



SERGIO MUÑOZ JR

District 36

Capitol Newsletter



"This week marked a significant upbeat in the legislative process at the capitol. The House passed major legislation regarding public schools and the state's water crisis. I am proud to be a co-author of HB 5 which reduced the number of standardized test and gives more curriculum control to the teachers. I also made significant progress on bills more local in nature, which will make our schools safer, will accommodate economic development & jobs, and honor a fallen local state trooper. Please review the items below and let me know if you have any questions. Have a safe & Happy Easter!"

Our Bills

HB 442-Trooper Chavez

Texas Highway Patrol Trooper Eduardo Chavez was killed in the line of duty in May 2006, having suffered fatal injuries in a traffic accident that occurred on U.S. Highway 83. This bill designates a portion of U.S. Highway 83 as the Trooper Eduardo Chavez Memorial Highway to honor his life and service.

Status: Muñoz expects HB 442 to pass the House next week.



HB 474 - Overweight Truck Corridor

Currently, differences in truck weight limits in Texas and Mexico are requiring RGV based produce companies to unload and split their shipments prior to crossing the border. This bill will create an overweight truck corridor within Hidalgo County that would allow trucks to proceed to Texas before having to lighten their loads. This corridor will save Texas produce companies money and make the RGV the premiere port of entry for produce from south of the border.

Status: Muñoz passed HB 474 out of the Transportation Committee on Tuesday, March 19th, explaining the corridor would create an economic produce hub within South Texas, benefiting the state of Texas and our nation as a whole.

HB 801 - School Safety

Students at a middle school were seriously injured by stray bullets that crossed onto school property in Dec. 2011. The bullets came from an individual engaging in target practice on a ranch near the school. HB 801 proposes measures to prevent such a tragedy from ever happening again. The bill enhances criminal penalties for knowingly discharging a firearm if the bullet travels across a school property line. It also seeks to provide awareness of such penalties in hunter education programs and with proximity signs near schools.

Status: Muñoz laid out HB 801 in front of the Homeland Security & Public Safety Committee on Thursday, March 28th.

Major State Legislative Highlights

This week marked an important step towards public school and water reform within our state as the Texas House Passed HB 5 & HB 4, two bills specifically co-authored and supported by Representative Muñoz.

HB 5, the education legislation that reduces the number of standardized tests that our children and teachers are overburdened by, was debated by the full House of Representatives and passed overwhelmingly with a 147-2 vote on Tuesday, March 26th. Rep. Muñoz co-authored this legislation because it reduces the dependence on high stakes testing, reducing the number of tests from **15 to 5**, giving more curriculum control to the teachers and promoting student success and initiative.

HB 4 implements the state water plan, and passing HB 4 is a significant step towards addressing the major water problems within our state. During the 2011 drought, Texas saw an economic loss of over \$11 billion. The 2012 State Water Plan, a plan developed by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) every 5 years to address the state's water needs, recommended 562 water management strategies to meet Texas' water needs in preparation for future droughts. This legislature, and Rep. Muñoz, decided to implement a form of this plan through HB 4 in an attempt to address the state's water needs and the concerning fact that by 2060, another severe drought would leave half of Texans without adequate water supply and cause economic losses of over \$116 billion.

Constituents @ the Capitol

On March 13, 2013, Erika Miller of Mission visited the Texas Capitol as part of her acceptance into the Lone Star Leadership Academy. In recognition of this achievement, Rep. Muñoz presented her with a Texas Flag flown over the Capitol.



On March 11, 2013, as part of American Federation of Teachers day at the Capitol, representatives from Edinburg ISD, PSJA ISD, McAllen ISD, and La Joya ISD talked with Rep. Muñoz about the Texas' public education system and ways this legislature can address the problems teachers across the state face on a daily basis.