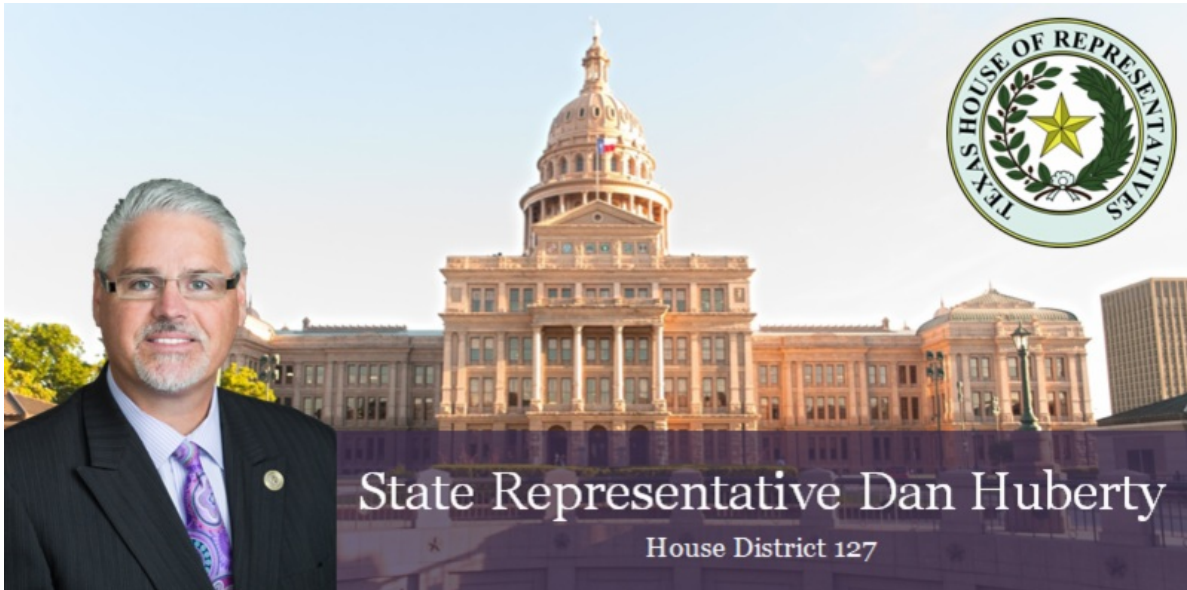


Thank you for your subscription to Rep. Dan Huberty's Session Newsletter. If you wish to unsubscribe, please use the SafeUnsubscribe option at the bottom of this email.



March 3, 2017

Dear Fellow Texan,

Thank you for subscribing to my newsletter. This edition contains information about what happened at the Texas Capitol during the eighth week of the 85th Legislative Session.

It was a busy week in Austin. On Monday, Chairman Huberty attended a dinner and received a "Legislator Appreciation Award" from the Fast Growth School Coalition. The next day started with a "One-on-One" Conversation with Evan Smith of the Texas Tribune and closed with a lengthy Public Education Committee hearing with panels on public school finance.

Then Wednesday, the Texas House approved the first two critical bills of the 85th Legislative Session. The Texas House provided necessary reform to Child Protective Services by approving House Bill 4, which provides additional monetary assistance for family members who care for a child who has been removed from his or her home, and House Bill 5, which makes the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) a stand-alone agency with a Commissioner appointed by the Governor.

Chairman Huberty closed the week at the Texas Tribune Symposium on Public Education, where he again spoke with Evan Smith. Held at the University of Houston- Downtown, the panel also included Senator Larry Taylor, who chairs the Senate Education Committee.

Take a look below to read more about these events and should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to my staff at any time. Our contact information is listed at the bottom of this email.

Sincerely,

Dan Huberty



## What's Going On in Austin?

85th Session Legislative Statistics

Once again, here are the statistics for the 85th Legislative Session thus far. As mentioned previously, bill filing began in November 2016 and will continue through March 10th, 2017. The current legislative statistics are shown in the table below:

| 85th Regular Session - 2017 |      |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |               |       |
|-----------------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|---------------|-------|
| Status                      | HB   | HCR | HJR | HR  | SB   | SCR | SJR | SR  | Total HB & SB | Total |
| Introduced                  | 2853 | 71  | 78  | 744 | 1305 | 28  | 45  | 338 | 4158          | 5462  |
| Passed                      | 0    | 5   | 0   | 441 | 0    | 6   | 0   | 338 | 0             | 790   |
| Vetoed                      | 0    | 0   | n/a | n/a | 0    | 0   | n/a | n/a | 0             | 0     |

\*as of March 3, 2017

All of these bills, including those that Rep. Huberty has filed, can be viewed by visiting the Texas Legislature Online website at <http://www.legis.texas.gov/>. Here you can track bills and follow them as they move through the legislative process.

