



si-ne die   \sī-nī-'dī(-ē), -sī-nā-'dē-ā\

adverb

: without any future date being designated (as for resumption) : **indefinitely** <the meeting adjourned *sine die*>

Origin: Latin, without day.







First use: 1607



"The 83rd Legislature adjourned "Sine Die" today, and with the closing of the session, we have made District 36 and Texas a better place. We were able to craft a balanced budget that restored a significant portion of the public education budget and pass SB 24, merging the Valley universities and creating our long-awaited medical school. My HB 474 authorized an overweight corridor in Hidalgo County, accommodating economic growth through the produce and agricultural sectors. It has been an honor to serve the people of District 36, and the stress and late nights associated with the session are bearable because I am able to take pride in the fact that I am making District 36, the Valley, and the State of Texas a better place. Thank you for your continued support, and I encourage you to contact our office with any of your concerns. Have a fantastic weekend, and may God bless you and your family!"

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

MAJOR STATE

-  **S.B. 1 - The Budget:** Both Chambers negotiated and finalized a budget deal between one another and Governor Rick Perry. This budget sees a \$3.8 billion increase from last biennium to public education, funds critical health & human services programs (including a significant increase in mental health services), provides for a long-awaited state water plan in conjunction with H.B. 4, H.B. 1025, & S.J.R. 1, increases the state's contribution to the teacher retirement system, and funds Rep. Muñoz items critical to the valley such as the surplus ag grant program for food banks and the EDAP program.
Status: This bill has passed out of both chamber and will now be sent to the comptroller for certification then the governor for final approval.
-  **S.B. 24/H.B. 1000 - Creation of the New University and Medical School in the Valley:** The House and Senate finally passed S.B. 24, a bill that will merge UTPA & UTB into a new university and create a medical school in the Valley. The bill includes an amendment that will spread medical school education throughout the Valley's current and future medical institutions.
Status: S.B. 24 has been sent to the Governor's desk for signature.
-  **H.B. 5 - School Testing:** This education legislation reduces the number of standardized tests that our children and teachers are overburdened by. Rep. Muñoz co-authored this legislation because it reduces the dependence on high stakes testing, reducing the number of tests from 15 to 5, giving more curriculum control to the teachers and promoting student success and initiative.
Status: H.B. 5 has been sent to the Governor's desk for final approval.
-  **S.B. 7 - Medicaid Reform:** S.B. 7 attempts to improve the coordination of Medicaid long-term care services and supports with acute care services, redesign the long-term care services and supports system to more efficiently serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and expand on quality-based payment initiatives to promote high-quality, efficient care throughout Medicaid. S.B. 7 seeks to accomplish this by amending current law relating to improving the delivery and quality of certain health and human services, including the delivery and quality of Medicaid acute care services and long-term services and supports.
Status: S.B. 7 has been sent to the Governor's desk for final approval.
-  **S.B. 1458 - TRS Reform:** S.B. 1458 seeks to make revisions to current TRS law relating to contributions to, benefits from, and the administration of systems and programs by the system. Though compromises were made by all interested parties, this bill will make the Teacher Retirement System more sound, and increases the state's contribution to the Teacher Retirement System. Since the Texas Retired Teachers Association and the Texas State Teachers Association were in favor of the bill, Rep. Muñoz was happy to support the positive aspects of this legislation.
Status: S.B. 1458 has been sent to the Governor's desk for final approval.
-  **H.B. 4/S.J.R. 1/H.B. 1025 - The Water Bills:** During the 2011 drought, Texas saw an economic loss of over \$11 billion. Rep. Muñoz and the Legislature decided to implement a form of the 2012 State Water Plan through H.B. 4 in an attempt to address the state's water needs now in an effort to avoid the severe economic damage another drought would bring to the state. H.B. 4 lays down the framework for the plan while S.J.R. 1 allows use of the Rainy Day Fund for water through a Constitutional Amendment and voter approval. The water plan is fuelled by H.B. 1025, which will appropriate \$2 billion to water if the voters approve S.J.R. 1.
Status: The measure awaits approval of the governor and the voters of Texas.

