

State Representative Gary VanDeaver



HD 1



87th Legislature
Bowie | Franklin | Lamar | Red River

87th Legislature Report - House District 1 Bowie, Franklin, Lamar & Red River counties

July 2021

Around the District. Congratulations to TexAmericas! Earlier this month, *Business Facilities Magazine* issued its 17th annual rankings of the best "corporate site selection, expansion, relocation & area economic development solutions." The magazine ranked TexAmericas Center (TAC) as the



fifth best industrial park location in the country. *BF Magazine* describes TAC as: "A massive mixed-use industrial park boasting more

than 12,000 acres and 3.5 million square feet of commercial and industrial product, TAC services the Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas markets. Formed in 1998 by Texas as part of an initiative to redevelop former military property, TAC offers custom industrial real estate solutions, including purchase, lease, build-to-suit (purchase, lease and reverse) and retrofit or build-out-to-suit options."

BF Magazine goes on to say that TAC is "considered one of the highest-performing and most successful Local Redevelopment Authorities in the US."

Congratulations to TAC Executive Director and CEO Scott Norton, as well as the board and staff. They have diligently worked for years to successfully implement the idea of what TexAmericas could become since the former military facility was recreated into a commercial and industrial business economic development center.

Here is a link to the story on the rankings in *BF Magazine*: https://cdn.businessfacilities.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/BF2021-Rankings_State_Metro-Global-C-1.pdf.

Visitors to the Capitol. It was great having visitors from the District stop by the Capitol office and tour the beautiful, historic building. The State Preservation Board (SPB) is charged with maintaining the Capitol and other historic buildings and grounds. The SPB has many resources available for people who want to visit and know more about the history of these locations. Here is a link to the SPB website: <https://tspb.texas.gov/>.

The Capitol was closed for a significant portion of the last year due to the pandemic, but it reopened earlier this year. If you are going to be in Austin and want to visit the Capitol, please contact the office at 512-463-0692 if you need assistance making arrangements.



Rep. VanDeaver with members of the New Boston Faith-Based Pre-College Program.

The New Boston Faith Based Pre-College Program stopped by the office while they were in Austin for their summer program.

"The Texas House of Representatives is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. This newsletter is available in alternate forms upon request. Please call 1-800-241-1163."



Rep. Vandeaver along with the Ben King family on the Grand Staircase outside the House Chamber.

Also, Texarkana lawyer, Ben King and his children (Grant, Sam & Noelle), were able to visit the Capitol and tour the building.

COVID making a comeback.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 virus is not finished with Texas

nor House District 1. Infection rates are rising again along with hospitalizations that are stressing local hospitals and health care professionals. Texas Governor Greg Abbott has made it very clear that neither the state nor local governments (cities, counties and school districts) can mandate the wearing of masks or getting vaccinated; however, he along with state health officials encourage Texans to get vaccinated to protect themselves and their families. News stories have recently reported that of the 9,000 Texans who have died from the virus since February 2021, only 43 people had been vaccinated. The head of the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stated this is "becoming a pandemic of the unvaccinated."

According to data from the Texas Department of State Health Services, vaccination rates for people in the four counties in House District 1 are less than 30 percent. Only 43.6 percent (12.6 million) of Texans are fully vaccinated, and the state's positivity rate is trending upward climbing above 10 percent again for the first time since this year's winter surge.

If it is right for you and your family, please consider getting vaccinated to protect yourselves, your loved ones and your community. It is everyone's right to decide this issue for themselves, but the vaccine is one of the best ways to stop the spread of the vaccine so everyone can return to a normal, everyday life. Regardless of whether you choose to get vaccinated, please practice the other measures

"The Texas House of Representatives is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. This newsletter is available in alternate forms upon request. Please call 1-800-241-1163."

that also help slow the spread of the virus where most appropriate: social distancing, frequent hand washing and wearing masks. These voluntary measures can work to keep everyone safe.

