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December 22, 2017

Thank you for subscribing to my newsletter. Please be sure to share the newsletter on Facebook with your friends and family to keep them updated on the most recent information from Austin and House District 127.

This edition of my disaster series of newsletters contains a special feature from Chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources, Lyle Larson. Chairman Larson and I have been working together in the past few months to address the actions of the San Jacinto River Authority during Hurricane Harvey as well as a long-term flooding plan that could be implemented in the coming 86th Legislative Session.

This newsletter also contains a very important survey for you and your family, if you are a resident of Humble ISD that was impacted by Hurricane Harvey. The deadline for this survey is January 3, 2018. I will send out a reminder on New Year's Day.

I am pleased to announce that the Texas Education Agency responded favorably to the House Committee on Public Education's letter, requesting waivers and leniency for districts located in the Gulf. You can read more about it below.

Please note that my District and Capitol office will close today for the Christmas Holiday, and will both re-open January 2, 2018. If any issue comes up during the break, please use the contact links in the newsletter below to get a hold of us. Keep in mind that both of my offices are searching for motivated interns, and are looking to hire in the new year. You can contact Casey in my District office and Molly in my Capitol office with inquiries about the internships available.

I hope that you and your family have a restful Christmas.

Sincerely,

Dan Huberty

Austin Updates

Chairman Huberty Named to School Finance Commission

The Chairman of the House Committee on Public Education, Dan Huberty, was named to the Texas Commission on Public School Finance by Speaker of the House, Joe Straus. Huberty will serve alongside two other members of the public education committee: Reps. Diego Bernal and Ken King.

The commission, established during the first called special session of the 85th Legislature, is comprised of appointees from the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House. The Speaker's appointments, announced earlier this week, rounded out the membership of the 13-member panel.

"I am honored to serve alongside members of the Public Education Committee," Huberty said. "During the regular session, the House clearly spoke on this issue, and I will be proud to represent them in the coming months."

During the 85th Legislative Session and the special session that followed, Huberty authored, and passed through the House, a version of House Bill 21 that would have provided nearly \$2 billion to public schools across the state. The bill included several measures which updated decades-old school finance formulas, increased the state's share of education funding, reduced Robin Hood payments, and would have diminished the need for higher property taxes in local communities. The enrolled version of the legislation that passed included significantly less funding.

"I am glad to see that the membership of this panel is representative of different perspectives across the state when it comes to school finance," Huberty added. "It is my hope that we can all work together to provide cohesive and constructive recommendations to the 86th Legislature in order to bolster our public school system."

Hurricane Harvey Recovery Resources

Humble ISD Residential Impact Survey - 1-3-2018 DEADLINE



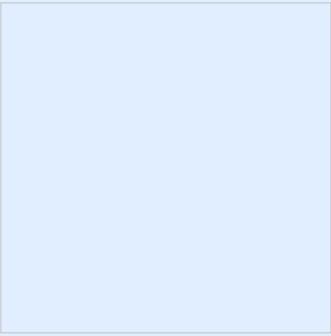
If your residence was impacted by Hurricane Harvey, please take a moment to read and complete [this survey](#) by 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, January 3, 2018.

The Texas Education Agency has asked school districts to reach out to families at this time in order to obtain a clearer picture of the impact Hurricane Harvey has had on Texas schools, communities and students.

Please complete this survey even if you have previously shared this information with your child's school. Results will be used to compile updated total figures from Humble ISD for the state. Families with more than one child in Humble ISD should only complete the survey once.

Humble ISD appreciates your participation if your living situation was impacted by Harvey at any point since Sept. 7, the first day of classes in our district this school year.

[Click here to take the survey! - DEADLINE: January 3, 2018](#)



Chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resource, Lyle Larson, has issued the following response to the many emails and phone calls he's received from residents of HD 127 regarding the **Plea for Three** campaign. Read below:

Thank you for your request that the state provide a short-term and long-term plan to assist the Lake Houston region to rebuild and ensure it is better-prepared for future floods. We have heard from many of you who attended the House Natural Resources Committee hearing in Houston on October 4th and the subsequent town hall meeting hosted by Rep. Huberty in Humble on October 20th. Your input has been

vital to this committee and will continue to inform the development of funding strategies and policy changes needed to address flood mitigation in the Lake Houston region and balance of our state.

We are exploring all options to address the specific requests of the residents of the Lake Houston region, including: conversion of a portion of the storage capacity in Lake Conroe to be used for flood control, dredging areas that make the most sense, whether it be in the reservoir or the river, to increase their capacity to hold water during large-scale rain events, working with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to prevent siltation from sand dumping in the river to prevent the need for dredging in the first place, and advocating for representation from the Lake Houston region on the SJRA board. Attached is a copy of the letter from my office to the SJRA requesting their coordination of dredging projects in Lake Houston and along the San Jacinto River and a letter to Governor Abbott requesting his appointment of individuals from the Lake Houston region to the SJRA board so folks downstream have a voice in all future decisions made by the authority. We will keep you apprised of their response.

