

SAM HARLESS

**State Representative District 126
July 2020 Newsletter**



Texas House of Representatives



District 126

**News
and
Information**



COVID's Continuing Impact On Texas

July brought us disappointing news as COVID's resurgence in Texas and other states threaten a second economic shutdown. In an effort to forego the dramatic economic impact we suffered from the first one, Governor Abbot, like many other governors across the country, issued a mandatory mask requirement when in public. His July 2nd order requires a mask for most people, affecting counties with 20 or more positive cases, with limited exceptions such as children younger than 10, those with medical conditions, etc. His full proclamation and exceptions can be seen here: [Governor's Order GA-29](#) The mask requirement as well as other local orders further infringing on personal liberties has been met with mixed response.

The Texas Comptroller came out with his annual review of anticipated revenues for the upcoming biennium, predicting a deficit of 4.6 billion dollars. The impact, caused largely by reduced income from sales tax due to the shutdown of businesses across the state coupled with dramatically lower oil revenues, will have a lasting affect on the state's next two year budget cycle. That impact will likely stress promises made to

schools and teachers during the last session and require creative budgeting to meet the needs of Texas. It will be no understatement to say the next legislative session will be one of the most challenging in years. There are now predictions that the session could be extended.

Hurricane Hanna

While sparing the Houston area, Hurricane Hanna made landfall Saturday, July 25th, between Corpus Christi and Padre Island. Hard hit areas such as Mission Texas and Hidalgo County, which were suffering with increased COVID activity, had widespread flooding and a number of high water rescues. It is a reminder how vulnerable we are living along the Texas coast.

Even through these continue to be challenging times, it remains my honor and privilege to serve the residents of District 126.

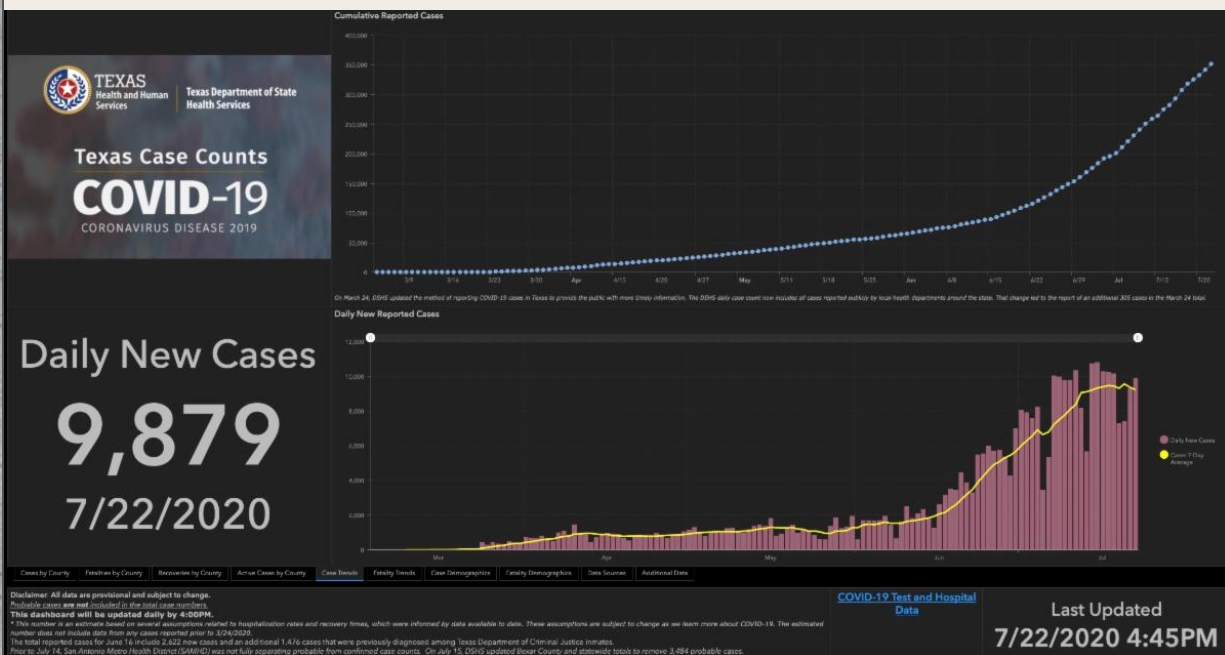
Sam Harless, State Representative

Please follow my Facebook page for daily updates and new information at: [Facebook.com/samharless126](https://www.facebook.com/samharless126)

or our Twitter Page at

twitter.com/SamHarless126

As your State Representative, I continue to maintain contact with our county and state officials and provide you details and updates from those calls. I try to keep you posted on updates to news and announcements about local actions and state efforts to contain this virus. I try to provide the highlights so you aren't inundated and hope you find our information useful. Like many of you I am concerned about the growing restrictions on our lives and I hope it yields an improvement in the spread of the virus soon.



