



Lyle Larson

State Representative - District 122

What's new in District 122

October was an exciting month for us! Early in the month, we visited several neighborhoods during National Night Out (NNO), including Hunters Creek North, the Bluffs at Two Creeks, Promontory Pointe and Timberwood Park. NNO is a great opportunity to meet neighbors and we certainly enjoyed visiting with so many constituents. In October, I spoke at the Texas Water Conservation Association Fall Conference, the Texas Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association fall conference and the Alamo Kiwanis Club. I was also a part of Jack Riccardi's Gang of Four on 550 KTSA. If you missed the show you can listen to it [here](#).

Last month, [Dr. John Folks](#), Northside Independent School District (NISD) Superintendent, earned the Texas Association of School Board's highest honor: Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Folks was selected from over 1,000 superintendents in the state for this well deserved honor. Because District 122 overlaps part of NISD, we have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Folks on public education issues and we are grateful for his leadership and commitment to providing students in our community with an exceptional education. Congratulations Dr. Folks!

We're seeking outstanding teachers! Humanities Texas is accepting nominations for the 2011-2012 Outstanding Teaching of the Humanities Award. Twelve teachers will be selected from across the state to win a \$5,000 prize and an additional \$500 for their school to purchase humanities related instructional materials. If you know a teacher who you believe deserves to win this award, please visit the [Humanities Texas website](#) to complete the nomination form by Monday, December 12, 2011.

Fighting Exorbitant Water Costs in Northwest Bexar County

While most folks in District 122 get their water and wastewater services from SAWS or BexarMet, there are several small areas in Bexar County that are served by other utilities. In northwest Bexar County, the Stage Coach Hills, Country Bend, and Oaks North neighborhoods are served by Monarch Utilities, an investor-owned utility that owns systems throughout Texas. On September 1st, Monarch Utilities put into effect an exorbitant water and wastewater rate increase and folks in these neighborhoods have seen a 200 percent increase in their monthly bills, unrelated to how much water they use. My office received hundreds of calls and emails about the increase and we've been working to address this issue over the course of the last several weeks.

As required by state law, Monarch Utilities has filed applications with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality ([TCEQ](#)) to increase water and wastewater rates and to consolidate 7 water utilities and 3 wastewater utilities across the state. Due to the large number of ratepayers who protested the increase, there are now two cases against Monarch that are being heard by the State Office of Administrative Hearings ([SOAH](#)).

On behalf of hundreds of District 122 constituents, I voiced my opposition to Monarch's rate increase at the most recent SOAH hearing on October 10. Last week, we received great news: the TCEQ's Office of Public Interest Counsel ([OPIC](#)) stated that this rate increase is an "unfair burden to customers" and a "windfall for Monarch Utilities." They went on to recommend that the rate increase be suspended until the consolidation application is determined, something that we have been strongly encouraging the SOAH judges to do from the beginning. We will continue to closely monitor this situation and keep you updated of any developments. Please call my capitol office at (512) 463-0646 if you have any questions about the Monarch situation and the SOAH process.

Early Voting has begun in Texas

As you may know, unlike our U.S. Constitution, the Texas Constitution is an extremely lengthy document that is rather easy to amend. As a result, after the Legislature meets each session, there are usually a few changes made to the constitution by the Legislature that need to be ratified by Texas voters. On the ballot, there are 10 amendments to the Texas Constitution. For a detailed explanation of the amendments, along with commentary from supporters and opponents of each amendment, [click here](#).

Additionally, many folks in District 122 will have the opportunity to vote in the BexarMet dissolution election, as well as the North East Independent School District bond election. Many of you who live in the BexarMet service area have contacted my office with various questions about the election, including who will be eligible to vote on this proposition. To clarify, the Bexar County Elections Department has included in their database the address of every individual registered voter who lives within the BexarMet service area. If you are a BexarMet customer, your ballot will automatically include the BexarMet proposition. Like any other election, you will simply need to provide your voter registration card or a form of identification and you will be able to vote on each proposition for which you are eligible.

Now that Early Voting is underway, make plans to stop by one of the many polling sites in Bexar County. To find a convenient voting location and to see a sample ballot, [click here](#).

