

SAM HARLESS

State Representative District 126
April 2019 Newsletter



Texas House of Representatives



District 126

**News
and
Information**



86th Session Action

Budget / House Bill 2 - This tax cap bill is generating some lively discussion around the capitol and was to be heard on the House Floor towards the end of on April. The bill provides a cap on tax rates established by local governments. Essentially this restricts taxes from being raised over the amount of the cap without taking the measure before the voters for approval. The bill as filed had a built-in 2.5% cap that taxpayer groups say is necessary to curb rampant growth of city and county budgets. Opponents say such caps will inhibit their ability to sustain growth and maintain the levels of service they are required to provide. The challenge will be determining what the right percentage will be. The companion SB 2 is being heard on April 30th. Proponents tout it as a not only a cap, but a taxpayer transparency bill.

Public Ed Reform - The Texas Plan - House Bill 3

House Bill 3 Co-Authored by Representative Harless addresses several of the issues that have plagued us for years. The legislation has been applauded by education groups across Texas. This bill also lowers school property taxes to give our communities some relief from ever growing property tax bills. After a full day of negotiating amendments to the amendments on House Bill 3, it was finally passed and sent to the Senate Education Committee on April 4th.

Texas Retired Teachers

House Bill 9 - After working on active duty teachers and school workers in HB 3, it was time to look into inadequacies in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) A large percentage of Texans are routinely unaware that most teachers in this state do not participate in the Social Security System and are ineligible to draw from it, even if their spouse contributed to it. In too many cases this places an abundance of our retired teachers in dire straits, worrying about rising healthcare and prescription costs and without a cost of living adjustment in over a decade. This motivated Representative Harless to co-author HB 9, designed to strengthen the Teacher Retirement System and provide a sustainable and well funded pension for all of our retired teachers. Their future should be as bright as the ones we want for our own children.

Committee Action

State Affairs: The action in State Affairs has been lively with several very long committee sessions late into the evening with lots of testimony. We have had a number of energy bills dealing with transmission and grid security, franchise rates, and public information. Transparency in public information and the means in which it is delivered is a broad and complicated landscape and a number of bills this session seek to improve access.

License and Administrative Procedure. The action in LAP has been less dramatic with issues relating to bringing your own wine into restaurants, sale of wine, fees for towing and storage of vehicles, moving the regulation of the plumbing industry under the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, training and licensing of barbers and cosmetologists and other licensed occupations around the state.

District 126 Polls

Issues we get calls or visits about April legislative Survey Results

Question 1 - ***Do you support the approval of growing and regulation of industrial hemp in Texas? (Does not legalize marijuana)***

Response: Yes - 81.7.5%

Question 2 - ***Expansion of Days For Sale of Fireworks***

Response: 89% Oppose or prefer local government to control it.

Question 3 - ***Should the rules for construction along waterways prone to flooding be reviewed in the next legislative session?***

Response - Yes - 88%

Question 4 - ***Should the state Board of Education (SBOE) continue to manage the Permanent School Fund***

Reponse - Yes 65.5%



Education Funding Bill - HB 3

Chairman Dan Huberty (Atascocita) presented HB 3 to the House Floor and worked through dozens of amendments to bring a sound plan to improve the school funding process, reduce school taxes, and put more money in the classroom. The plan has a positive gain for all three of my school districts.

Governor Gregg Abbott

While we were preparing for deliberation of the School Funding Finance Plan, known as the "Texas Plan" or House Bill 3, Governor Greg Abbott stopped by to encourage House Members to find solutions to the very real problems faced by Texas school districts and local taxpayers. Improving the funding for education and providing school tax relief are among the Governors priorities for this session.



After bills pass through committees, they have to be presented on the House Floor for approval prior to transfer to the Senate. I presented my first bill HB 1488 and was both surprised and proud to have my wife Patricia Harless, on hand to watch it pass.

Focus On The Future - Opportunities for Students

Scholarship Links

[City of Houston Scholarship Page](#)

[Unigo Scholarship List Webpage](#)

[Tomball ISD Scholarship Page](#)

[Scholarship.com](#)

[Cy-Fair ISD Scholarship Page](#)

[Klein ISD Scholarship Page](#)

[Cy-Fair Education Foundation Scholarship Page](#)

Our Bills In Motion

HOA Board Membership - (HB 1396) This bill would preclude membership on the board of a property owners association by more than one member in a given household. (Excludes the subdivision or community developer during declaratory period) **(Awaiting a vote on the House Floor)**

Entry of Bond Conditions [HB -738](#) In cases where a defendant is authorized to be out on bond is permitted bail that has specific conditions imposed by a judge or magistrate, those conditions have not previously been electronically distributed via the statewide law enforcement network. This bill would require judges to notify Sheriffs for computer entry when bail bonds have conditions. *(Out of Committee, Awaiting Approval for House Floor Calendar)*

Tuition and Fees For Military Spouses - [HB 739](#) Currently military spouses and dependents who are Texas residents but are currently deployed out of state can be charged out of state tuition, even if they maintain residency in Texas. *(Out of Committee, Awaiting Approval for House Floor Calendar)*