## The Texas Tribune



Tuesday morning, Chairman Huberty met with Evan Smith of the Texas Tribune for a "One-on-One Conversation". They covered topics from public school finance to the A-F rating system.

They discussed Huberty's previous successes in limiting testing and future plans to further decrease it. Huberty spoke on his commitment to fixing the public education system.

He laid out his goals for the House Public Education Committee, which will have a strong focus on the funding process. He plans to address specific issues each week by hearing bills relative to that agenda item.

**[You can watch the interview in full by clicking here.](#)**

On Friday, The Texas Tribune held a daylong Symposium on Public Education at The University of Houston-Downtown. The event included elected officials, advocates and policy experts from across the state.

Topics included public education and the Legislature, school choice in the 85th session, assessment and accountability, and special education.



Chairman Huberty joined Evan Smith again, along with Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, Senator Larry Taylor, for the opening panel on Public Education.

**[You can view the panels by clicking this link.](#)**

## Texas House Republican Caucus Floor Report: HB 4 & HB 5

Improving Texas' child protection capabilities is the House's top priority this session. Taken together, HB 4 and HB 5 are an important first step in the Texas Legislature's commitment to protecting Texas' children and providing the best quality of life possible for children who need it most.

### House Bill 4: Strengthening Kinship Care

Data demonstrates that children who are placed with caregivers who are relatives receive more stability and permanency in their lives than children who are placed in non-relative Foster Care.

Currently, qualifying families receive an initial integration payment of \$1,000 for the first child and \$495 for each additional child to offset immediate expenses plus an annual reimbursement of \$500 per child.

- HB 4 provides additional monetary assistance for Kinship Care placements based on a family's need.
  - A caregiver that has a family income that is less than or equal to 300 percent of the federal poverty level will receive a monthly stipend as follows:
    - Family income less than or equal to the federal poverty level will receive a monthly stipend that is no greater than 75 percent of the Department of Family and Protective Services' (DFPS) basic foster care rate (currently \$693) for the child.
    - Family income greater than the federal poverty level but less than or equal to 200 percent of federal poverty level will receive a monthly stipend no greater than 50 percent of the DFPS basic foster care rate.
    - Family income between 201-300 percent of federal poverty level will receive a monthly stipend no greater than 25 percent of the DFPS basic foster care rate.
  - A caregiver that has a family income that is between 301-500 percent of the federal poverty level would receive a one-time integration payment for each child placed with the caregiver on the initial placement of a child or sibling group.
  - A caregiver that has a family income greater than 500 percent of the federal poverty level is not eligible for monetary assistance under HB 4.

Additionally, HB 4 creates an offense for those who knowingly make a false statement that generates a situation whereby a relative takes custody of a child solely to access state funds.

### **House Bill 5: Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) as a Stand-Alone Agency**

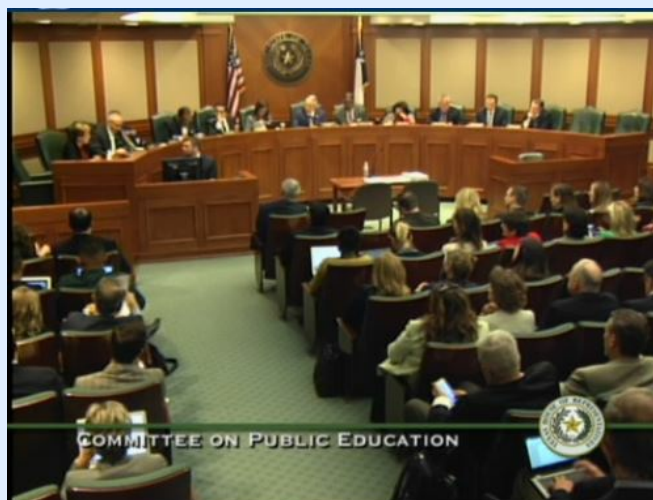
- HB 5 makes DFPS a stand-alone agency that would report to the Governor, consolidate investigations of child abuse and neglect under Child Protective Services and maintain many consolidated administrative support functions in the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).
  - *Note: Currently, DFPS is considered a division under the umbrella of HHSC.*
- This change will streamline decision-making and accountability at DFPS to help provide the best outcomes for children.
- Further, it will clarify leadership and ensure that agency policies are best suited to the unique services that DFPS performs to protect vulnerable adults and children.
- Finally, HB 5 aims to ensure that there is consistent investigation into child abuse and neglect across the state to keep children safe in care.

