



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## SERGIOMUÑOZJR

State Representative District 36

86<sup>TH</sup> SESSION | #3 | MARCH 17, 2019

### A MESSAGE FROM REPRESENTATIVE MUÑOZ

These past two weeks have been quite busy at the Texas Capitol! We have reached the 60th day of the 86th Texas Legislative session, which is the bill filing deadline in the House. This important deadline also means that the House can begin passing bills that are not a part of Governor Abbott's priority items. On the next page, I have provided a list of all the bills that I filed this session.



From this point moving forward, we can expect much more debate on the House floor on some key pieces of legislation. Committee hearings have ramped up and we are close to finalizing the House version of the state budget in the House Appropriations Committee. As always, I will continue to keep you up-to-date through this newsletter and via social media. Hoping all students, teachers, and parents had a safe and enjoyable Spring Break. God Bless!

### DISTRICT 36 VISITORS AT THE TEXAS CAPITOL

These busy past two weeks have been made much more interesting by your visits! (1) I was honored to invite Flora Flores up to the Capitol to honor her with a House Resolution for her 45<sup>th</sup> year anniversary working for HEB. (2) Mission Leadership Class 36 took their annual trip to the Capitol and joined me on the floor. (3) La Joya ATPE members visited my office as part of their ATPE lobby day. (4) Mission CISD School Board members dropped by our office during their TASA/TASB Legislative Conference. (5) I spoke with Pat Almendarez with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network regarding issues important to the organization. (6) Local members of Texas AFT came up to Austin for their annual lobby day!



## BILLS FILED FOR THE 86TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The bill filing deadline for the 86<sup>th</sup> legislative session has passed and I am proud of the hard work my staff and I, along with community partners and constituents, have put into these meaningful pieces of legislation. Over the next few weeks, I will keep you up-to-date on the status of these bills as they make their way through the legislative process.

#### HB 597

Makes an annual determination of a cost-of-living adjustment applicable to certain benefits paid by TRS to ensure that when inflation rates increase, members and their beneficiaries are able to maintain financial security post retirement.

#### HB 1124

Seeks to discourage insurance companies from simply paying nominal fees by holding insurance carriers liable for damages to an insured if their out-of-network policy benefits are ignored.

#### HB 1718

Enables patients the ability to shop their medical costs through a public portal that lists contract reimbursements. The bill provides transparency and mitigates surprise medical billing by containing out-of-pocket costs and increasing patient access.

#### HB 2151

Will ensure that insurance plans are only seeking recoupment on claims that are actually overpaid by prohibiting a health maintenance organization from conducting a sample audit and extrapolating those findings across the remaining un-reviewed portion of the claim.

#### HB 2193

Will increase the current baccalaureate capacity at community colleges like South Texas College from five to seven degrees to ensure that the state possesses the capacity to facilitate the growing need for skilled professionals.

#### HB 2356

This bill would allow for overtime pay to be included in the computation of benefits for DPS and Game Warden employees working overtime providing law enforcement services in counties along the Texas-Mexico border.

#### HB 3228

Gives consumers the right to participate in the title insurance rate hearing process by providing standing to the public to appear, offer evidence at rate hearings, and to request a rate hearing be held to consider a rate change more frequently than five years.

## HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

Earlier this week, the House Appropriations Committee adopted several riders meant to improve overall state functions and provide additional revenue for local grants. With the markup process complete, we will consider the committee substitute for HB 1 in the upcoming week, which will draw us closer to the infamous "budget night".

Some of the riders include:

- Additional funding for border prosecution grants;
- Local grants for eligible non-profits to promote border economic development;
- An appropriation of \$1,000,000 for grants to professional fire departments in the border region to assist in the acquisition of specialized equipment, maintenance, and medical supplies to support emergency services associated with the execution of security activities in the border region;
- An additional 2 million dollars to provide grants to reimburse district attorneys for costs associated with testing forensic evidence;
- An additional appropriation of \$3,000,000 for veterans treatment courts grants;
- \$500,000 to establish pilot programs that work with juveniles at the Juvenile Justice Department to provide trade skills and counseling to reduce recidivism;
- Increase appropriations to prioritize the testing of Sexual Assault Kits and Improve Crime Lab Services at the Texas Department of Public Safety labs.

### CONSTITUENT INPUT



Is there a particular bill and/or issue you're passionate about? Feel free to let us know! Your participation keeps us informed about district needs and concerns.

Call us at 512-463-0704 or email us at [distric36.munoz@house.texas.gov](mailto:distric36.munoz@house.texas.gov)

### ANTIQUE CHAIR



Our office has a new addition from the State Preservation Board, an antique chair rich with Texas history. This piece of furniture is part of the State Capitol's personal collection of antiquities and is proudly situated inside the Representative's office.