MY LEGISLATION

LOCAL IMPACT

- S HB 474 - Overweight Truck Corridor:** Currently, differences in truck weight limits in Texas and Mexico are requiring RGV based produce companies to unload and split their shipments in Mexico prior to crossing the border. This bill will create an overweight truck corridor within Hidalgo County that will allow trucks to proceed to Texas before having to split their loads. This corridor will save Texas, agricultural and other manufacturing companies money and make Hidalgo County the premiere port of entry for produce and other products from south of the border.
Status: HB 474 has been sent to the Governor for final approval.
- S H.J.R. 87/H.B. 1372 - City Vacancies:** HJR 87 and its enabling legislation, HB 1372, are common sense legislation that allow certain Home Rule Cities the option to fill vacancies with a remaining term of 12 months or by appointment. This change will allow cities to stop the expensive process of holding a special election if the term is less than 12 months.
Status: HB 1372 will be sent to the Governor for approval; HJR 87 will be in front of the people of Texas for final approval.
- S H.B. 3674 - Historic Courthouses:** Would allow a limited number of cities to qualify for the Historic Courthouse Preservation and Maintenance Programs, including the 1886 Hidalgo County Courthouse in Hidalgo.
Status: HB 3674 passed the House and the Senate and has been sent to the Governor for his signature.
- S H.B. 2094 - Roadside Vendors:** Allows Hidalgo County to enforce Transportation Code 285.001 to regulate the sale of items by a vendor of food or merchandise in the unincorporated area of the county if they occur on a public highway or a road with a speed limit of 40 miles per hour or faster.
Status: HB 2094 has been signed by the House and Senate and is being sent to the Governor for final approval.
- S HB 442-Trooper Chavez:** Texas Highway Patrol Trooper Eduardo Chavez was killed in the line of duty in May 2006, having suffered fatal injuries in a traffic accident that occurred on U.S. Highway 83. This bill designates a portion of U.S. Highway 83 as the Trooper Eduardo Chavez Memorial Highway to honor his life and service.
Status: HB 442 has been signed by the House and Senate and is being sent to the Governor for final approval.
- S HB 995- Water District 19:** Relating to the powers and duties of the Hidalgo County Water Control and Improvement District No. 19. HB 995 will allow additional road infrastructure development in District 36.
Status: This bill has been sent to the governor for final approval.
- S SCR 46/HCR 219- Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence:** HCR supports the establishment of the Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence in Pharr, that will be administered by South Texas College. The center will develop and provide initial and continuing education and training, credit of which could be used towards an Associate of Applied Science Degree and basic peace officer certification for law enforcement personnel in the Rio Grande Valley.
Status: Was finally passed by the legislature on Sine Die, Monday the 27th of May.

THE HISTORIC PASSAGE OF S.B. 24

The Valley delegation and the joint authors of S.B. 24, creating a medical school in the Valley, celebrate the historic passage of this bill on the House floor. It was a long, hard process, but thanks to the hard work of your legislators, the Valley will secure a Tier 1 institution with access to the Permanent University Fund. The legislators' excitement can be seen in this picture as the Members hold up one finger, signifying one last "Aye" vote on the most important bill of the session.



TEAM SERGIO



Special Thanks to Our Legislative Session Staff

Our work at the Capitol could not have been accomplished without the dedication & hard work of a team of Legislative Interns:

DYLAN MATTHEWS - A MALC Fellow from Mission Tx. who will be attending law school in the fall.

ARTURO GARCIA - A recent graduate of the University of Texas at Austin who is staying at the Capitol this summer.

GARRETT BRAWLEY - From Buna Texas, our TLIP Fellow will be attending the University of Texas School of Law this fall.

DEANNA MARKOWITZ & ABDUAL MUHALDIN (Not Pictured) - Our UT Law and Austin Community College interns.