



Your District 45 Weekly Update

Happy Friday, y'all!

I'm checking in with news from the capitol and around the district. I've laid out three more bills for committee consideration — two related to pipelines and one to dark sky preservation. I joint-authored a bill on aggregate industry oversight, and I danced with Lark one of my favorite bands, Asleep at the Wheel, at the Denim & Diamonds Gala in Dripping Springs! All that and more below.

Thank you for being engaged, and I hope you'll stay in touch.

For a better Texas,

Erin Zwiener

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Hays & Blanco Counties

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Click [here](#) to sign up for our office newsletter!

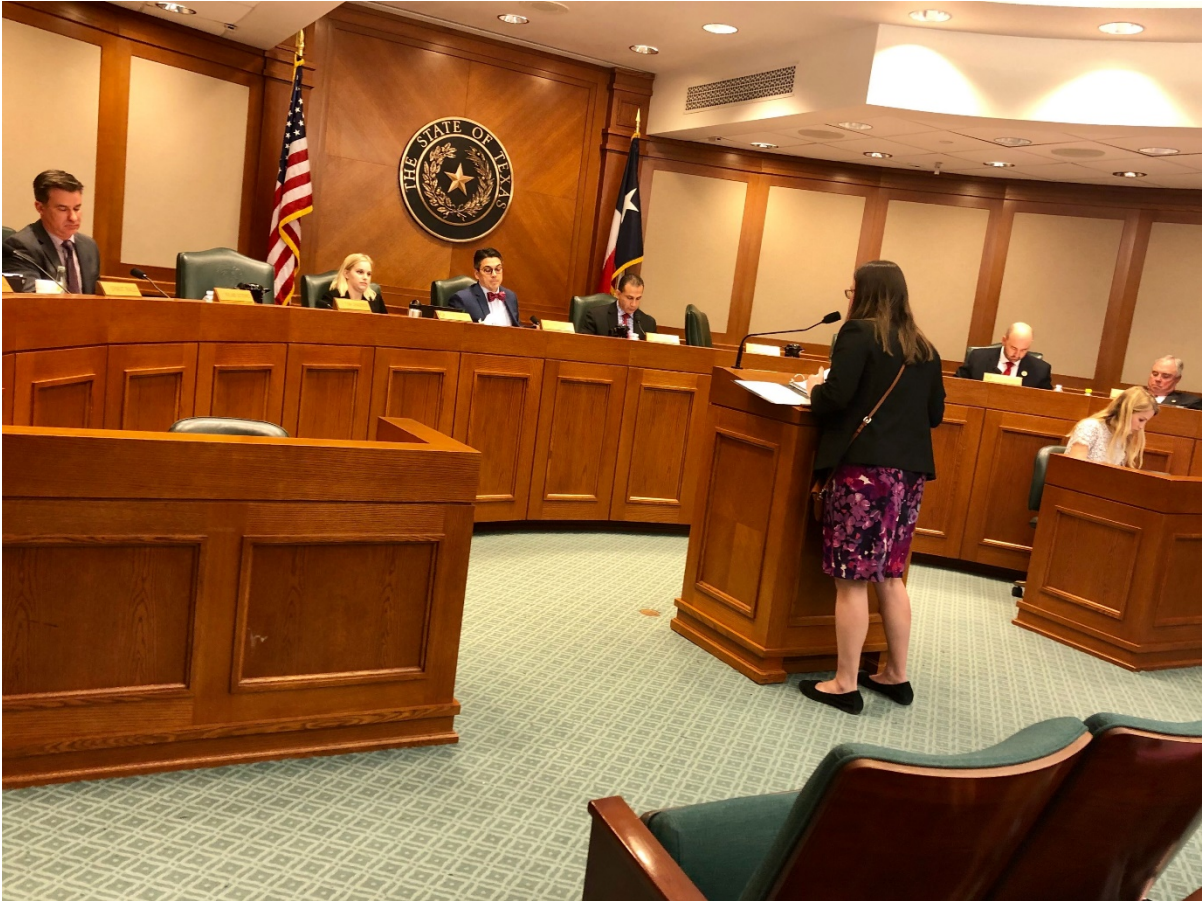
The Main Stories

Pipeline Bills

Laying out HB 4060

I laid out HB 4060 to ensure prompt and proper responses to emergencies involving large gas pipelines. Communities are forced to deal with large pipelines without any input in the routing process, and Texas landowners are rightfully worried about what might happen when there is a pipeline accident.

By establishing and funding a pipeline emergency preparedness grant program as in HB 4060, we are protecting their futures and assuaging their fears.



Laying out HB 4432

Landowners currently don't have assurances that their land, which was taken under threat of eminent domain, will be returned to its proper condition. That's why I laid out HB 4423, which establishes a grant program to address land restoration issues such as erosion control, soil replacement, and vegetation re-establishment over disturbed areas.

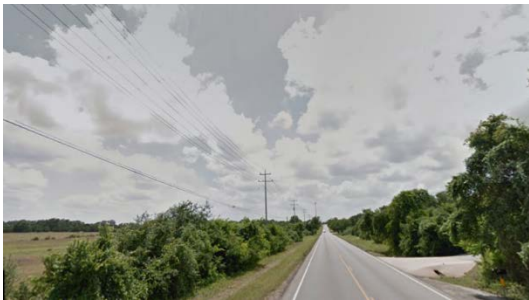
With HB 4423, we are standing up for Texas landowners and others whose land is disturbed by the construction of pipelines without a choice in the matter.

