



**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2016**

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### **NCSL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT**

The NCSL Legislative Summit in Chicago was held on August 8th-11th. The Conference is governed by a 63-member executive committee, elected yearly, which includes both legislators and staff, under the leadership of seven officers. The NCSL Standing Committees guide the lobbying efforts of the Conference and serve as forums to exchange ideas and information among the legislatures. It was a great opportunity to meet legislators and legislative staff to discuss the nation's pressing issues, as well as share experiences with federal policy. The issues discussed included: military and veterans, legislatures, taxes and the economy, health and human service, education, and elections. I am grateful the Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, Joe Straus, nominated me to participate in such an important conference and further my knowledge of these critical issues.

### **INTERIM HEARING**

On Monday, August 22nd, 2016 the Land Resource Management committee held its first interim meeting of the year to discuss two charges. Charge one was to study state preparedness and response to natural disasters including but not limited to: an evaluation of risks to the state, emergency planning efforts, first response efforts, coordination between the General Land Office, the State Emergency Operation Center, and other state, local, and federal resources. It is our job to make appropriate recommendations to ensure Texas has the proper programs, resources, and personnel in place to respond to natural disasters.

Charge two was examine the rate of erosion along the Texas coast and the effects of coastal erosion on public beaches, natural resources, coastal development, public infrastructure, and public and private property. After examination, we analyzed current programs related to coastal erosion and reviewed their effectiveness to make appropriate recommendations.

### **COASTAL SUMMIT GALVESTON**

On September 8th-11th I attended the 2016 Galveston Coastal Legislative Tour hosted by Senator Larry Taylor and Representative Wayne Faircloth, along with the Galveston Regional

Chamber of Commerce. The purpose of this tour is to highlight all that Galveston has to offer, including: the Port of Galveston, the offshore industry, the petrochemical industry, tourism, UTMB, Galveston National Lab, Texas A&M University Galveston, Galveston College and the significant contributions of the area to the state and country. This was an excellent opportunity for me to learn about the needs of the Texas coast, and the development of a coastal barrier system.

### **REENTRY SUMMIT**

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Texas is hosting a free conference for reentry service providers and interested community members on Sep. 22, 2016, at the MCM Elegante Hotel and Convention Center in Beaumont, Texas. Successful reentry reduces recidivism by helping individuals return from prison to productive, law abiding lives. This conference will support successful reentry by promoting community collaboration for improved training and employment outcomes for former prisoners. National and regional reentry experts will share solutions and answer questions for an audience of business and community leaders, state and federal prison and parole officials, social service resource providers, and faith-based prison ministers. Finally, in a workshop setting, experts in reentry networking will outline action items to create a community-wide reentry network in Southeast Texas.

### **INTERIM HEARING**

On September 21, 2016, the Land Resource Management Committee held its second interim hearing in 2016 to discuss charges four and five. Charge four is to examine current regulatory authority available to municipalities in their extraterritorial jurisdiction, as well as study current annexation policies in Texas. It is necessary for us to make legislative recommendations to ensure a proper balance between development, municipal regulations, and the needs of citizens in Texas. Charge five is to conduct legislative oversight and monitoring of the agencies.

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