



State Representative Gary VanDeaver



87th Legislature
Bowie | Franklin | Lamar | Red River

HD 1

87th Legislature Report - House District 1 Bowie, Franklin, Lamar & Red River counties May 2022

Tragedy in Uvalde. The murder of innocent children and teachers at Robb Elementary School on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, in Uvalde, Texas, has brought Texans to their knees in unbelievable grief and sadness combined with anger and resolve to stop such tragedies from happening again. Regardless of what side of the gun rights vs. gun control debate you are on, I believe hard questions must be asked and answered in order to keep our most precious gifts from God safe and healthy.

The facts about who did what and when are still being gathered and this landscape is ever shifting. As more information is shared by the survivors, eyewitnesses, and local, state and federal law enforcement agencies a more complete picture will emerge. Until we have that complete picture, I hope people will not rush to judgment on what must be done or which changes should be implemented to keep our children safe. We cannot come up with the right fixes if we do not have the whole story of who did what and when, as well as the why something was either done or not done. Our children and grandchildren were senselessly murdered; our world will never be the same. We must carefully and thoughtfully take this situation apart piece-by-piece to find the necessary answers.

I am sure members of the 88th legislature, that convenes on January 10, 2023, will hold hearings and listen to hours of public testimony about mass shootings in Texas. Since 2010, there have been mass shootings at Fort Hood, Dallas, Sutherland Springs, Santa Fe, El Paso, Midland-Odessa and now

in Uvalde. These shootings were at one of the world's largest military bases; at police officers in the country's ninth largest city; at a tiny Baptist Church in rural Texas; at a high school in the state's largest county; at a Wal-Mart; on a West Texas highway; and finally at an elementary school with only two days left in its school year.

Before we can come up with solutions to stop these tragedies, we must have complete and accurate data. That will take time. I ask for your patience while that data is gathered, analyzed, interpreted and synthesized into workable solutions. I believe we must ask the hard questions, pledge to keep an open mind during our debates and be committed to letting the facts speak the truth to us as we find our way going forward to keep all Texans safe. The victims of all these senseless shootings deserve nothing less. I am sorry for the victims and their families. May God give you, and all of us, the strength, courage and grace to face the days and nights ahead.

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.

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