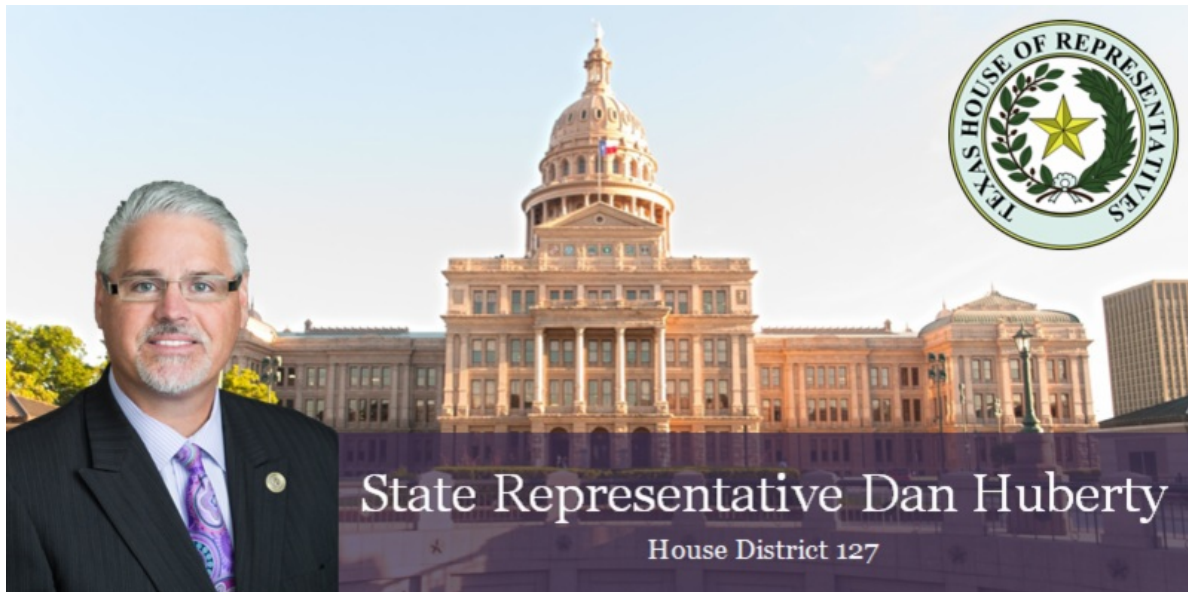


Thank you for your subscription to Rep. Dan Huberty's Session Newsletter. If you wish to unsubscribe, please use the SafeUnsubscribe option at the bottom of this email.



June 30, 2017

Dear Fellow Texan,

Thank you for subscribing to my newsletter. This edition contains information about what happened at the Texas Capitol and back in District 127 during the last month.

Governor Abbott has announced that he will be calling a Special Session to begin on July 18th, to address Sunset legislation that failed to pass during the Regular Session. Below, you can read more about this and the other items he intends to add to the call after the passage of this bill.

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?

Governor Abbott Announces Special Session on July 18th

In June, Governor Greg Abbott announced a legislative special session that will begin on July 18th, 2017. In his announcement, he identified 20 items that will be included on the special session call. This includes:

1. Sunset legislation
2. Teacher pay increase of \$1,000
3. Administrative flexibility in teacher hiring and retention practices
4. School finance reform commission
5. School choice for special needs students
6. Property tax reform

7. Caps on state and local spending
8. Preventing cities from regulating what property owners do with trees on private land
9. Preventing local governments from changing rules midway through construction projects
10. Speeding up local government permitting process
11. Municipal annexation reform
12. Texting while driving preemption
13. Privacy
14. Prohibition of taxpayer dollars to collect union dues
15. Prohibition of taxpayer funding for abortion providers
16. Pro-life insurance reform
17. Strengthening abortion reporting requirements when health complications arise
18. Strengthening patient protections relating to do-not-resuscitate orders
19. Cracking down on mail-in ballot fraud
20. Extending maternal mortality task force

Huberty Applauded for Intent to Author Annexation Legislation

In the upcoming special legislative session, Rep. Dan Huberty and Sen. Donna Campbell will author legislation to reform and restrict the municipal annexation process. This is one of 20 items that Governor Abbott previously announced will be added to the special session agenda. Governor Abbott issued the following statement applauding Rep. Huberty and Sen. Campbell for tackling this issue in the upcoming special session.

"Cities abusing their authority with forced annexation practices is nothing more than a form of taxation without representation," said Governor Abbott. "Cities that annex property without the approval from those affected is piracy by government, and it must end. I am grateful for the leadership of Rep. Huberty and Sen. Campbell to reform this unfair practice, and I look forward to working with them and members of both chambers to ensure this legislation reaches my desk."

"Across Texas, we have seen years of tax abuse through forced municipal annexation," said Rep. Huberty. "Forced annexation threatens the property rights of Texans, subjecting them to higher taxes and regulations that they did not consent to when they purchased their property. Last session, HB 424/SB 715 would have permitted property owners to have a say in whether or not their property could be annexed by these municipalities, consenting to the higher tax rates in these areas. In Texas, we have to remember that cities do not have a right to vote; citizens do. This bill would have prohibited taxation without representation that currently exists in some of the major metropolitan areas in Texas and allowed voters to have more control over their property."

"Our nation was founded on the right to determine who governs us, yet current law allows cities to determine who they will govern," said Sen. Campbell. "This is backwards and it's why we need annexation reform. I applaud Governor Abbott for guaranteeing Texas citizens the right to vote as part of the annexation process, bringing greater accountability to local governments and limiting the appetite of big cities to tax, spend, and expand with no end in sight."

