

Texas House of Representatives



Lyle Larson

State Representative - District 122

What's new in District 122

The past several weeks have been extremely busy for Team Larson. In addition to traveling throughout the state to see firsthand several innovative projects aimed at bolstering our state's water supply, we've participated in several events and meetings throughout San Antonio. Last month, we discussed the importance of getting involved in government with local young professionals at an Associated Builders and Contractors Future Leaders Task Force meeting. We also discussed water planning at a meeting of the Austin Area Research Organization and spoke on a Texas energy panel at the San Antonio Energy Summit organized by the Texas Conservative Coalition Research Institute. Please let us know if you'd like us to attend a meeting of an organization you're a part of. Hope to see you around District 122!

Sharing the bill with President Calderón

In late March, we sent a letter to Mexican President Felipe Calderón with the intent to start a dialogue on how to secure reimbursement for state funded services provided to illegal immigrants from Mexico. You can view the letter we sent [here](#). We were invited on the Your World with Neil Cavuto show on Thursday to discuss the idea. Click [here](#) to see a transcript of the interview. We want your feedback on this issue! Please send me an email to let me know what you think.

Truth in Budgeting at the local level - the streetcar and Advanced Transportation District funding

As you may have heard recently, several Bexar County elected officials have challenged the Bexar County Commissioners Court's decision to allocate \$92 million in Advanced Transportation District (ATD) funding to the downtown streetcar project. View the letter we sent to County Judge Nelson Wolff requesting that the Commissioners Court rescind their vote [here](#). Many of you voted in the election held in November of 2004 which authorized the creation of the Advanced Transportation District, levying a 1/4 sales tax to be used to improve our ability to meet transportation needs in Bexar County. The ATD funding was intended to be divided with 50 percent spent on streets and highways and 50 percent for public transportation. Many of you will also remember the pledge VIA Metropolitan Transit made to voters: that no ATD funding would ever be used to fund light rail or toll roads (a link to the original voter guide produced by VIA in 2004 is located [here](#)).

As the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Chairman when the ATD was created, I directly negotiated with VIA and other stakeholders to ensure this funding would be used as the voters desired. The County's portion of ATD funding was never intended to be used for this purpose and Bexar County voters will suffer the consequences of this decision in the form of prolonged traffic congestion. The good news is that grassroots organizations have become involved and State Senator Jeff Wentworth has asked the Texas

Attorney General for a formal opinion on the legality of this decision. Please read [this article](#) in the San Antonio Express-News for more information on Senator Wentworth's efforts.

What to do with \$2 billion in new highway funding

Recently, TxDOT announced that approximately [\\$2 billion in additional funding had been found](#) through efficiencies achieved inside the agency and from additional federal funding flowing into the state. We sent a letter to Phil Wilson, Executive Director of TxDOT, requesting that Bexar County receive its fair share (11 percent of the state's total highway funding, based on congestion funding formulas) and that the money be dedicated to adding capacity to Hwy 281 between 1604 and the county line without toll roads. You can read the letter we sent [here](#) and the response from TxDOT [here](#).

BexarMet Legislative Oversight Committee Meeting Recap

On March 26, the first meeting of the Joint Committee on Oversight of Bexar Metropolitan Water District was held since voters elected to integrate Bexar Metropolitan Water District into San Antonio Water System (SAWS). The Committee listened to a presentation from SAWS explaining the progress made toward full integration. Several BexarMet systems have been connected to the SAWS system and email and monitoring systems have already been consolidated. SAWS confirmed that, as promised, there will be no rate increase for former BexarMet customers. For a complete recap of the meeting, please visit the [SAWS BexarMet District Special Project site](#).

All Things Water

During the last month, we traveled throughout the state to research innovative water resource strategies and to speak with experts who are pioneering these projects. First, we traveled to College Station to sit down with the folks who run the [Texas Water Resources Institute](#). Next, we traveled to El Paso to tour the Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant, the largest inland desal plant in the world. We also visited the Fred Hervey Water Reclamation Plant and spend several hours with the great minds behind the [Center for Environmental Resource Management](#) at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). Most recently, we traveled to Kenedy, Texas, in the heart of the Eagle Ford Shale region, to look at a new technology developed by [Fountain Quail Water Management](#). Fountain Quail uses a patented process to desalinate flowback from hydraulic fracturing wells. They are currently able to recycle and reuse up to 80 percent of the flowback.