It is my belief the State should take a leadership role by providing immediate resources for flood infrastructure rather than waiting for the federal government to act, or waiting for the next Legislative Session in 2019 to make state resources available. Folks need an assurance that their community will be protected when the next flood hits as decisions are made about whether or not to remain in the region. Unfortunately, the prevailing mentality is to wait to see what funding becomes available from the federal government first. As you may know, the Texas Rebuild Commission has submitted a list of \$61 billion worth of projects to Congress for consideration, and is working with the federal government to secure funding for flood infrastructure projects in Texas, though more than likely the amount appropriated will be far less than what is needed. The state must play a leadership role in rebuilding affected areas and preventing future devastation, which could include accessing the state's \$10.2 billion Rainy Day Fund. We encourage you to stay in touch with your state elected officials to voice your support for state resources to develop projects to prevent future flooding.

In the near-term, the Texas Water Development Board has programs available for local entities that wish to access low interest loans to initiate projects immediately, including the D-Fund, and the State Participation Fund. TWDB has been holding education sessions all over affected areas of the state to inform communities of opportunities to finance projects through the state. We acknowledge this is not a long-term solution as the state will need to set up a flood infrastructure fund or otherwise help fund projects directly, but should be explored by communities who wish to assess funding strategies available to them now.

Lastly, we would like to provide some information regarding sand dumping in the San Jacinto River. Sand or gravel operations that will affect groundwater, have a surface-water discharge or create a point-source air discharge are regulated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The TCEQ addresses compliance with sand and gravel mining operations by conducting annual aerial flyovers of the San Jacinto River, scheduled surveys of existing and potential Aggregate Production Operations (APOs), and on-site investigations at APOs, which can include sand mining operations, pursuant to legislation passed by Rep. Huberty in 2011 during the 82nd legislative session. The latest aerial flyover of the San Jacinto River area occurred in October 2017. APO investigations are required every three years and we will request that the TCEQ increase the frequency of the investigations based on the feedback we have received about siltation in the river. In order merit asking the agency to conduct more frequent investigations, it is helpful that TCEQ has complaints on file. If you know of or have witnessed illegal dumping in the San Jacinto, please make a complaint with TCEQ here or by calling 1-888-777-3186.

We hope this information is helpful to you, and look forward to keeping you informed of efforts to remediate the Lake Houston area. Again, your willingness to contact the members of the House Natural Resources Committee and your efforts on behalf of your community are greatly appreciated.

Best,

Lyle Larson
Chairman, Natural Resources Committee
Texas House of Representatives

Accountability and Assessment Update from TEA

This fall, the House Committee on Public Education met to discuss three interim charges related to Hurricane Harvey and the recovery of and effects on the public school system.

The committee sent [a letter](#) to the Commissioner of the Texas Education Agency in November asking him to do the following:

1. Engage in a dialogue with the United States Department of Education regarding the possibility of a waiver from federal requirements for accountability ratings for affected districts and campuses for the 2017-28 school year;
2. Consider excluding displaced students from the calculation of accountability ratings for the 2017-18 school year; and
3. Consider allowing affected districts and campuses to receive a "Not Rated" rating for the 2017-18 school year.

The commissioner responded this week with a letter detailing that he has begun talks with the US Department of Education to grant the requests of the public education committee.

[You can read the commissioner's response here.](#)

This is great news for the school districts in the Gulf Coast region that are working to recover.

For Your Information

Kevin Kilgore Sr. Stroke Recovery Fund



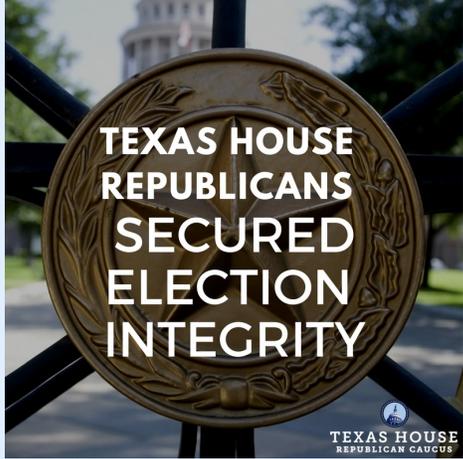
Kevin Kilgore Sr., owner of the Overlook, suffered a major stroke Thursday evening one week before Thanksgiving. He and Sandy Kilgore were driving and luckily stopped at Starbucks coffee. It was then that she noticed a dramatic change in his speech and body movement. She acted quickly and dialed 911. He was rushed to Kingwood Medical Center for treatment. It has been a long month of surgeries and medical procedures. He is now close to discharge and admittance to a recovery and rehabilitation center. We are hopeful for entrance into Memorial Hermann TIRR in January 2018.