COVID STATS & INFO

At the end of July the United States has surpassed 4 million cases. According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, now over three million tests have been

done as of July 22nd over 350,000 positive cases have been reported with over 4,300 deaths statewide. We currently are increasing at a rate of over 9,000 new cases per day at this point.

The five larger counties continue to be the hot spots in the state, with nearly 160,000 thousand cases between them and most of their County Judge's have reacted with tighter restrictions. Harris County's numbers are on the top of the list with 58,400 cases as of July 22nd.

In District 126 we have seen 35 reported deaths and 3,057 reported positive cases as of the end of July. We have also had 1,338 recovered cases in the District.

To find a testing site near you, follow this link:

[COVID Testing Locations](#)

Harris County's Threat level System, which can be found here: [READY HARRIS THREAT LEVEL](#), provides the current threat status to the County. Judge Hidalgo's executive order remains in place requiring business to have health and safety policies and to have their employees, customers, and visitors wear masks or face coverings. Executive Orders and other COVID related news for Harris County as well as the COVID Dashboard can always be found at www.readyharris.org.

The threat level currently is set to **RED** signifying a severe and uncontrolled level of COVID-19. This indicates you should minimize individual contact with those outside your family whenever possible in the Harris County area.

COVID-19 News and Resources

State of Texas Resources

Governor Abbott's Website for News

<https://gov.texas.gov/news>

Executive Orders (Proclamations)

<https://gov.texas.gov/news/category/proclamation>

Texas Unemployment Commission

District 126 has a population of 190,040 residents with an Unemployment Claim Count of 6,829 as of the end of June.

DPS

The Department of Public Safety has begun a phased re-opening of Driver's License Offices, offered by appointment only. Appointments can be made here:

<https://www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/appointments.htm>

DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles)

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) is open for most Regional Service Centers for in-person transactions by same-day or next-day appointment only. Appointments may be scheduled at www.TxDmv.gov/appointment. The temporary waiver of vehicle title and registration requirements remains in effect. TxDMV will notify the public when normal services have resumed. Texans will then have 60 days to complete any overdue vehicle title and registration transactions.

TEA (Texas Education Agency)

The Texas Education Agency now has a COVID-19 support page for student assessment for the STARR test with information about extensions. Here you can find guidance and resources organized by the following categories. Simply click on this link [TEA EXTENSION](#) to be taken directly to those resources below on the page. For questions, please email disasterinfo@tea.texas.gov.

The complete guidelines for business re-opening, with protocols and reopening dates can be found at the Department of State Health Services:

<https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/opentexas.aspx>

Texas Workforce Commission

TWC reports that the Texas economy added 291,000 private sector positions over the past month. In May, Texas saw a decrease in the state unemployment rate to 13.0 percent. This is the first decrease in the state unemployment rate since March 2020 when the Texas economy was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Texas is below the national rate of 13.3 percent.

The TWC call center can be reached seven days a week, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Central Time.

The TWC Unemployment Benefits System online portal is available 24 hours a day, but it is seeing lower traffic volume between the hours of 10 p.m. and 8 a.m.

TWC has paused their work search requirement which was recently reinstated and will revisit it in late July. This determines whether or not you are required to prove you are looking for a job to continue to receive unemployment benefits.

Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)

(If you are working full time, disregard this.)

General Information

Under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), you may be eligible for 13 weeks of additional benefits of Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) if you still are totally or partially unemployed.

For more information and to add or update your information, go to this site:

<https://apps.twc.state.tx.us/UBS/peuc/peucPublic.do>

“The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) encourages individuals previously deemed monetarily ineligible for unemployment benefits to reapply online starting Sunday, April 5, 2020. This date marks the beginning of a new quarter and as such the base period for unemployment benefits and those previously ineligible may now qualify.”

TWC Website to Apply for Benefits: [TWC Unemployment Benefits](#)

Texas Workforce TeleCenter - 800-939-6631

TWC has a new Chat service on their website in the bottom right of the screen, called "Chat With Us". This new function will be able to answer most general questions from individual.

<https://www.twc.texas.gov>

Texas Workforce Claims For July

Week

Starting Total Internet Telephone Other

7/4	117,244*	116,100	24,100	28,700
7/11	105,590*	80,800	17,900	44,800
7/18	142,000	86,900	21,800	33,300
7/25	68,800	35,000	8,700	25,100

Unless indicated, numbers are estimates based on internal TWC data and are subject to revision.

