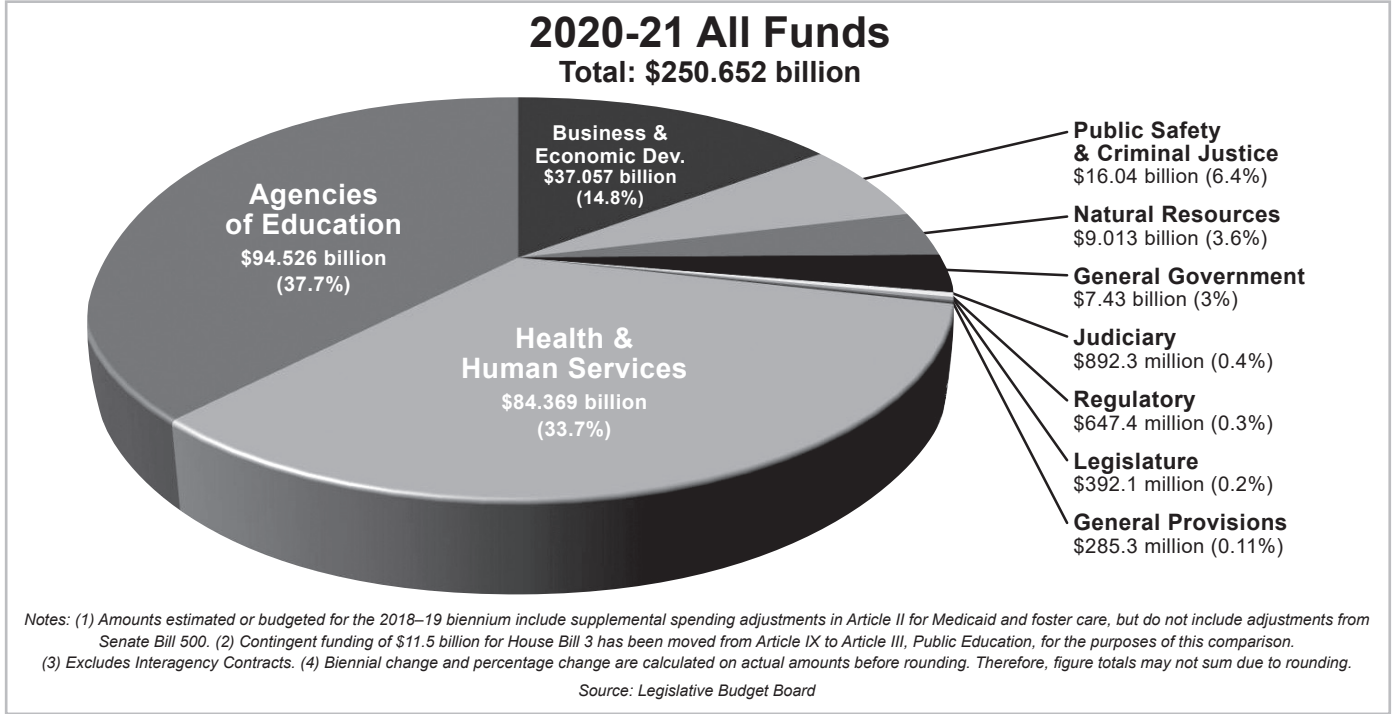


★ BUDGET BREAKDOWN ★



House Bill 1: 2020-2021 State Budget

- Appropriates \$118.9 billion in General Revenues and approximately \$250.7 billion in All Funds
- Remains under all four constitutional spending:
 - **Debt Limit** - Caps debt not to exceed 5% of the average annual unrestricted General Funds in the past 3 years
 - **Welfare Spending Limit** - Funding for assistance grants cannot exceed more than 1% of the state budget
 - **Pay-As-You-Go Limit** - Requires that all appropriations be within available funds in General Revenue
 - **Spending Limit** - Prohibits the state from spending tax funds not dedicated by the constitution if they exceed the rate of growth for the state economy.

However, property taxpayers will be able to keep \$5 billion of their money therefore providing the legislature with a net \$113.9 billion in General Revenue

Higher Education

- \$500 million for increased formula funds for all higher education institutions

Emergency Relief and Preparedness

- \$11.7 million for salary increases for Adult Protective Services workers to address the emerging hiring and retention crisis
- \$48 million for rate increases and cost growth for Early Childhood Intervention
- \$7.7 billion for behavioral health and substance abuse services
- \$86 million in rate increases for community care and Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) providers, pediatric home therapists, and pediatric private duty nursing

Important Deadlines for Property Tax Exemptions

In most cases, statute requires a property owner to apply for a property tax exemption, and the general qualifying requirement for these exemptions is that the individual has to own the property by January 1st. The general **deadline to file an exemption application is April 30th**. If a property owner fails to file the required application on time, the owner usually forfeits the right to that exemption unless there is a late application provision in statute that applies to that particular exemption.

