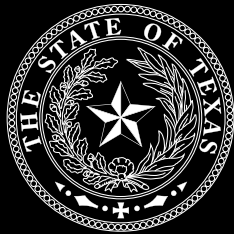


TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

★
VALOREE SWANSON



NORTHERN HARRIS COUNTY · DISTRICT 150



2021 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dear Constituent,

It is a true honor to represent you in the Texas House of Representatives!

When this session began, Texans were caught in the wake of a contentious national election in which many laws designed to protect the integrity of the election in this state were broken. The state also faced major challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the government-imposed economic shutdown.

As Legislators were still in the early stages of filing bills to address those problems, all of Texas was blanketed by the cold-weather disaster, Winter Storm Uri. I lost power at home sometime late the first night of the storm, as did my mother, children, staff, and much of the district. The Capitol could not even be accessed due to icy roads and entrances.

I spent the next week in constant contact with CenterPoint Energy, ERCOT, phone and water providers, and other state and local officials, getting information and answers to constituents and working on solutions to get the power back on.

When Legislators returned to the Capitol the week following the storm, official investigations began. The Committees on State Affairs and Energy Resources uncovered the many causes and developed solutions. In the following pages of this newsletter, you can read more about the reforms that were passed to strengthen the independent Texas grid and help prevent similar future disasters.

While that important work was being done, the Legislature passed many other major victories for Texans:

- *Banning abortion after a heartbeat is detected (Senate Bill 8)*
- *Restoring Constitutional Carry (House Bill 1927)*
- *Expanding telemedicine (House Bill 4)*
- *Proclaiming Texas a Second Amendment Sanctuary State (House Bill 2622)*
- *Designating houses of worship as essential services and preventing local closure orders (House Bills 525 & 1239)*
- *Appropriating \$11 Billion in CARES Act funding for Texas public schools*
- *Increasing state contribution rates to the Teacher Retirement System*
- *Preventing taxes on PPP loans and replenishing the state unemployment fund without hurting small businesses (House Bills 1195 & 7)*
- *Designating gun stores as essential businesses to prevent closure orders (House Bill 1500)*

The Legislature passed many other great bills you can read about in the following pages!

One of my major focuses remains protecting women's sports, which is why I have filed several bills to stop biological males from competing in female athletics in high school and college. At the time of writing this, the Fair Play in Women's Sports Act has not yet passed, but rest assured, it will be filed again and again until it does!

I am excited and remain committed to defend and expand economic liberty and opportunity for generations of Texans to come!

Sincerely,

Valoree Swanson

Rep. Valoree Swanson



State Representative
VALOREE SWANSON
Constitutional Amendment Guide

*The following are Constitutional Amendment Propositions on the ballot this November 2, 2021.
Please cut this page out and save it for your reference before the election!*

PROPOSITION	TOPIC
Proposition 1 (HJR 143)	The constitutional amendment authorizing the professional sports team charitable foundations of organizations sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association or the Women's Professional Rodeo Association to conduct charitable raffles at rodeo venues.
Proposition 2 (HJR 99)	The constitutional amendment authorizing a county to finance the development or redevelopment of transportation or infrastructure in unproductive, underdeveloped, or blighted areas in the county.
Proposition 3 (SJR 27)	The constitutional amendment to prohibit this state or a political subdivision of this state from prohibiting or limiting religious services of religious organizations.
Proposition 4 (SJR 47)	The constitutional amendment changing the eligibility requirements for a justice of the supreme court, a judge of the court of criminal appeals, a justice of a court of appeals, and a district judge.
Proposition 5 (HJR 165)	The constitutional amendment providing additional powers to the State Commission on Judicial Conduct with respect to candidates for judicial office.
Proposition 6 (SJR 19)	The constitutional amendment establishing a right for residents of certain facilities to designate an essential caregiver for in-person visitation.
Proposition 7 (HJR 125)	The constitutional amendment to allow the surviving spouse of a person who is disabled to receive a limitation on the school district ad valorem taxes on the spouse's residence homestead if the spouse is 55 years of age or older at the time of the person's death.
Proposition 8 (SJR 35)	The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a member of the armed services of the United States who is killed or fatally injured in the line of duty.

*For more details about each proposition, visit <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/BillNumber.aspx>
and search by the HJR or SJR number listed above.*