* Official Department of Labor Data when available and TWC Estimates.

Harris County Resources

Harris County and Harris Public Health has a lot of information available.

Harris County Public Health - [Harris Health Confirmed CoronaVirus Cases](#)

Harris Public Health Self Assessment Tool: [Self Assessment Tool](#)

Stay Home Order: <https://www.readyharris.org/stay-home>

Testing Sites

In Houston and Harris County, there currently are 6 testing FEMA supported sites with a capacity of 1,400 tests per day with enough supplies to last 20 more days. There are many times more tests being done by private labs outside the public testing sites. Along with their two permanent and four mobile testing sites, Harris County has partnered with Walgreens to create two additional drive through testing sites. These sites are a partnership project and are managed by Walgreens and results are available within 24 hours.

ReadyHarris Website: <https://www.readyharris.org/#resources>

Harris County Fire Marshal hotline to report businesses who are in violation of the "Stay Home, Work Safe" - 832-839-6941

Precinct 4 Commissioner Community Assistance - [Pct 4 Community assistance](#)

People can sign up to receive emergency alerts from Harris County at: [Ready Harris Alert Signup](#).

Also, 2-1-1 is a resource hotline set up by Harris County. If someone is in need of resources fast they can call that number and they will be connected to resources in their community. They can also text CV19 to 888-777. This hotline is available 24/7.

Federal Resources / Websites

CDC- Center for Disease Control: [CDC Coronavirus](#)

Small Business Administration: [SBA](#)

SBA Paycheck Protection Program - [Paycheck Protection Loans](#)

An SBA loan that helps businesses keep their workforce employed (during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.)

FEMA Corona Response: [FEMA CoronaVirus](#)

Around The District

If you've heard of outstanding businesses in our community, please email us and let us know so we can properly recognize them.

School Reopening

Judge Hidalgo issued a joint order on July 24th requiring all school districts to begin the year with virtual, or online, classes. In person, or face-to-face classes are not permitted until after September 7th. In response, all of our local school districts have developed a virtual learning approach in preparation for the opening of the fall semester.

You can see Superintendent Dr. Jenny McGown describe their plan in a video message regarding Klein ISD at this link: [Dr. Jenny McGown - Klein Reopening](#)

Cy-Fair ISD's website details their approach to school reopening in the "Lead Safely" plan available here: [Cy-Fair Lead Safely](#)

Tomball ISD calls their plan "Return to Excellence 2020-2021" and it is available at this link: [Tomball ISD Return to Excellence 2020-2021](#)

Fallen Warriors

Fallen Warrior Memorial

We attended the Fallen Warrior Memorial Celebration at the memorial on Cutten Rd on July 11th. Master Sergeant Strother, renowned artist Ken Pridgeon, Cheryl Whitfield, and a host of community members were on hand to celebrate our fallen.

The Fallen Warrior Memorial and the Fallen Warrior Art Gallery in the



14,500 block of Cutten Road are our community's best tributes to those families who have sacrificed a loved one in our military service.



Sergeant Major Ryan Sartor

Seen here is Terri Pryor receiving a flag flown over the Texas Capitol in recognition of her sacrifice in the loss of her son Sergeant Major James "Ryan" Sartor in service to our country. He is one of our fallen



warriors and should always be remembered.

Sergeant Major Sartor who had deployed on numerous occasions, was a highly decorated Green Beret assigned to the 10th Special Forces Group and lost his life to enemy fire in Afghanistan in 2019.



In The District

Precinct 4 Commissioner Capital Project Update

Thanks to Pamela Rocchi, Director for Capitol Improvement Projects for the update from Precinct 4 Commissioner Jack Cagle's Office.

Boudreaux Road 3 between Old Boudreaux Lane and Gleannloch Forest Drive at SH 99

- Summary: Proposed improvements include widening Boudreaux Road to a 4-lane concrete pavement section with improved drainage accommodations and traffic signal installation/modification as warranted.
- Status: Pre-Planning Phase
- Construction Timeline: TBD
- Construction Cost: TBD

Bourgeois Road between Cutten Road and West Richey Road

- Summary: Proposed improvements include upgrading Bourgeois Road as a 2-lane concrete pavement section with improved drainage accommodations and traffic signal installation/modification as warranted.
- Status: Study Phase
- Construction Timeline: TBD
- Construction Cost: TBD

Cutten Road between Bavaria Drive and Cossey Road

- Summary: Proposed improvements include the extension of Cutten Road as a 4-lane concrete pavement section with improved drainage accommodations and traffic signal installation/modification as warranted.
- Status: Pre-Planning Phase
- Construction Timeline: TBD
- Construction Cost: TBD

