texas, discussed the challenges they face and showed us how they fulfill their mission each day.



Talking with owners of the Pecan Valley Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center

Though we're just over a month into the interim, we're busy listening to constituents and collecting ideas for legislation for next session. As the interim progresses, each of the House committees will meet to address the interim charges provided by the Speaker. The following is a list of interim studies we have requested that the Speaker include in his charge. If you have an idea to help make Texas an even better place, we encourage you to share it with us and we'll work together to make it happen.

Committee on Culture, Recreation and Tourism:

- Determine the double-breasted cormorant's impact on Texas fisheries.
- Look into determination of the south and north zone lines and season dates for dove hunting.
- Track implementation of SB 460 regarding Deer Management Permits (DMPs) for Mule Deer.
- Explore issues surrounding the declining quail population.
- Meet with Texas Historical Commission to determine the condition of the historic buildings under their care.
- Monitor implementation of HB 716, the "pork chopper" bill.

Committee on Defense and Veterans Affairs:

- Investigate occurrences of individuals marrying service members, divorcing them shortly after, then receiving their retirement funds in divorce court. The former spouses are sometimes being awarded up to 1/2 the service member's retirement due to a provision in the Uniformed Services Federal Spouse Protection Act (USFSPA), PL 97-252. Oklahoma has passed legislation that remedies the problem, and we've been asked by a constituent to look further into the issue.
- Develop a more comprehensive military base protection template for all Department of Defense installations in Texas. HB 3533 (82R) by Larson would have allowed local jurisdictions to protect their Air Education and Training Command (AETC) bases from encroachment. We would like to see what other states have already accomplished through their legislatures for guidance, as Texas is behind in finding a solution on this issue.

Committee on Natural Resources:

- Stormwater capture (82R SB 467). This is a complicated issue that needs to be addressed, and we'd like to find a workable solution for the stakeholders.
- Determine how to implement desalination of brackish water in urban areas.
- Create an effective drought management plan.
- Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs): ensure notification to school districts and other refinements needed on current MUD templates.

- Meaningful reform of investor owned utilities (IOUs), specifically, more practical rate structure.

Committee on County Affairs:

- Develop creative ways for counties to cut costs and find savings at the local level. Examine city/county consolidation by looking at successes and failures in other states (82R HJR 44/HB 431 by Larson). Ensure county leadership has access to all available funds when budgeting (82R HB 2465 by Larson).

Committee on Appropriations:

- Determine how, over the next several sessions, the Legislature can restore transparency and regain confidence by ending diversions from specific dedicated accounts. Examples include the Sporting Goods Sales Tax, diversions from the Highway Fund (Fund 006), and the Trauma Fund (Account 5111), as addressed by Rep. Larson's 82R HB 1628, 82R HJR 84/HB 1131, and 82(1) amendment to SB 2, respectively.
- Examine what other state legislatures do when their revenue projections are off, especially during a budget crisis. Determine how we can promptly deal with declining revenues by making requisite cuts immediately. Look into feasibility of Texas Legislature meeting for a special session when revenue projections vary by 5% more or less to reallocate funding (82R HJR 149 by Larson).

General Interim Studies:

- Ensure Trauma Hospitals receive funding from their dedicated account - Fund 5111: Determine how best to ensure the Trauma Centers actually receive the funds that have been collected through Account 5111.
- Evaluate the annual cost of illegal immigrants to the state of Texas (82R HB 1553 by Larson).
- Examine feasibility of merging the Public Utility Commission and Railroad Commission to eliminate redundancy and streamline communication and operations. Research what other states have done, how much money it has saved them, and if it would work in Texas (82R HB 1302 by Larson).
- Determine ways to cut costs and provide flexibility to jails by revisiting jail standards and inmate classification. Examine successes and failures in other states (82R HB 684 by Larson - tent jails; 82R HB 2348 by Larson - paper ready inmates).

- Examine what Texas can do to combat harsh environmental restrictions coming from the EPA to ensure state sovereignty, protect residents and businesses from unnecessary regulations (82R HB 3188 by Larson).
- Examine the feasibility of implementing statewide adoption programs to expedite and improve the adoption process. Look at Project PUSH and Project SWIFT in Bexar County (PUSH facilitates adoption by stable and caring family members, and SWIFT streamlines the adoption process).
- Transportation: Studying the cost impact of abiding by federal highway program specifications vs. allowing the state to build projects to their own specifications.

Let us know what you think of this list and what you believe should be studied over the interim.

Please feel free to contact me if I may ever be of assistance to you by phone at (210) 402-5402 or by email at lyle.larson@house.state.tx.us.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lyle Larson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lyle Larson