House Committee on Natural Resources Receives its Interim Charges

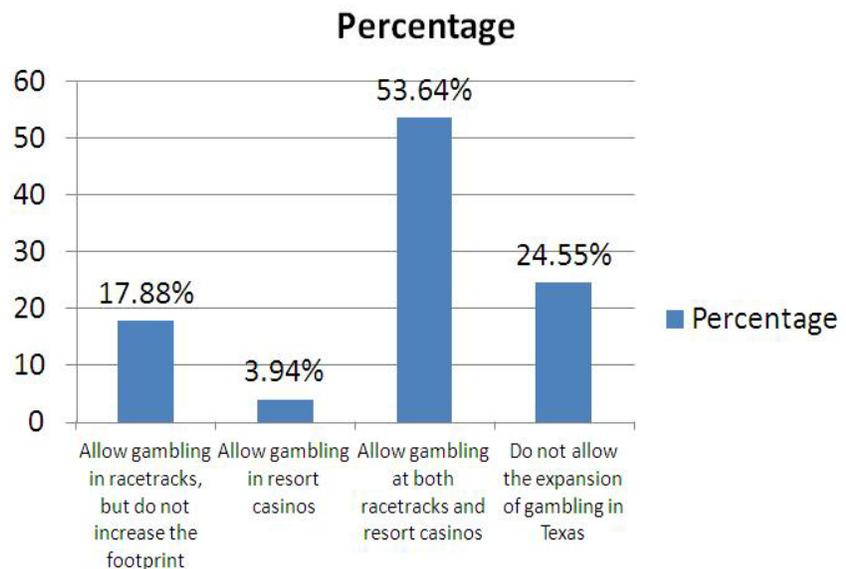
As many of you are well aware, we're currently experiencing the worst drought in Texas history. I wanted to share [this article](#) with you, which describes how scientists analyzed tree rings to determine that the current drought is the worst Texas has experienced

since 1789. Water planning is one issue Texas cannot afford to ignore. Fortunately, the Natural Resources Committee will spend a significant amount of time during the interim focusing on addressing this issue. On Wednesday, November 2nd, the Natural Resources Committee will convene for the first time since the Session ended. To view the Speaker's interim charges for this and other committees, visit this [link](#).

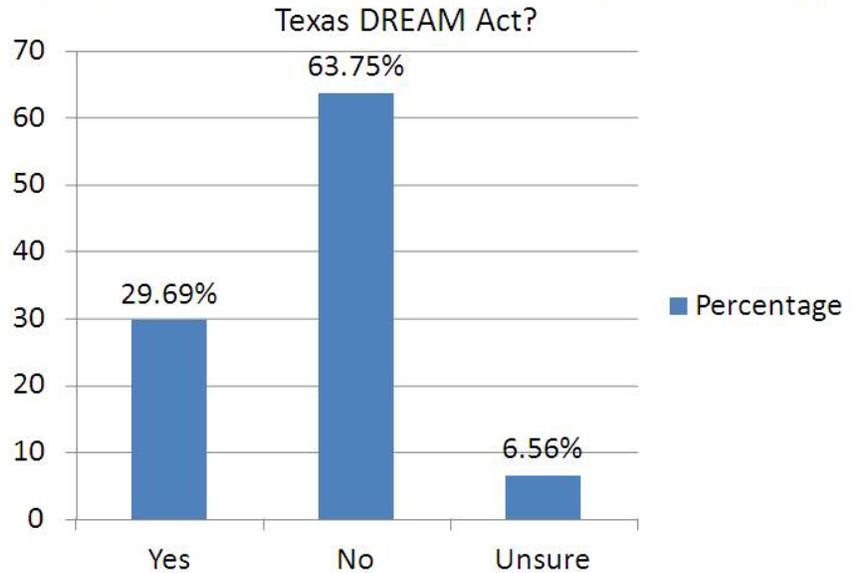
"Survey Says"

Thanks to all who took our surveys in the last newsletter. The results are as follows:

When it comes to gambling in Texas, which of the following do you support?



The Texas DREAM Act, passed by the Legislature in 2001, allows illegal immigrants who have attended a Texas high school to pay in-state tuition at state colleges. If this vote were to take place today, would you support the



Thank you for sharing your feedback through our online surveys!



Visiting with Leon Springs Volunteer Fire Department firefighters during National Night Out.

As always, 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", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lyle Larson