Joint-Authoring Aggregate Production Bills

I joint-authored House Bill 509 with Representative Terry Wilson in hopes of providing additional oversight for gravel pits, stone crushers, concrete batch plants, and others in the aggregate industry. That bill was laid out in front of committee this week.

Though most operators follow the law and are good neighbors, I've heard from dozens of constituents about bad actors who skirt the law, avoid getting necessary permits, and drastically damage the quality of life for their neighbors.

Protecting Our Scenic Highways



I have heard from thousands of constituents who know we must protect the natural beauty and landscape of House District 45. That's why I introduced legislation to protect eleven miles of road in Hays County along RM 1826, RM 150, and RM 967 and prohibit new billboards along their corridors.

Western Hays County is growing fast, and lots of folks visit and move here because of the beautiful scenery. We must protect our tourism, our property values, and our beautiful views.

HB 4116 Passes Out of Committee

HB 4116 creates a voluntary financial assurance program for discharge permits administered by TCEQ. It would allow a permit applicant to negotiate an agreement upfront with interest groups — an agreement that would include more stringent limitations than the TCEQ permit —and then back that agreement up with bonding, a letter of credit, or an escrow account.



Seeing this bill pass overwhelmingly out of committee is a good sign for communities who can use this tool to expedite and improve the permit process. We have worked on this legislation with numerous stakeholders across the district and state, and I am hopeful that by creating this process for upfront negotiation and consensus building, we will reduce the administrative headache that comes with a contested case and provide a model for future collaborative efforts in environmental permitting.

Pride Pictures



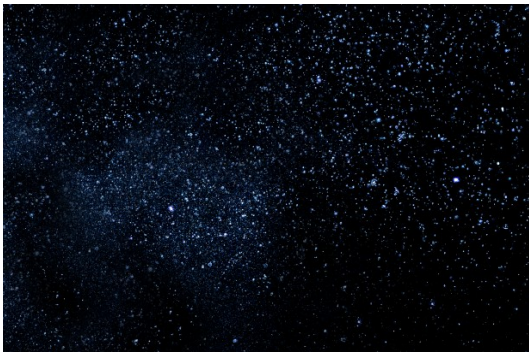
I am so proud to stand with fellow members of the Texas House LGBTQ Caucus formed this year. None of us in the LGBTQ Caucus today got here by being timid, and we're not going to govern that way either.

Interfaith Rally at the Capitol

Between rains last week, I spoke at the Texas Interfaith Rally on the capitol steps. I want to say a huge thank you to Texas Interfaith and all of those in attendance for their advocacy and meaningful dialogue that brings together people of different religious backgrounds.



Dark Sky Protections



Small-town natives and visitors alike are drawn to rural Texas in part because of the undisturbed and captivating night sky. With HB 4158, I am hoping to promote improved outdoor nighttime quality of life for residents and visitors in these communities.

The International Dark Skies Association currently has certified three communities in Texas as Dark Sky Communities: Dripping Springs, Horseshoe Bay, and Wimberley. Blanco and Fredericksburg are in the process of applying to receive the designation.

Recent Photos



Clockwise from top left: Getting ready to testify for HB 509; Lark and me at the Agarita Alliance meeting in Johnson City; talking with constituents at the Blanco Volunteer Fire

Department Annual Fish Fry; and dancing the night away with Lark at the Dripping Springs Education Foundation's 2019 Denim and Diamonds Gala.

Looking Ahead

Next Wednesday, April 17, I will be laying out two bills related to studying sexual assault and its reporting. Out of every 1000 rapes, only 230 are reported to police, only 9 are referred to prosecutors, and only 4.6 rapists are incarcerated.

House Bill 2672 seeks to illuminate disparities in these statistics of reporting and sentencing by creating a study to be conducted by the Department of Public Safety. Results from this study will be compiled into a report analyzing the level and type of prosecution in Texas sexual assault cases. That report is then to be presented to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and each member of the legislature by December 1, 2020.

House Bill 2678 requires the compilation and maintenance of statistics involving sexual assault victims who receive a forensic medical examination before reporting the assault to law enforcement.

If you have time this Wednesday, please come register your support or, better yet, sign up to testify in favor of the bills.

Get Involved

Thank you to everyone who signed up to join our Legislative Action Team! In case you missed the call to action, please read the message below!

As more opportunities for constituent involvement in the policy-making process pop up, I want to make sure that your voice is being heard. **What are you passionate about? What issues affect your day-to-day life? What do you want to see happen this session?**

Our **Legislative Action Team** is a place for you to share your answers to those questions with me. **Sign up to join the Action Team [here!](#)**

Recent Articles

[Pipeline Bills Are Going to Committee Monday](#)

[This Week At The Capitol With Rep. Zwiener](#)

[State Lawmakers Look to Protect Landowners Against Proposed Pipeline Project](#)

[Texas Lawmakers Target Lapses in Deer Park](#)