[You can donate to the Kevin Kilgore Sr. Stroke Recovery Fund on YouCaring.com.](#)

A four-man scramble golf tournament has also been scheduled to benefit the fund. Mark your calendars for February 16, 2017 at 12pm. [Details about this event can be found here.](#)

House Republicans Uphold Voter Integrity Laws

In 2011, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 14 to require stricter collection of voter identification during elections. Forms of appropriate



identification included a state driver's license or ID card that is not more than 60 days expired at the time of voting, a concealed handgun license, a U.S. passport, a military ID card or a U.S citizenship certificate with a photo.

Later that year, the state was sued on the grounds that Senate Bill 14 was discriminatory under the Voting Rights Act. In August 2015, the U.S. 5th Circuit Court ruled that the law was not considered a "poll tax." Although the state legislature did not have discriminatory intent when passing the law, the court perceived a "discriminatory effect" did occur that violated the federal law that prohibits racial discrimination in voting.

Toward the end of the 85th Regular Session, Governor Greg Abbott made amending the state's voter identification law an emergency item for the Legislature to address. Increasing concerns and a number of recent cases and investigations related to mail-in ballot issues in local races lead the state to take a closer look at irregularities within the system of mailing in a ballot.

Texas is one of nine states that still allows the practice of casting a straight-ticket vote at the polls (this will change following September 2020 when HB 25 goes into effect). The practice of straight-party voting has become a less common occurrence since the 1960s.

Legislation from the 85th Sessions that affected Election Integrity:

Senate Bill 5 (85R) - Voter ID Law

- Requires the Secretary of State to establish a program using mobile units to provide election identification certificates to voters in order to satisfy voter ID requirements
- Allows for voters who are not able to meet the photo identification requirement, to meet the requirements by:
 - Showing one of the approved forms of non-photo ID
 - Executing a declaration stating the voter has a reasonable impediment to meeting the requirement

Senate Bill 5 (85(1)) - Mail-in Ballot Fraud

- Eliminates electronic signatures on applications for mail in ballots. Electronic and faxed applications must now be followed up by the original application with the original "wet" signature. Aligns with voter registration requirements.
- Enables and requires signature verification and ballot board committees to reject fraudulent ballots. Currently, these boards may not reject a ballot, they may only confirm the signatures are, or are not, a match.
 - Also grants them authority to deny if the signatures on the application and carrier envelope are not those of the voter, and/or do not match.
 - Adds liability to ballot board members who knowingly accept invalid signatures.
- Creates a new definition of "voter fraud", establishes a "voter fraud" offense (Class A Misdemeanor), and gives law enforcement the tools they need to go after violators.

House Bill 25 - Eliminates straight-party voting in Texas

- Encourages voters to consider more carefully candidates running in elections by requiring they vote for each individual race.

Constituent Resources

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 Live Updates

All of the relevant information our office has gathered in regard to response and recovery of Hurricane Harvey is posted immediately to our Facebook page. Be sure to "like" us so that you can have the most up-to-date information.



Upcoming Events

December 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 related to Hurricane Harvey.

This color box indicates a general purpose event.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 The Prophet's Birthday	2 8th Annual Snowball Run
3 Candlelight Remembrance	4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day BizCom - Kingwood	8	9
10	11 Pachyderm Christmas Party with State Rep. Dan Huberty	12 Hanukkah Begins at Sunset House Committee on Energy Resources - Midland, TX Elected Officials Reception	13 LHACC Chamber 101 House Committee on Human Services - Austin, TX	14 BizCom - Summer Creek	15	16
17	18	19	20 Hanukkah Ends at Sunset	21 First Day of Winter	22 <i>Capitol and District Offices Closed thru January 2nd</i>	23
24 Christmas	25 Christmas	26 Kwanzaa	27 <i>Capitol and</i>	28 <i>Capitol and</i>	29 <i>Capitol and</i>	30

Eve	Day	(thru. Jan. 1)	<i>District Offices Closed thru. January 2nd</i>	<i>District Offices Closed thru. January 2nd</i>	<i>District Offices Closed thru. January 2nd</i>	
	<i>Capitol and District Offices Closed thru. January 2nd</i>	<i>Capitol and District Offices Closed thru. January 2nd</i>				
31						
New Year's Eve						

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