[The House Committee on Natural Resources](#) held its first hearing of 2012. During the nine hour hearing, we listened to invited testimony on the drought (interim charge 1), desalination (interim charge 3), and agriculture irrigation conservation (interim charge 4). We look forward to continuing to address our interim charges to develop a report to inform the Legislature on water issues and ensure that the state's leadership make water a priority.

We have recently updated the emergency water plan to include the creation of a 4 state water council comprised of various public and private stakeholders representing the states of Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Louisiana. The council would be aimed at providing a forum for productive discussion, increased synergy and sharing of best practices between the states to ensure the water needs of the region are met. To view the updated plan, visit this [link](#).

2012 Elections

As you have likely heard by now, the San Antonio Court tasked with drawing maps for the U.S. House, Texas Senate and Texas House released the final maps early last month. District 122 remains as the Legislature approved during the Legislative Session. If you'd like to determine if you will be in a different district, please visit [this link](#), which includes links to each map and an analysis by the Texas Tribune. The election dates are as follows:

Texas Primary

Deadline to register: April 30

Early Voting: May 14-May 25

Deadline to request mail-in ballot: May 22

Election Day: May 29

General Election

Deadline to register: October 9

Early voting: October 22-November 2

Deadline to request mail-in ballot: October 30

Election Day: November 6

Survey results from February's newsletter

As the 83rd Legislative Session approaches, we're working to develop our legislative package and determine what legislation we will pursue. Visit [this link](#) to see the results of the poll in our last newsletter.

In the news

550 KTSA Jack Riccardi Show [Gang of Four](#) April 6, 2012

KABB FOX 29 San Antonio: [State lawmaker wants Mexico to pay up](#)

FOX 7 Austin: [Texas State Rep. wants compensation from Mexico](#)

TheBlaze.com: [Texas State Rep. Lyle Larson to Mexico: Pay us back for the cost of illegals](#)

The Washington Times: [Texas rep. demands Mexico pay for services to illegals](#)

The Daily Caller: [Texas legislator to Mexico: Pay us back!](#)

HotAir.com: [Why shouldn't Mexico compensate us for illegal aliens?](#)

Newsmax.com: [Texas pressures Mexico to reimburse for illegal immigrant services](#)

San Antonio Current: [State Rep. Lyle Larson wants Mexico to pay up](#)

KSAT 12 News: [Rep. Larson wants Mexico to reimburse Texas for illegal immigrants](#)

WOAI 1200 AM News Talk Radio: [Larson: Mexico should pay taxes for services for illegals](#)

KFYO News Talk 790 AM: [Texas House member requests \\$8 billion from Mexico for illegal immigrants](#)

Lubbock Avalanche-Journal: [Legislator asks Mexico to reimburse state for public services illegal immigrants get](#)

San Antonio Express-News: [Larson wants Mexico to reimburse Texas for illegal immigrants](#)

News 4 WOAI: [Texas State Rep. Larson requests payment from Mexico](#)

Austin American-Statesman: [Drought a threat to state economy, officials say](#)

Texas Tribune: [Texas lawmakers mull water options](#)

San Antonio Express-News: [Time for a new water supply game plan](#)

El Paso Times: [Lawmaker hails El Paso's water efforts](#)

WOAI 1200 AM News Talk Radio: [Local Officials Challenge Wolff Over Streetcars](#)

San Antonio Express-News: [Politicians ask county to rescind streetcar plan](#)

Your News Now Austin Capital Tonight: [Exclusive Lawmaker pushes for drought solutions](#)

Your News Now Austin Capital Tonight: [State of Water](#)



Discussing our letter to President Calderón on Your World with Neil Cavuto

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,

Lyle Larson