Cypress North Houston Road between Jones Road and FM 1960

- Summary: Planned improvements include widening and extending Cypress North Houston Road (formerly Lou Edd Road) as a 4-lane concrete pavement section with improved drainage accommodations and traffic signal installations at Misty Moss Drive, Autumn Mills Drive, and FM 1960.
- Status: Design Phase
- Construction Timeline: Goal to advertise for construction purposes in 2020 (barring any unforeseen circumstances).
- Construction Cost: TBD

Hollister Street 4 between Log Hollow Drive and Breen Drive

- Summary: Proposed improvements include extending Hollister Street as a 4-lane concrete pavement section with improved drainage accommodations and traffic signal installation/modification as warranted.
- Status: Pre-Planning Phase
- Construction Timeline: TBD
- Construction Cost: TBD

Hufsmith-Kohrville Road 2 between Hollow Glen Lane and Ezekiel Road

- Summary: Planned improvements include widening Hufsmith-Kohrville Road as a 4-lane concrete pavement section with improved drainage accommodations and traffic signal installations at Lacey Road and Ezekiel Road.
- Status: Design Phase
- Construction Timeline: Goal to advertise for construction purposes in 2020 (barring any unforeseen circumstances).
- Construction Cost: TBD

Hufsmith-Kohrville Road 3 between Ezekiel Road and Holderrieth Road

- Summary: Planned improvements include widening Hufsmith-Kohrville Road as a 4-lane concrete pavement section with improved drainage accommodations and traffic signal installation at Woodland Shore Drive.
- Status: Design Phase
- Construction Timeline: TBD
- Construction Cost: TBD

Fairbanks North Houston Road at Terrace Brook Drive

- Summary: Planned traffic signalization of intersection as warranted.
- Status: Design Phase
- Construction Timeline: TBD
- Construction Cost: TBD

Stuebner Airline Road at Oakwood Glen Boulevard

- Summary: Modernize existing traffic signal with pedestrian push button components and ADA-accessible ramps.
- Status: Design Phase
- Construction Timeline: Goal to begin construction in third quarter 2020 (barring any unforeseen circumstances).
- Estimated Construction Cost: \$40,000

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality 4 joint participation project with Texas Department of Transportation

Phase 4-1C – North Eldridge Parkway corridor between Clay Road and FM 1960, and between Grant Road and Spring Cypress Road

- Summary: Planned improvements include installation of new traffic signal systems, battery back-up installation for existing traffic signal systems, extension and installation of turn lanes, and installation of fiber optic interconnection system along the North Eldridge Parkway corridor.
- Status: Construction Phase
- Construction Timeline: April 8, 2019 – August 31, 2020
- Construction Cost: \$4,532,472

Phase 4-2D – SH 249 corridor between Antoine Drive and Spring Cypress Road, and FM 529 corridor between Greenhouse Road and North Eldridge Parkway

- Summary: Planned improvements include installation of additional turn lanes, turn lane extensions, and median modifications along the SH 249 and FM 529 corridors.
- Status: Construction Phase
- Construction Timeline: August 2019 – March 2022
- Construction Cost: \$3,618,458

Phase 4-2E – Beltway 8 corridor between West Gulf Bank Road and T.C. Jester Boulevard

- Summary: Planned improvements include installation of additional turn lanes, turn lane extensions, and median modifications along the Beltway 8 corridor.
- Status: Construction Phase
- Construction Timeline: August 2019 – March 2022
- Construction Cost: \$3,000,244

Phase 4-2F – SH 6 corridor between West Little York Road and West Road, and FM 1960 corridor between Fallbrook Drive and Kenswick Drive

- Summary: Planned improvements include installation of additional turn lanes, turn lane extensions, and median modifications along the SH 6 and FM 1960 corridors.
- Status: Construction Phase
- Construction Timeline: August 2019 – March 2022
- Construction Cost: \$2,000,868

Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce

Transportation and Mobility Committee

2nd Tuesday of each month

Meeting Location:



29201 Quinn Rd.
Tomball, Texas 77375
Upstairs Conference Room

Tomball Government Affairs
Committee

**Cy-Fair Chamber of Commerce
Transportation\Government Affairs
Committee**



The committee meets the 1st Thursday of each month to discuss governmental issues that confront their Cy-Fair area. They meet at the Chamber offices located at 8711 Highway 6 North, Ste. 120 Houston, TX 77095.

Cy-Fair Chamber Website



**Houston NW Chamber
Public Safety Forum**

Public Safety Forum Meeting:
4th Thursday each month
8:30 am - 9:30 am
Champions Emergency Services
District
12730 Champion Forest Dr.
Houston, TX 77066

Houston NW Chamber Website

Visit our House of Representative Website:

Contact Us

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