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CAPITOL NEWSLETTER

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Over the past two weeks, my staff and I have been hard at work getting our bills out of committee. I am excited to announce that several of our bills have been voted favorably out of committee and are on their way to the House floor. I am also happy to inform you that my legislation allowing the City of Pharr to establish a Foreign-Trade Zone has passed the House and is on its way to the Senate. With just 44 days before the end of session, my staff, colleagues, and I will be working late into the night to pass legislation that will shape the future of the state of Texas. Thank you for reading!



## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

### PHARR FOREIGN-TRADE ZONE BILL PASSES HOUSE

On Thursday, April 17 the House passed HB 2515, which allows the city of Pharr to apply for a federal grant to establish a Foreign-Trade Zone adjacent to the Pharr International Bridge. “The establishment of a Foreign-Trade Zone in Pharr will allow South Texas to compete with other major ports of entry in terms of recruiting new business to the area,” said Representative Muñoz. “Allowing business to benefit from less stringent U.S. Customs regulations will help to ensure that our U.S. companies do not send jobs overseas.” A Foreign-Trade Zone is a designated area that is outside of U.S. Customs control in which duties and excise taxes are not assessed until the merchandise leaves the zone. HB 2515 is on its way to the Senate.

### STC REGIONAL CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY EXCELLENCE BILL SET FOR VOTE ON FLOOR

Representative Muñoz laid out HB 1887 in the Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee on April 7. This bill establishes a

Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence that will provide law enforcement training. This center will be operated jointly by South Texas College, the City of Pharr, and other community partners. “The need for additional professionally trained law enforcement officers is clear,” said Representative Muñoz. The Texas Workforce Commission projects an estimated 22% increase in law enforcement officers in the next ten years.

### TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM ANNUITIES BILL VOTED OUT OF COMMITTEE

HB 2168, which relates to Teacher Retirement System annuity payment dates has been voted favorably out of committee. This bill will allow retirees quick access to their benefits by making the payment date on the last weekday of the month. Currently, retirees receive their payments on the first day of the month and weekends can prolong the payment process. “Changing the payment date is a simple, equitable solution to a common problem among our retired teachers,” stated Representative Muñoz.



Media students from PSJA T-STEM were in Austin this week for the Texas Media Awards. These talented students placed in video recording, multimedia, book trailers, and photography categories.



Representative Muñoz presented a House Resolution to Mission Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in honor of their tier two designation as part of the American Health Care Association.



Constituents with the Texas Association of Relators from District 36 visited the Capitol to present their legislative agenda this week.