Charterwood M.U.D. [HB 1488](#) This bill realigns the percentage of expenditures in one category for this single MUD. It allows for a percentage increase in the expenditures for improvements to recreational facilities. It does not increase the amount of tax collected, just the single category expenditure percentage. *(Passed the House, In Senate Governmental Relations)*

Tainted Beer Bill [HB 3271](#) This bill permits beer distributors to remove beer whose containers have been contaminated or tainted through natural disaster. *(In Committee Awaiting Final Report)*

Fire Marshal Training Bill [HB 3753](#) This bill authorizes the Fire Marshal to act as a fire-related training provider. *(On House Floor Calendar April 29th)*

Flood Control Removal of Encroaching Property [HB 3782](#) This bill will give the Flood Control Authority the right to remove property encroaching on areas owned or controlled by the Harris County Flood Control District. *(Awaiting Floor Calendar Date)*

Cy-Champ Public Utility District - [HB 4646](#) This bill provides road development authority to the Utility District and allows them to assist with building new roads within their area. *(On Local & Consent Calendar)*

Co-Authored Bills

[House Bill 3](#) - Public Education Reform Bill

[House Bill 5](#) - Disaster debris removal and regional coordination planning

[House Bill 9](#) - Teacher Retirement System

[House Bill 13](#) - Flood Planning & Mitigation, Appropriation for Infrastructure Costs

[House Bill 16](#) - Enforcement of the rights of a living child born after an abortion

[House Bill 39](#) - Repeal of certain time limitations on the award of grants by CPRIT

[House Bill 41](#) - Paid leave for a state employee who is a search and rescue volunteer.

[House Bill 539](#) - Automatic college admission for the valedictorian in a graduating class.

[House Bill 1214](#) - Allocation of state sales and use taxes on sporting goods.

[House Bill 1397](#) - Establishment of rates for certain non-ERCOT utilities.

[House Bill 1500](#) - Fetal heartbeat bill

[House Bill 1576](#) - Delivery of certain transportation services under Medicaid

[House Bill 1631](#) - Prohibiting the use of photographic traffic signal enforcement systems.

[House Bill 1821](#) - Designation Loop 111 as Richard Overton Memorial Highway.

[House Bill 1929](#) - Prohibiting an advantage to abortion providers in lease rates

[House Bill 2945](#) - This bill relates to credit card skimmers on motor fuel dispensers

[House Joint Resolution 13](#) - A constitutional amendment authorizing the allocation of a portion of oil and gas production tax revenue to the counties from which the oil and gas originated.

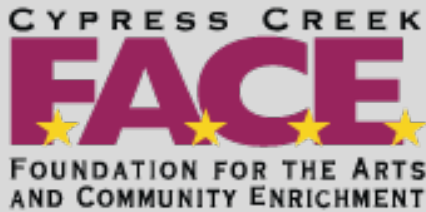
[House Joint Resolution 12](#) - A constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase the maximum bond amount authorized for the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas

[House Joint Resolution 39](#)- proposing a constitutional amendment relating to the appropriation of the net revenue received from the imposition of state sales and use taxes on sporting goods.

News Articles

[Community Impact News - April 8th](#) - Local school districts voice concern over rising costs for health coverage

In The District



[Visit our F.A.C.E. Website](#)

Cypress Creek F.A.C.E.

Foundation for Arts and Community Enrichment

The Cypress Creek Foundation for the Arts & Community Enrichment (FACE) is a non-profit foundation with the mission to provide cultural arts programming and educational opportunities for the community. Our concerts feature a wide range of classical and performing artists from traditional to contemporary, large to small ensembles, solo performers, and multi-cultural attractions.



[Visit the Houston NW Chamber Website](#)

Houston NW Chamber Networking Breakfast

Networking Breakfasts are held every fourth Tuesday of each month (January thru October) from 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Networking Breakfasts are a great way to get together, shake some hands, talk about other business, and learn a little bit about the other businesses in the community and how you might be able to benefit each other.

Cy-Fair Chamber of Commerce

Transportation & Government Affairs

This committee investigates current and future community and transportation issues. The results are taken to the appropriate government and legislative offices to encourage and facilitate improvements. Past speakers have included local and state agency representatives and elected officials. Meets 1st Thursday each month at 8:30



[Visit Cy-Fair Chamber of Commerce Website](#)

Greater Tomball Area



Chamber of Commerce

Transportation and Mobility Committee

2nd Tuesday of each month
Meeting Location:
29201 Quinn Rd.
Tomball, Texas 77375
Upstairs Conference Room

Tomball Government Affairs
Committee

Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts

The Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts brings the best in original, high-quality museum works of art to the day-to-day environment of the residents of Northwest Houston. In collaboration with Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Harris County, and The Cypress Creek Fine Arts Association, the museum was created to bring great works of art to the people where they reside.



Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts

Visit our House of Representative Website:

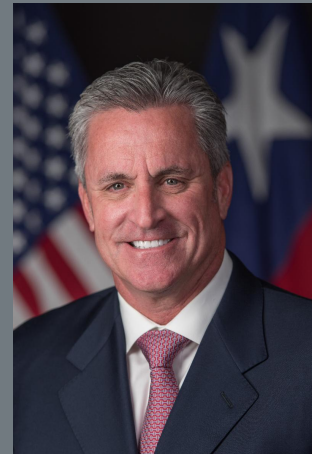
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