Constituent Resources

New STAAR Report Card provides Texas parents stronger, student-specific information, helpful resources

Commissioner of Education Mike Morath has announced that Texas parents will now have access to greater individualized student information with the launch of the new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Report Card.

In addition, a new interactive website will offer an opportunity for parents to "Log In, Learn More" to access additional student-specific resources. Among the available tools on the website will be the ability to view actual STAAR questions as well as their student's answer. Texas will be among the first states in the nation to offer this valuable component to all its parents.

"Every parent needs to know how their child is doing in school, but they also want to be in position to provide greater support for their son or daughter," said Commissioner Morath. "The STAAR Report Card goes beyond providing a student's information from the previous year. It also gives every parent access to resources that can help their child as they move from grade level to grade level."

The new report card contrasts dramatically from what has been shared in previous years with parents. The revamped report presents information in a more colorful, understandable and parent-friendly way.

Student information includes how a child performed on a specific STAAR assessment, how the student is progressing from the previous school year, and the level of reading difficulty a student can successfully accomplish. Parents will also see new STAAR performance labels for their student: *Masters Grade Level*; *Meets Grade Level*; *Approaches Grade Level*; and *Does Not Meet Grade Level*.

- **Masters Grade Level** (Passing) - Performance in this category indicates that students are expected to succeed in the next grade or course with little or no academic intervention.
- **Meets Grade Level** (Passing) - Performance in this category indicates that students will have a high likelihood of success in the next grade or course but may still need some short-term, targeted academic intervention.
- **Approaches Grade Level** (Passing) - Performance in this category indicates that students are likely to succeed in the next grade or course with targeted academic intervention.
- **Does Not Meet Grade Level** - Performance in this category indicates that students are unlikely to succeed in the next grade or course without significant, ongoing academic intervention.

A section of the new STAAR Report Card highlights how a student has progressed academically from the previous year. A student academic growth graph will show parents where their son or daughter was academically the previous school year and reflect any growth seen in the most recent school year.

Beyond the report card itself, parents are encouraged to "Log In, Learn More" at a newly-revamped website (www.texasassessment.com) to see even more student-specific information regarding their child. With a student-specific access code (provided in the STAAR Report Card), parents will be able to see a variety of resources and assessment components, including STAAR assessment questions and answers - along with their child's answers.

"The ability for each parent to view the actual STAAR questions posed to their child, along with the answers their child provided, should provide greater insight into the expectations at every grade level," said Commissioner Morath.

The website also makes available resources designed to help parents prepare their son or daughter as they progress from grade level to grade level. Resources include tools to support a child's ability to read and write, as well as tips and questions to help prepare for parent-teacher conferences in the new school year.

Beginning this month, the new STAAR Report Card will be distributed to parents with children who took the STAAR assessments during the 2016-2017 school year. High school STAAR reports are available to parents beginning June 13. Grade 3-8 STAAR reports are available to parents beginning June 30.

Harris County Commissioners Court again approves Property Tax Exemptions for Homeowners, Seniors & the Disabled

Harris County Commissioners Court unanimously approved a set of property tax exemptions this morning that will virtually eliminate county property tax bills for thousands of older or disabled homeowners here and greatly reduce tax bills for nearly everyone else.

Court members approved an annual extension of the 20 percent exemption for all Harris County homesteads, as well as the \$160,000 exemption for homesteads belonging to disabled owners or those 65 years of age or older. When combined, those exemptions guarantee that disabled and senior homeowners pay no Harris County taxes on homesteads assessed at \$200,000 or less and greatly discounted tax bills on more expensive homes.

The court's decision again places Harris County among the state's most generous counties in granting property tax exemptions, especially those for seniors and disabled homeowners. No other surrounding county offers a senior or disabled exemption higher than \$100,000, with most at or around \$25,000.

Harris County first approved its \$160,000 exemption in 2008, the year after Commissioners Court also

approved the county's largest-ever property tax rate cut.

"Increases in property value have us all concerned and talking about property tax bills," said Harris County Judge Ed Emmett. "But Harris County goes much further than other counties in Texas when it comes to protecting homeowners - especially older and disabled homeowners - from ballooning tax bills."

The exemption applies to taxes levied by Harris County, the Harris County Hospital District, Harris County Flood Control District and Port of Houston Authority tax bills.

For any questions on this issue, please contact Joe Stinebaker, Harris County Commissioners Court Communications Director at 713-755-4027 or by email at Joe.Stinebaker@cjo.hctx.net.

Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program Nominations Reopen

Nominations for the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program (TASSP) will open on June 19, 2017, for the 2017-2018 academic year. Nominations had previously been suspended in order to verify the total amount of funding appropriated for the next biennium in Senate Bill 1, 85th Texas Legislature.

The TASSP provides you a unique opportunity to encourage students to become members of the Texas Army National Guard, the Texas Air National Guard, the Texas State Guard, the United States Coast Guard, the United States Merchant Marine, or commissioned officers in any branch of the armed services of the United States.

Given the decrease in appropriated funding, and the legislative intent to fund both new and renewal awards, the FY18 TASSP annual amount will be \$4,000 for both new and renewal awards. As was done in FY17, any unexpended funds will be assessed mid-year to determine whether the annual award can be increased for FY18.

If you are interested in a TASSP nomination, please send your resume and a Letter of Interest to dan.huberty@house.texas.gov.

[Click here to view more information regarding TASSP.](#)

Need Assistance?

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

July 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
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						1
2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 85(1): Special Session Begins	19	20	21	22 National Day of the Cowboy
23 National Parent's Day	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

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