There are **late application** provisions for homestead exemptions, which allows a homeowner to file for any homestead exemption up to **two years after the delinquency date (5 years for disabled veterans and surviving spouses), which is generally February 1st**. This late application provision refers to:

- Residence Homestead
- Residence Homestead for 65+ or disabled
- Residence Homestead for 100 percent or Totally Disabled veteran
- Donated Residence Homestead of Partially Disabled Veteran
- Residence Homestead of Surviving Spouse of Member of Armed Services Killed in Action
- Residence Homestead of Surviving Spouse of First Responder Killed in Line of Duty

Note that agricultural land exemptions do not qualify for the late application and must meet the April 30th deadline.



Flat Stanley visited State Representative James White at the State Capitol in Austin. During his visit, Flat Stanley helped lay out legislation and met with Governor Greg Abbott. Upon his return to Silsbee, he shared what he learned about state politics with his classmates in Mrs. Sadler's class.

JAMES WHITE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ DISTRICT 19

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SILSBEЕ TIGER SENIORS VISIT STATE CAPITOL



State Representative James White meets with honor students from the Silsbee High School 2019 graduating class. The students were assigned to tweet about the civics and history lessons they learned during their visit to Austin using the hashtag #TigersTakeAustin.

COME VISIT YOUR STATE CAPITOL

If you have plans to visit the Capitol, please be sure to contact my office so we can arrange a tour.

CAPITOL OFFICE: (512) 463-0490

JAMES WHITE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
★ ★ ★
District 19

86TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



JAMES WHITE
DISTRICT 19

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is an honor to serve House District 19. Serving as the Chair of Corrections and a member of the committees on Redistricting and Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence, I consistently strive to fight and represent our strong Southeast Texas interests and values.

This newsletter will focus on the legislative efforts of the 86th Legislative Session. The Legislature met in Austin to pass strong commonsense legislation aimed toward supercharging our economy, lowering tax rates, protecting our property rights, strengthening religious liberties, upholding our Second Amendment rights, and increasing governmental transparency. Additionally, the Legislature took a strong stance to pass a fiscally responsible and balanced budget. This budget funds our schools and promotes higher academic achievement. It also funds our efforts to secure the border that will help our local law enforcement keep our Southeast Texas communities safe.

During the interim, I plan to meet with and listen to constituents like yourself, community leaders, local elected officials, teachers and school administrators, farmers and ranchers, pastors, doctors and nurses, small business owners, and families regarding the needs and concerns that face our Southeast Texas communities. These are issues that the Legislature must address in order to ensure a bright and prosperous future for Texas.

It is a blessing to serve Texans in Hardin, Jasper, Newton, Polk, and Tyler counties. Both the Woodville district office and the Capitol office are open during the interim to any constituent that wishes to visit. I invite you to come visit and express your aspirations, hopes, and dreams for the future.

For God and Texas,

James White
State Representative

PUBLIC EDUCATION

“Texas Constitution Article 7 Sec. 1. SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE OF SYSTEM OF PUBLIC FREE SCHOOLS. A general diffusion of knowledge being essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature of the State to establish and make suitable provision for the support and maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools.”

After years of research, data, and testimony, the Texas House and Senate have come together to put forth unprecedented school finance reform legislation. House Bill 3, the “Texas Plan”, invests more state funding into classrooms than ever before, lowers property taxes, reduces recapture (or taking taxpayer money from a so-called “wealthy” district and giving it to less wealthy district), and treats our hardworking educators like the professionals they are by dedicating funding for dynamic raises in their compensation. The bill will do the following:

Puts \$4.5 billion into classrooms for transformational education reforms to accelerate student achievement

- Significantly increases the Basic Allotment per student to \$6,160 from \$5,180
- Funds full-day Pre-K for economically-disadvantaged children
- Creates the first dyslexia identification program in Texas history
- Accelerates student achievement via College, Career & Military Readiness (CCMR) outcomes bonuses, dual-language programs, and extended year summer programs for students
- Directs more funds to schools with higher concentrations of economically-disadvantage children, students at-risk of not completing high school, students in special education, and students in residential treatment facilities
- \$200 million for school safety improvements including building renovations, added security personnel, and technology

Provides over \$5 billion in tax relief by increasing the state’s share of education funding to lower property tax rates

- Lowers school property tax rates by an average of 8 cents in 2020 and 13 cents in 2021
- Caps school property taxpayer bills at 2.5% growth
- Ensures taxpayer dollars are used responsibly by requiring districts to conduct efficiency audits before going to voters with a tax increase



State Representative James White welcomes the Texas Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas to their State Capitol. On the dais are Chairwoman Cecilia Flores, Second Chief Herbert Johnson, Sr., and Rick Sylestine.

