



GENE WU

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ DISTRICT 137



Issue 39

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

Friends,

I hope everyone had wonderful Spring Holidays with friends and family.

The end of the 86th legislative session is quickly approaching and we are eager to update you on our work.

Students from KIPP SHARP College Prep Lower School came to their State Capitol and performed songs in many languages. I had a great time listening to their performance.

We would also like to remember the former State Representative, Tom Bass. It was my privilege to host his family on the floor of the House of Representatives with a memorial resolution in his honor.

Hire Houston Youth is hiring over 10,000 Youth ages 16-24. Applications are being accepted at their website May 3, 2019 for Nonprofit and Private companies yet there may be more opportunities to apply in the future.

Cigna Sunday Streets is coming to Alief on May 19th. Come out for a great day of fun!

It is an honor to serve and represent you in the Texas Legislature, please reach out to my office at any time.

Sincerely,



Gene with members of the KIPP Sharp Singers performing in the Capitol Rotunda

In this Issue...

- Legislative Updates
- Honoring Tom Bass
- Hire Houston Youth
- Cigna Sunday Streets

Legislation For House District 137

The Appropriations bill is the only bill constitutionally required to pass. This is my second session serving on the Appropriations Committee. Through my work on the Appropriations Committee and with my fellow House members, we worked to develop a budget for the State of Texas. The process for developing a comprehensive budget for a state as large as Texas can be nuanced and complicated. However, I am proud of the work of my fellow Committee and House members. We deliberated from 8am until nearly midnight before passing the budget out of the House. The Senate has received our bill and passed their version of the budget, and now the two bodies will meet in a conference committee to pass a final product. As always, children were my number one priority when looking for increases to state dollars. I hope we can continue to prioritize the children in this state, and look forward to working with the Senate to make sure our state programs are properly funded.

Since beginning my tenure as a State Representative, I have always put children first, and this session is no exception.

Children as young as 10 years old are entering the juvenile system, and labeling youth at such a young age as criminals can have lasting detrimental effects on their development and later opportunities. I authored [HB 1364](#), a bipartisan bill, that changes the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 12 years of age. 10 and 11 year olds rarely commit serious crimes, and incarcerating children so young is a poor reflection of how our society treats children who need extra guidance.

[HB 759](#) is a bill to help protect our family service providers. State family service providers have a difficult and dangerous job working for the public; there have been reports of threats made against these workers, and they deserve the same protections others serving the public have, such as having their personal information kept private. HB 759 protects Child Protective Services (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS) workers' personal information, and helps them do their jobs without fear of personal attack.

Additionally, Senator Miles and I have worked together on two bills that affect our constituents:

- [HB 2580](#) relates to telephone services for people confined in county jails. Incarcerated individuals or their families must pay to have telephone access and an additional fee for every minute on the phone, creating an undue financial burden. Many inmates are awaiting trial, yet to be convicted of a crime. This bill mandates a county jail must provide each arrested person who is confined in the county jail pending trial with access to calls to their attorney and also allows them more access to call with their families while awaiting trial.
- [HB 4055](#), relates to the availability of medicine used to treat HIV or prevent AIDS under Medicaid. Currently, Texas Medicaid beneficiaries can access life-saving drugs, called antiretrovirals, immediately following the diagnosis of HIV. The immediate access to this medicine occurs because HIV medications have been treated as a "protected class" by Texas Medicaid. HB 4055 matches the state statute with the protections in federal regulation by providing a protected

class status to antiretrovirals in Texas Medicaid. A protected class status will continue to give providers the ability to treat patients with the best medications immediately following an HIV diagnosis.

If you want to learn more about the bills I have introduced, click on the picture below and type in the house bill number. You can follow the bills' progress through the committee process and see how members vote.



The screenshot shows the 'Research' section of the Texas House of Representatives website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for ABOUT, MEMBERS, COMMITTEES, NEWS, RESEARCH, RESOURCES, SCHEDULES, VIDEO/AUDIO, HELP, and SEARCH. The 'Research' section is divided into two main columns. The left column contains 'Bills Search' and 'Legislature'. 'Bills Search' includes links for 'Advanced', 'Bill Number', and 'Keyword', along with brief descriptions of their functions. 'Legislature' includes links for 'Bills by Author', 'Bills by Coauthor', 'Bills by Sponsor', and 'Bills by Cosponsor'. The right column contains 'House Research Organization', which includes links for 'About HRO', 'Bill Analysis', 'Floor Reports By Date', 'How to Use the HRO Pages', 'HRO Website', 'Latest Floor Reports', and 'Recent Research Reports'. Each link is accompanied by a brief description of the resource.

Honoring Tom Bass



Houston lost a good friend this year. It was my privilege to honor former State Representative Tom Bass with a memorial resolution read before the Texas House. Representative Bass served honorably from 1963 to 1973. During the 62nd Legislature, he was a founding member of the "Dirty Thirty," who crossed party lines to force out several prominent state leaders enmeshed in the Sharpstown stock-fraud scandal. He ran successfully for County Commissioner, Precinct 1 two years later and after ten years stepped down to teach political science at St. Thomas University. Read the resolution honoring Tom Bass [here](#).

Hire Houston Youth

With school letting out for summer next month, I wanted to share a great summer jobs program that the City of Houston has created for the summer. Hire Houston Youth offers young adults ages 16 to 24 internship and job opportunities at public and private employers throughout the Houston area. All positions offer at least 7 weeks of employment, and employers are asked to compensate youth at least \$8.00 an hour. Most opportunities begin June 10, 2019 and end August 1, 2019. The application will close May 3, 2019 for nonprofit companies and May 10, 2019 for private companies. Youth may apply [here](#). Keep an eye on their website (hirehoustonyouth.org), as additional opportunities and support will appear when available throughout the year.

Cigna Sunday Streets

Cigna Sunday Streets Houston opens a stretch of streets normally reserved for cars and other vehicles to allow cycling, walking, dancing, socializing and provides a family-friendly opportunity to be physically active. Come out and enjoy a great day!

CIGNA SUNDAY STREETS

CELEBRATE THE STREETS OF HOUSTON
MARCH 24 • APRIL 28 • MAY 19
SPRING 2019



During Cigna Sunday Streets, a major thoroughfare is closed to motorized traffic. Without cars on the road, you'll be able to enjoy walking, running, dancing or cycling with friends and family. Cigna Sunday Streets promotes being physically active, meeting your neighbors, and exploring your community. Please help spread the word and visit houstonspecialevents.org for more information.



Don't forget to follow Cigna Sunday Streets on social media:

#SSHTX @SundayStreetHTX SundayStreetsHTX @SundayStreetsHTX

Thanks to our Partners



Produced by Mayor's Office of Special Events
 Houston Civic Events, Inc. non-profit partner