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OUR DISTRICT 126 LEGISLATION

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Tx Commission On Environmental Quality	. 512-239-1000	State Bar Legal Referral Services
Housing & Community Affairs	. 512-475-3800	Department of Criminal Justice Offender
Injured Workers Hotline	. 800-252-7031	Status Line (Prior to release approval) 512-424-2600
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TDCJ Parole Release Status Line (After approval)	512-406-5202	Texas Legislature Online - https://capitol.texas.gov/ Texas House of Representatives - www.house.texas.gov



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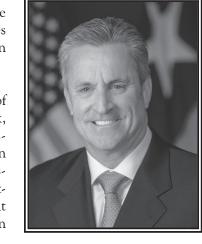
TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



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REPRESENTATIVE SAM HARLESS * 86TH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

We had significant accomplishments during the 86th Session, many of which had far-reaching implications for our constituents in District 126 and other residents of Texas. Whether it was the budget, taxes, public education, or teacher retirement, this legislature dealt with a good many issues important to all of us. We will hit the high points of a few of the major points from this session. One of the most important things for us this session was the harmony among members. We avoided divisive issues and were generally able to carry out the State's business without any distractions.

The budget for the next biennium allocates \$250.7 billion (a 16% spending increase) and provides additional funding for educators and other school workers under local control of duly elected school boards. It provides billions in property tax relief and includes a reduction in "Robin Hood" recapture. This budget adds over a billion in disaster recovery funds, adds more money for state hospitals, and transportation. All of which was done without increasing sales taxes.

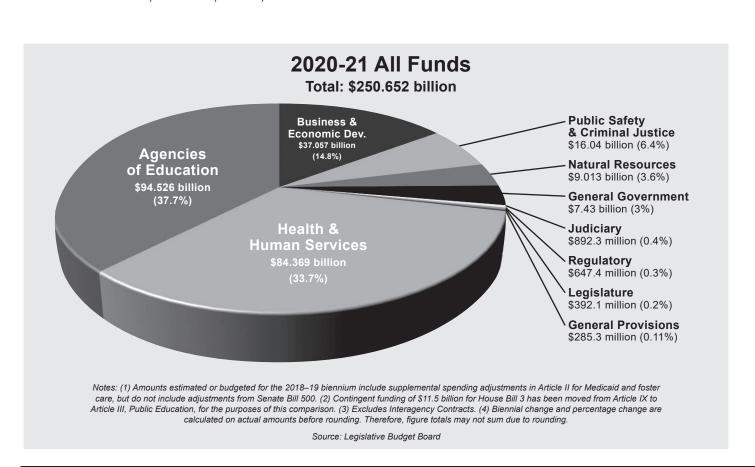
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One of the most important issues to our communities was fixing the public education system, something accomplished this session by adding funding for teachers and other educators, while reducing school taxes. The effort called the "Texas Plan" in House Bill 3, led by our friend Whether its teachers, librarians, nurses, or school councourt ordered



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TAX SYSTEM REFORM/TRANSPARENCY

Our system of notification for appraisals and appeals was largely considered unfair to many and the ability of taxing entities to continually raise tax rates dramatically impacted some of our most vulnerable Texans. Senate Bill 2 brought improved transparency to your tax bill so that you can now determine the source and amount of any increases to your taxes or tax rates in the future. At the same time, it curtailed the growth of the percentage of revenue to 3.5% that cities or counties can collect without bringing the increase before the voters for approval.

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This legislature addressed the effects of Hurricane Harvey in a number of different bills and many were successful. House Bill 5, provides better coordination and planning for wet debris management as well as developing templates for contracts with vendors and establishes a training program for local governments through the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, for trench burning and debris removal. House Bill 6 establishes a task force specifically for disaster recovery through the Texas Division of Emergency Management and permits the use of any state resources. I was proud to co-author and support both of these measures. The Senate also passed measures that affected disaster recovery, such as Senate Bill 6 which also relates to debris management and obtaining federal grants. Senate Bill 8 seeks to develop a state management plan and creates a networking group within regional watershed groups.

TEACHER RETIREMENT **SYSTEM**

Our retired teachers have suffered for years without a cost of living adjustment and many are greatly impacted by rising health care costs, prescription medication, and deductibles. Since most teachers in Texas are prohibited from participation in the Social Security System, even for their spouse, their retirement system is a critical source of income. Fixing the Teacher Retirement System started by making it sustainable because only when it is properly funded, can the legislature work on the cost of living adjustments. To improve their situation in the short term, this years budget included a 13th check for retired teachers, averaging about \$2,000.00 each.



Klein ISD School Board members, with Dr. Jenny McGown, our new School Superintendent and Brett Champion, our former one.

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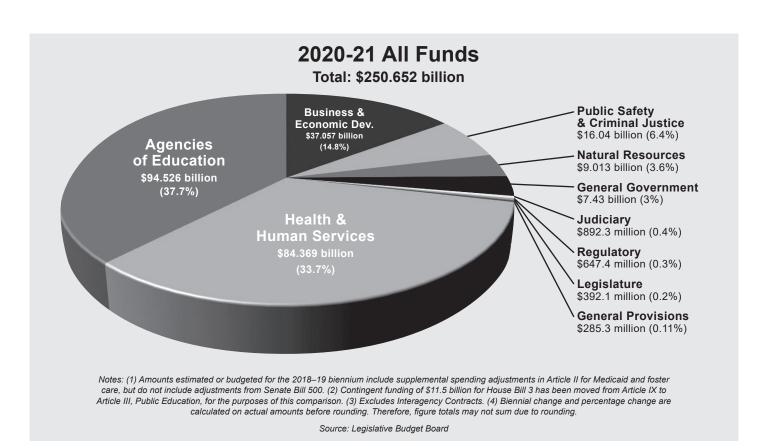
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