- Increases the state’s share of education funding to 45% from 38%
- **Modernizes outdated school finance formulas to reduce recapture**
- Reduces recapture payments by \$3.6 billion, a 47% reduction this biennium, and allows ISDs to keep more of their local property taxes

Energizes teacher pay and invests in programs to promote teacher quality

- Compensates educators as true professionals by unleashing over \$2 billion in dynamic pay raises for teachers, librarians, counselors, and nurses
- Does not mandate that districts link teacher compensation to standardized testing
- Increases the minimum teacher salary schedule

TEACHER RETIREMENT

The Legislature passed reforms to better the Texas Teacher Retirement System that has faced various funding challenges in the past years.

- The Supplemental Payment or 13th check to retirees will be up to \$2,000
- Increases the State contribution to the Teacher Retirement System to 8.25% from 6.8% beginning in FY20 through FY25.
- \$524 million to make TRS stable and solvent
- Actuarial soundness is achieved immediately, dropping the funding period from 87 years presently to 29 in FY20 and 24 in FY25
- \$230.8 million to cover shortfalls and ensure retired teachers’ healthcare premiums do not increase

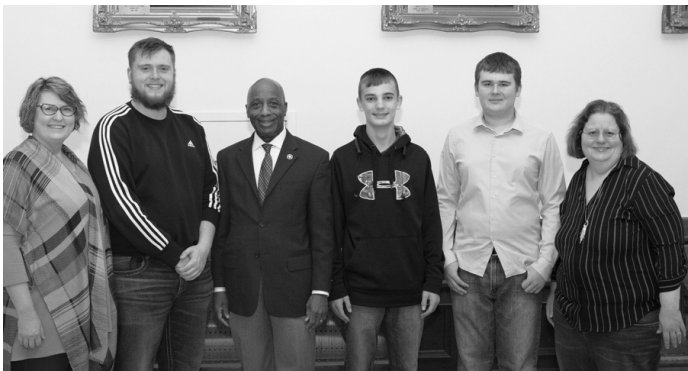


Woodville High School students and their teacher meet with State Representative James White outside his Capitol office during their visit as part of the UIL Congress State Competition. Penny Brackin and Drake Broom represented the Eagles and were coached by Cathy Dentremon.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Various reform were passed to ensure that our Texas school children are safe when on our school campuses. No parent or child should fear for their life when working to obtain a 21st Century Education.

- **Senate Bill 11** - Creates the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium to facilitate access to mental health care services and expand the mental health workforce
- Requires the Texas Education Agency to ensure that school building standards provide a safe and secure environment
- Ensures schools adopt a multi-hazard emergency operations plan and appoint a school safety committee.
- **House Bill 18** - Enhances school safety and strengthens parental approved mental health resources for students and school personnel
- **House Bill 19** - Partners non-physician mental health professionals at education service centers with schools to provide greater personnel resources in school districts and charter schools



West Hardin High School students and their teacher meet with State Representative James White outside his Capitol office during their visit as part of the UIL Congress State Competition. Christopher Johnson represented the Oilers and was coached by Sandra Peek.

PROPERTY TAX REFORM

Senate Bill 2 - The Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act

- Adds real-time tax notices for taxpayers to engage in the rate-setting process
- Informs taxpayers of proposed tax rate increase and how to protest
- Provides taxpayers with an online form to submit their position on proposed rates
- Improves financial disclosures from taxing units
- Expands opportunities to protest or appeal appraisal values
- Requires electronic notices from appraisal districts
- Automatically triggers a November election when taxes are raised above the voter approval rate
- Ensures that elections occur in November

House Bill 492/House Joint Resolution 34

- Allows taxpayers to apply for a property tax exemption if the property is in a declared disaster area and is at least 15% damaged by the disaster

VETERANS & FIRST RESPONDERS

We must make sure we attract our best and brightest to a career in law enforcement and enable them to provide for their families as they make sacrifices to protect our safety.

