



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
JAMES WHITE

CORRECTIONS - CHAIR
INTERNATIONAL TRADE &
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

DISTRICT 19
HARDIN, JASPER
NEWTON, POLK, TYLER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:
Saul Mendoza, Chief of Staff
(512) 463-0490

Chairman James White Passes Final House Bills Before House Floor Deadline
- Weekly Legislative Update 5/15/17 -

(Austin, TX) - This past week was an exciting time at the Texas Legislature. It was the final week for legislation filed by the House to be heard on the House floor before being sent to the Senate. I was proud to lay out and pass three pieces of legislation; two that will make some much needed improvements to our criminal justice system and one to provide educational opportunities for apprenticeship training programs.

House Bill 3147 entitles a person to obtain the expunction of any information that identifies the person who was arrested solely as a result of identifying information that was inaccurate due to a clerical error or mistaken identity. Many people believe if they are released after being mistakenly arrested and the charges were dropped or dismissed without any court date being set that they no longer have an arrest record; even in cases of a mistaken arrest, the damaging documents are not automatically removed. This bill seeks to expedite the process of having these records expunged, so the innocent citizens who have been wrongfully arrested can move forward with their lives, free from fear of a tarnished record for a crime they did not commit.

House Bill 3705 permits juvenile justice agencies to jointly create and maintain a juvenile justice information system. Currently, 250 Texas counties and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department are using the Juvenile Case Management System, which provides users with access to real-time information regarding children within the juvenile justice system. This bill seeks to address the way system is being used in ways that may exceed the current authority to permit the use of the system by private juvenile facilities, which makes information sharing more efficient.

House Bill 2790 looks to create funding for certain apprenticeship training programs to create more opportunities for the expansion of apprenticeships to keep up with growing demand for skilled labor. Apprenticeships have largely fallen off the radar when it comes to options in pursuing post-secondary education. As an educator of many years, I of course, have been, and



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will continue to be a staunch advocate for higher education. However, rising tuition costs and an oversaturation of the entry-level market have created a greater demand for skilled trades. Apprenticeships are an extremely effective method of combining on the job training with classroom education to give students the hands-on experience and training they need to be successful in their trade. Skilled trades were once considered the backbone of the American economy. As we advance technologically, the need for competent and educated tradesmen will only increase over time. We have an opportunity to try and stay ahead of the curve with this piece of legislation, and make sure that Texas is getting the best education possible for our tradesmen.

My colleagues also passed other strong reforms before the midnight deadline this past Thursday. House Bill 3859 protects faith-based child welfare service providers from discrimination, or adverse legal actions, for exercising their deeply held religious beliefs in the context of the foster care system. This will enable providers to decline to offer certain services when they conflict with their sincerely held religious beliefs while also requiring the state to ensure that alternate providers are available to offer any services that a faith-based provider declines to provide.

House Bill 2962 increases reporting requirements for abortion providers. This will require a report of any complication or injury resulting from an abortion as a specific complication of abortion, rather than a general complication of maternal health, which has been the typical practice. Separating abortion complications from maternal health statistics provides a more accurate picture of both maternal health and the after effects of abortion in Texas.

House Bill 810, named Charlie's Law, in honor of former State Representative, Charlie Howard, creates a pathway for Texas to become the first state to allow terminally ill and chronically diseased patients to utilize their own biological, life-saving stem cells to treat serious conditions in a more expedient manner. Currently, many have to travel abroad to receive treatment due to overregulation and a bureaucratic process in place by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Senate Bill 7, expands criminal liability for teacher-student relationships to include educators who target students in other schools or other school districts. The bill ensures that we protect our Texas children from predators and that penalties are in place for any teacher who has an improper relationship with a student.

These bills, and the ones I have previously filed have now been received by the Senate. They must go through a similar process and be voted favorably by the full Senate body. Just as Senators will be working hard to push my legislation through, I too will be working hard to make



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sure that good bills from the Senate make their way through the process. Once a bill is voted favorably by both the House and the Senate, it will be sent to the Governor to be signed into law. This is a very exciting time in the Texas Legislature, and I couldn't be more proud to represent the great people of District 19.

Additionally, this week I was proud to host Elder Debra Battise-Kleinman of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas as our Pastor of the Day. It was truly a privilege to hear her recite the Lord's Prayer in the Tribe's language.

I was also able to meet with Newton and Hardin-Jefferson students who were in town for the State UIL Track & Field competition. I look forward to seeing the results of this year's meet and see how well our Southeast Texas athlete's place.

Lastly, I was proud to recognize Goodrich ISD science teacher, Krystal Scott, as a 2017 Ernest and Sarah Butler Award for Excellence in Science Teaching awardee on the House floor. It is truly a privilege to represent such an outstanding educator in the Texas House. Krystal is an asset to East Texas and I could not be any prouder to see her go above and beyond to educate our Texas children.

The Capitol of Texas belongs to you and visiting the Capitol during the biennial legislative session is a great experience. To assist in arranging your visit please call Saul Mendoza, my Chief of Staff, at (512) 463-0490 or at saul.mendoza@house.texas.gov.

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