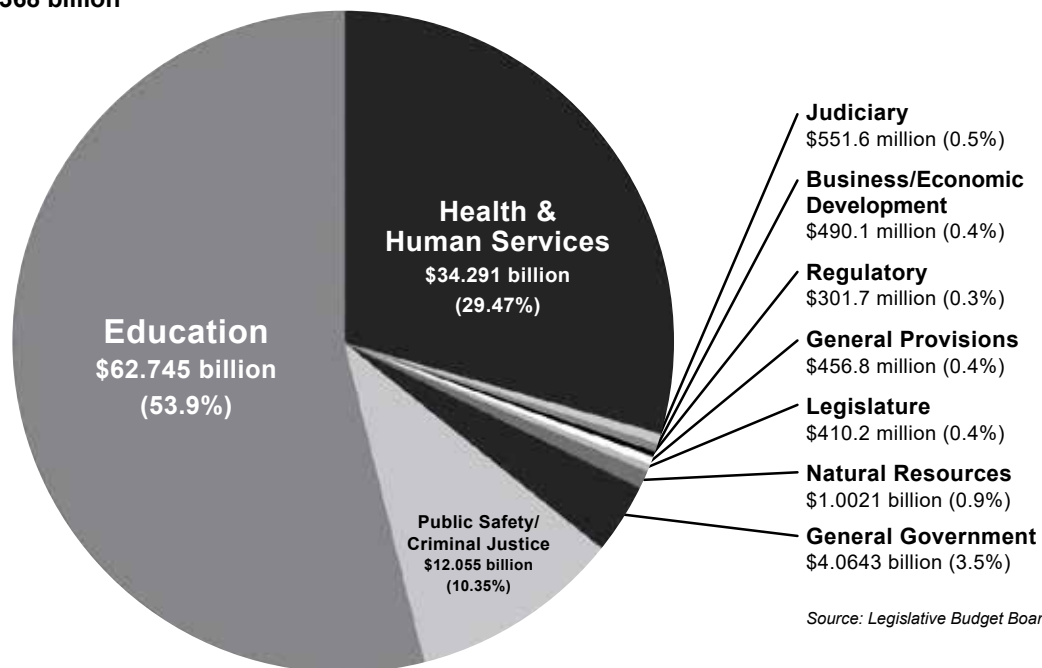


The Texas Budget

The Texas budget is balanced, well below constitutional spending limits, and it funds state agencies and programs in a fiscally responsible manner. Even with a \$15.5 Billion decrease in federal funds, the Legislature increased the state's commitment to health care and education, while maintaining a balance of \$11.6 Billion in the Rainy Day Fund. Here are some highlights: \$1 Billion for border security operations, \$664 million to help students and schools affected by COVID-19, \$464 million for increases to Foundation School Program formula funds, \$4.2 million to enhance the Public Utility Commission in the wake of Winter Storm Uri, \$164.2 million to lower CPS caseworker workloads and expand community-based care, \$30.2 billion for highway planning and construction, \$57.6 million to combat human trafficking, and \$139.2 million for increased law enforcement salaries, among many other items.

2022-23 General Revenue

Total: \$116.368 billion



Texas Power Grid Reforms

- Senate Bills 2 and 3 make numerous reforms to the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) and the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), like requiring board members of ERCOT be Texas residents, creating alert systems, and designating natural gas facilities as critical during an emergency.
- House Bill 17 ensures homeowners, builders, and businesses have the ability to decide how best to meet their energy needs by preserving customer choice and access to energy sources in Texas.
- House Bill 1510 provides the funding mechanism necessary to ensure the winterization of Texas' power grids.
- House Bill 1520 provides securitization financing for gas utilities to recover extraordinary costs from Winter Storm Uri and requires a study of measures to mitigate similar future costs.
- House Bill 16 protects consumers from sky-high electric bills and extreme fluctuations in electricity prices.

Election Integrity

- Deceased persons can now be more efficiently removed from the voter rolls, thanks to the passage of House Bill 1264!
- The Legislature also increased penalties for conducting fraudulent activity in elections by passing House Bill 574!
- House Bill 2283 bans "Zuckerbucks." It prevents election administrators from accepting large donations from private entities seeking to influence our elections.

Low-Income Housing

Each year, my office receives applications from developers to construct low-income, government-subsidized housing in our district. After receiving each application, I have spoken with community leaders and gathered feedback from local residents and have consistently received overwhelming opposition to these developments. Therefore, under the Section 42 (9%) law, I have written letters of opposition which have prevented each project from being approved or constructed. Each session, I have led the charge to stop any legislation that would strip local and state officials of their rights to represent their constituents in this process.

87TH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Public Safety

Last year, rioters successfully pressured big cities, including Austin, Texas, into defunding their police. House Bill 1900 puts a stop to that and affirms the Legislature’s commitment to public safety.

House Bill 9 creates a penalty for rioters who block the road and prevent emergency vehicles from performing their duties.

Unregulated urban camping is detrimental for the homeless and for local residents. The human waste, drug needles, and crime are a threat to public health and safety. It has only enabled and encouraged more homeless to pour into the cities that allow it. This might be acceptable for California, but not for Texans. House Bill 1925 stops cities from allowing it.

House Bill 1927 ensures that law-abiding Texans are able to carry their legal handguns without jumping through government hoops. I was a proud coauthor and supporter of Constitutional Carry!

Other Session Highlights

- Senate Bill 1336 limits the growth of state spending to population plus inflation.
- Senate Bill 6 provides retroactive lawsuit protections for large and small businesses, religious institutions, non-profits, healthcare providers, first responders, and education institutions that operated safely during the pandemic.
- The following bills tighten up the property tax reform law passed last session, strengthen taxpayer protections, provide additional relief, and create more transparency and flexibility: House Bills 988, 1869, and 2723, and Senate Bills 63, 742, 1438, 1449, 938, 611, 794, and Senate Joint Resolution 35.