As House Republicans continue to work to protect children throughout the 85th Legislative Session, we are confident that providing additional aid to families and caregivers and reforming the state agency tasked with offering support services will dramatically improve our state foster care system and protect these precious children.

## House Public Education Hearing: School Finance Panels

The House Public Education Committee met on Tuesday. The hearing was scheduled as a Listening Session and only heard invited testimony about Public School Finance. More than 24 panelists testified. It was a lengthy but productive day. The committee is scheduled to meet again next Tuesday, March 7th, 2017, at 12 PM or upon adjournment. You can see the bills set for that hearing by clicking here:

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlodocs/85R/schedules/html/C4002017030712001.HTM>



**You can view the hearing from February 27th in full at this link:**

## Capitol Events & Visitors



Rep. Huberty accepted the Fast Growth School Coalition's "Legislator Appreciation Award"



Rep. Huberty with members of the Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce



Rep. Huberty with Dr. Guy Sconzo, Dr. Doug Killian, Dr. Randy Reid & Dr. Jamie Wilson of the Fast Growth School Coalition



Rep. Huberty with members of the Humble ISD Council of PTAs

## Constituent Resources

Our office is always ready to assist you. Call or email us and we will do our best to help. Many State Agencies also have hotlines or citizen assistance offices to assist you. That contact information is available at this link, in alphabetical order:

<http://www.lrl.texas.gov/genInfo/stateAgencies.cfm>

## House District 127 Events

Do you want to know what Rep. Huberty has been up to this month? Head over to his Facebook page! Give him a "like," and you'll never be out of the loop when it comes to updates, events, and photos.



## Upcoming Events

March 2017

See an event you're interested in? Click the links on each date to learn more about the event's details. Under each link, you can find R.S.V.P. information, exact times, locations, and much more.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| This color box indicates an event in or near House District 127. | This color box indicates an event in Austin, Texas. |
|--|---|

| Sunday                                  | Monday  | Tuesday  | Wednesday                     | Thursday                                   | Friday   | Saturday |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------|--|--|----------|
| 26                                      | 27  | 28   | 1<br><b>Ash<br/>Wednesday</b> | 2<br><b>Texas<br/>Independence<br/>Day</b> | 3<br><a href="#">Texas Tribune<br/>Public Education<br/>Symposium</a>                      | 4        |
| 5                                       | 6   | 7<br><a href="#">House Public<br/>Education<br/>Committee<br/>Hearing</a>      | 8                             | 9  | 10   | 11       |
| 12<br>Daylight<br>Savings Day<br>Begins | 13<br>House Pensions<br>Committee<br>Meeting<br><b>Spring Break</b> | 14<br>House Public<br>Education<br>Committee<br>Hearing<br><b>Spring Break</b> | 15<br><b>Spring Break</b>     | 16<br><b>Spring Break</b>                  | 17<br><b>St. Patrick's<br/>Day</b><br><b>Spring Break</b>                                  | 18       |
| 19                                      | 20<br>House Pensions<br>Committee<br>Meeting                        | 21<br>House Public<br>Education<br>Committee<br>Hearing                        | 22                            | 23   | 24   | 25       |
| 26                                      | 27<br>House Pensions<br>Committee<br>Meeting                        | 28<br>House Public<br>Education<br>Committee<br>Hearing                        | 29                            | 30   | 31<br><b>Cesar Chavez<br/>Day</b><br><a href="#">HAAM Pillars<br/>of the<br/>Community</a> | 1        |

## Contact Information

### Staff Contact

### Capitol Office

### District Office

**Representative Dan Huberty**

[Email Dan](#)

**Casey Christman**

**Chief of Staff**

[Email Casey](#)

**Molly Spratt**

**Legislative Director**

[Email Molly](#)

**Patrick Love**

**Legislative Aide**

[Email Patrick](#)

**Physical Address:**

1100 Congress Avenue E2.408  
Austin, TX 78701

**Mailing Address:**

P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, TX 78768

**Phone:**

(512) 463-0520

**Fax:**

(512) 463-1606

**Address:**

4501 Magnolia Cove  
Suite 201  
Kingwood, TX 77345

**Phone:**

(281) 360-9410