- **Senate Bill 16** - Creates a loan repayment assistance program to help peace officers repay their student loans. Eligible peace officers can get up to \$20,000 in assistance.
- **House Bill 2137** - Exempts an honorably retired peace officer from completing the classroom instruction portion of the required handgun proficiency course if the officer complies with certain requirements and holds a current certificate of proficiency to obtain a license to carry a handgun.
- **House Bill 3601** - Permits the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board & Texas Military Department to approve degree plans that use alternative methods of determining mastery, including competency-based education.
- **House Bill 1883** would allow individuals on active duty in the U.S. armed forces to defer payment on delinquent property taxes when transferred out of state.
- **House Bill 1597** - Makes it easier for members of the military to relocate by allowing their children to establish residency for admission into Texas public schools by providing the school district a copy of a military order directing the parent’s transfer to a military installation in or adjacent to the applicable district’s attendance zone.
- **House Bill 114** (authored by Rep. White) - Directs the Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to jointly provide high schools with materials regarding the availability of college credit awarded by institutions of higher education to veterans and military servicemembers for military experience, education, and training obtained during military service.



State Representative James White was presented with the artwork from children at Goodrich Elementary. Principal Kathryn Washington and her teachers helped our most vulnerable children, who were impacted by Hurricane Harvey, have an outlet to express their emotions and thoughts on the traumatic events that unfolded in the area.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Hurricane Harvey hit the Texas coast on Friday, August 25, 2017, causing massive destruction along the Coastal Bend before moving up the Texas coast into Central and Southeast Texas and resulting in extreme flooding and devastation to our communities. This session the Legislature took steps to ensure that we are better prepared in the event of another catastrophic natural disaster.

- **House Bill 5** - Directs the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) to create a catastrophic debris management plan, ensuring a more timely and simplified response to post-disaster debris.
- **House Bill 6** - Tasks the TDEM with assisting individuals with specialized assistance, including financial issues and federal assistance programs, and communities with recovery and resiliency planning.

- **House Bill 7** - Requires the Governor’s Office to compile and maintain a comprehensive list of all the regulatory waivers needed during a disaster so the state may be able to expedite suspensions in any future disaster.
- **Senate Bill 7/House Joint Resolution 4** - Creates the Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF) for statewide regional flood planning, mitigation, and infrastructure projects.

SEXUAL ASSAULT & HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Our state and our communities have been plagued with rampant crimes of sexual assault and human trafficking. It is imperative that we promote safe communities and value the dignity of all Texans.

- **House Bill 4345** - Allows nonprofits and churches to share information about sex abuse allegations against former employees without becoming vulnerable to lawsuits
- **House Bill 3106** - Molly Jane’s Law instructs all departments in the state to input their sexual assault investigations into the Violent Criminal Apprehension Program
- **House Bill 3809** - Empowers survivors of child sex abuse by extending the civil statute of limitations to 30 years for

personal injury lawsuits arising from the abuse

- **House Bill 2789** - Makes the electronic transmission of sexually-explicit visual material without consent a Class C misdemeanor, which will be punishable by a fine of up to \$500
- **Senate Bill 325** - Establishes a protective order registry ensuring law enforcement agencies, courts, governmental entities, and the public are actively informed of such orders

HIGHLIGHTS OF BILLS PASSED BY STATE REPRESENTATIVE JAMES WHITE

- **HB 72** - Allows for parents who adopt foster children to maintain the same STAR Kids or STAR Health program benefits that a child who qualifies or qualified for SSI would continue to receive under the conservatorship of the state. This also prevents a disruption in care for these vulnerable children.
- **HB 123** - Allows the state to provide personal identification to homeless youth.
- **HB 410** - Allows for the small sell of rabbit and chicken meat without heavy burdens from state regulation.
- **HB 650** - Ensures an appropriate hygienic standard for incarcerated women, sets health, security, and safety standards for pregnant women, and gives proper guidance to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) on how to adequately respond to issues that impact justice-involved women.
- **HB 918** - Develops procedures at TDCJ to ensure that those who are able to work upon release receive proper documentation to assist in obtaining employment. Additionally, it allows TDCJ to provide practice job interviews to better prepare for job prospects upon reentry.
- **HB 3316** - Developed as part of the Governor Abbott’s School and Fire Safety Action Plan, this legislation expands the type of tips that can be reported to crime stopper organizations and involve public and charter schools in the reporting process.



Colmesneil High School students and their teacher meet with State Representative James White in the back hall of the Texas House of Representatives while on their visit to compete in the UIL Congress State Competition. Julius Mabry represented the Bulldogs and was coached by Jimmy Smith.