The governor's office, DSHS and the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) put out this information relating to the coronavirus:

- **WATCH** from [@TexasDSHS](#): We are in a race against time, Texas. COVID hospitalizations and cases are rapidly rising due to the Delta variant. **The best protection for yourself and your family is to get FULLY vaccinated.** Many pharmacies provide walk-in vaccinations. [CovidVaccine.Texas.gov](https://www.covidvaccine.texas.gov)
- From Texas DSHS's Facebook: [facebook.com/TexasDSHS/videos/796307311030107](https://www.facebook.com/TexasDSHS/videos/796307311030107)
- From [@TDEM](#): Texas Mobile #COVID19 Vaccine Teams are ready to serve you! Call 844-90-TEXAS to schedule a team to vaccinate your group! You Choose: Date; Time; Location. A team will come to you!

Around the Capitol. Walkout continues. As of today, the current special session is still at a standstill due to the walkout by over 50 House members that "broke quorum" almost three weeks ago. The 30-day special session ends August 6, and it remains to be seen whether the absent House members will return to the Capitol before then. The governor has vowed to keep calling special sessions until the issues he wants enacted into law are passed. The state's constitution grants only the governor the authority to call special sessions of the legislature and to set the "call" (issues) that are to be decided. The governor put the following issues on the call for the current special session including: bail reform; election integrity; border security; social media censorship; Article X funding; family violence prevention; disallowing transgender students from participating in UIL athletic competitions; prohibiting the distribution of

abortion-inducing drugs; 13th-month check for retired school employees; further limiting the teaching of critical race theory; and appropriation-related issues of adopting property tax relief, protecting foster children and safeguarding the state from cybersecurity attacks.

The state constitution requires at least two-thirds of the members in either House to establish a quorum to conduct business. So, until there are at least 100 House members present in Austin, it will be impossible for work to continue on the issues on the governor's call. Stay tuned!!

Texas Sales Tax Holiday is Aug. 6-8. Earlier this month, Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar reminded Texas shoppers they can save money on clothes and school supplies during the state's sales tax holiday on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 6-8. State law exempts sales tax on qualified items — such as clothing, footwear, school supplies and backpacks — priced below \$100, saving shoppers about \$8 on every \$100 they spend. The date of the sales tax holiday and list of tax-exempt items are set by the Texas Legislature.



Apparel and school supplies that may be purchased tax-free are listed on the comptroller's

website at [TexasTaxHoliday.org](https://www.texas.comptroller.org/sales-tax-holiday). During the annual sales tax holiday, qualifying items can be purchased tax-free online or by telephone, mail, custom order or any other means (including in-store purchases) when either:

- The item is both delivered to and paid for by, the customer during the exemption period; or
- The customer orders and pays for the item, and the seller accepts the order during the exemption period for immediate shipment,

even if delivery is made after the exemption period ends.

Texas' sales tax holiday weekend has been an annual event since 1999, allowing consumers to save millions of dollars in state and local sales taxes each year. The comptroller's office estimates that shoppers will save an estimated \$107.3 million in state and local sales tax during this sales tax holiday.

Items of interest. The following information was shared by the governor's office:

- From [@TexasVeterans](https://twitter.com/TexasVeterans): Friday, July 30, is the deadline for PenFed Foundation **Veteran Entrepreneur Investment Program applications** for fall 2021. The program is an accelerator to prepare growth-stage, #TexasVeterans owned startups to raise investor funds & scale their companies. veip.penfedfoundation.org/masters
- **JOBS:** There are more than 860,000 postings with even more available jobs on TWC's [MyTXCareer.com](https://www.mytxcareer.com)
- From [@TXWorkforce](https://twitter.com/TXWorkforce): We have programs that prepare you to earn your high school equivalency and move ahead to college or a career training program. If you have your high school diploma or equivalency, check out how we can help you with college prep. #MoveAheadwithAdultEd → tcall.tamu.edu/search.aspx

Social Media. Please follow me on both my Facebook and Twitter accounts!

My office is here to help. I thank each of you for letting me serve you as your state representative. Please contact either the District office (903-628-0361) or Capitol office (512-463-0692) if there is anything you think we can do to help you.

"The Texas House of Representatives is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. This newsletter is available in alternate forms upon request. Please call 1-800-241-1163."