Swanson Bills Passed into Law

- House Bill 29 provides jurors (and other Texans) the ability to store their firearms in storage lockers at county courthouses, rather than having to leave them in their vehicles where they can be stolen and end up on our streets.
- House Bill 1306 raises the offense of assaulting a process server to a felony. These individuals play a crucial role in the judicial process, serving papers to individuals to appear before a court. They often have weapons drawn on them, are assaulted or threatened, and have dogs sicced on them, among other dangers.
- Senate Bill 1761 makes campaign finance reports more transparent and less confusing so that voters and candidates can understand exactly how the money is spent.
- Senate Bill 2093 will ensure fairness and good government by requiring all candidates to pay the same filing fee that candidates in the two major parties are already required to pay.
- House Bill 1400 increases the penalty for impersonating a private investigator. Unlicensed private investigators defraud the public by unlawfully acquiring evidence, which can then get thrown out in court. It is important to protect the public from being shaken down by these perpetrators.
- House Bill 3340 protects a Texan’s right to appeal a dangerous dog decision and will ensure that dogs are not euthanized before an appeal can be filed. Many people consider their dogs to be a part of the family. To have one destroyed without the opportunity to appeal is a violation of due process, and it is just plain wrong.
- House Bill 4544 helps rehabilitated children, who are released from the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, and who are in the country legally, to receive identification documents. Helping these rehabilitated juveniles get identification will help them find jobs and stay off welfare.



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 REP VALOREE SWANSON
 PO BOX 2910
 AUSTIN TX 78768-2910

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DISTRICT 150 SURVEY FOR UPCOMING SESSION

Survey Instructions

Your opinion is very important and will help guide me on policy next session. Please fill out the survey below and fold the paper into thirds, with the mailing label facing outward. Then, tape it shut and drop it in the mail with a stamp. I look forward to hearing from you!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

1. Do you support abolishing the property tax system in favor of a consumption or sales tax?
 YES NO

2. Should the Legislature continue to supplement border security operations if the federal government refuses to act?
 YES NO

3. Should the Legislature protect historical monuments from displacement and destruction?
 YES NO

4. Should the Legislature end taxpayer subsidies to companies moving to Texas?
 YES NO

5. Should all future taxpayer-funded roads be toll-free, even if it takes much longer for the roads to be built?
 YES NO

6. Should the Legislature pass stronger pro-life laws?
 YES NO

7. If so, do you support abolishing abortion, except when medically necessary to save the life of the mother?
 YES NO

8. If so, do you support abolishing abortion and charging the mother with a crime?
 YES NO

9. Should the Legislature protect Texas' independence from the national power grid or join the national grid?
 Remain Independent Join National Grid

10. Should the Legislature protect female athletes by preventing biological males from competing on girls' and women's teams in public schools and colleges?
 YES NO

11. Do you generally support or oppose the development of low-income, government subsidized housing projects in your area?
 Support Oppose





State Representative ★ District 150
VALOREE SWANSON

CAPITOL OFFICE:
 P.O. Box 2910
 Austin, Texas 78768
 (512) 463-0572



DISTRICT OFFICE:
 23008 Northcrest Dr.
 Spring, Texas 77389
 (281) 257-4222

DISTRICT150.SWANSON@HOUSE.TEXAS.GOV

*Committees: Elections; Juvenile Justice & Family Issues, Vice Chair;
 Resolutions Calendars*

2021 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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VALOREE SWANSON
State Representative



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HELPFUL NUMBERS & WEBSITES

State Representative Valoree Swanson • District 150 • (512) 463-0572 • www.house.texas.gov

Texas Dept. of Aging and Disability Services (800) 458-9858www.dads.state.tx.us/index.cfm	Texas Dept. of State Health Services (DSHS) (888) 963-7111www.dshs.state.tx.us
Texas Dept. of Agriculture (800) 835-5832 www.texasagriculture.gov	Texas Dept. of Insurance (800) 252-3439 http://www.tdi.texas.gov/
Office of the Attorney General www.oag.state.tx.us	Texas Legislature www.capitol.texas.gov
<i>Child Support Enforcement</i> (800) 252-8014	Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (800) 792-1112
<i>Consumer Protection</i> (800) 621-0508 www.tpwd.state.tx.us
<i>Crime Victims</i> (800) 983-9933	Texas Dept. of Public Safety www.txdps.state.tx.us
<i>Consumer Protection Hotline</i> (800) 621-0508	Texas Public Utility Commission (888) 782-8477 http://www.puc.texas.gov/
Texas Education Agency (512) 463-9734www.tea.state.tx.us	Texas Department of Transportation (800) 452-9292 www.dot.state.tx.us
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) (512) 239-1000www.tceq.state.tx.us	Voting and Election Information (800) 252-8683 www.dod.state.tx.us
Texas Dept. of Family and Protective Services (800) 252-5400 https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/	Texas Workforce Commission (800) 832-2829 www.twc.state.tx.us
Texas Health and Human Services Commission www.hhs.state.tx.us	

