



## Your District 45 Weekly Update

Happy May y'all!

We have just under a month left in the 86th legislative session, and we've got a lot going on. In the past week, the House passed a bill to reduce marijuana penalties, two of my bills fighting sexual assault were passed out of committee, I laid out a bill to create public accountability on common carrier pipeline companies using eminent domain, and House Democrats introduced HB 1513 to add gender identity to the hate crimes act. Oh, and I passed my first bill on the House floor!

All that and more below. Thanks for reading.

For a better Texas,

**Erin Zwiener**

State Representative | District 45

Hays & Blanco Counties

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

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## **The Main Stories**

### *Fighting Sexual Assault*

Last month was Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and the Texas House has been working hard to address this serious and multifaceted issue.



# San Marcos Daily Record

## Two Of Rep Zwiener's Bills To Fight Sexual Assault Pass Out Of Committee

Sun, 04/28/2019 - 12:00am

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Sunday, April 28, 2019

### HB 2672 and HB 2678 Clear Hurdle

I am so proud to report three of the four bills I have introduced this session to fight

sexual misconduct have now passed out of committee! Two of these bills are aimed at increasing Texas' ability to study and understand sexual assault on a macro level.

You can't fix a problem if you can't study it. And with House Bills 2672 and 2678, we will have a more complete picture of the issue to help better understand why survivors of sexual violence aren't as likely to receive justice as victims of other crimes.

You can read more about [each of these bills here](#).

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## *Making Pipeline Operators Work with Local Officials*



It's common sense:  
There should be full and transparent communication between common carriers attempting to route a pipeline and the county governments it will impact. That way we can ensure the needs of each impacted community are met.

For instance, in our district, Kinder Morgan didn't reach out to our local elected officials until they had already chosen a route. But the company didn't have local on-the-ground information about planned developments, road reroutes, and the

counties' open space plans. Their maps even showed outdated city boundaries, and they skipped reaching out directly to at least one city where they're planning to build.

This is unacceptable, and with this legislation, we can remedy it this session.

The bill I laid out this week, HB 3327, would require pipeline operators with eminent domain authority to send a written notice of intent to county judges of the impacted counties before the operator contacts landowners.

Companies should know their full liabilities and have the ability to understand their siting prior to beginning the eminent domain process. With this bill, we'll create a faster and fairer procedure for all parties involved in the pipeline laying process.

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### *Passing My First Bill on the House Floor*

I haven't done the research, but I'm pretty confident I am the first representative in Texas history whose freshman hazing involved the Jeopardy! theme song being played over the Texas House intercom.



**Q: This person is relieved to have had her first bill layout on the House floor.**

**A: Who is "me"?! 🎉 🎊**

My first bill, House Bill 4116, was officially passed out of the House this week. The bill provides communities pursuing water discharge permits more tools to negotiate agreements that work for everyone and will encourage more beneficial reuse.

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### *Protecting Members of the Trans Community*



Transgender women of color face a higher rate of violence than any other group. It is past time we add prejudice based on gender identity to the hate crimes act so that all Texans can live free from violence and persecution. That's exactly what Rep. Garnett Coleman's HB 1513 would do.

I was proud to join with Rep. Coleman and fellow members of the LGBTQ and House Democratic Caucuses for a press conference in support of this bill.

Thank you, Rep. Coleman, for leading on this issue in the Texas Capitol for nearly two decades.

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## *Fighting for Medical Marijuana and Decriminalization*

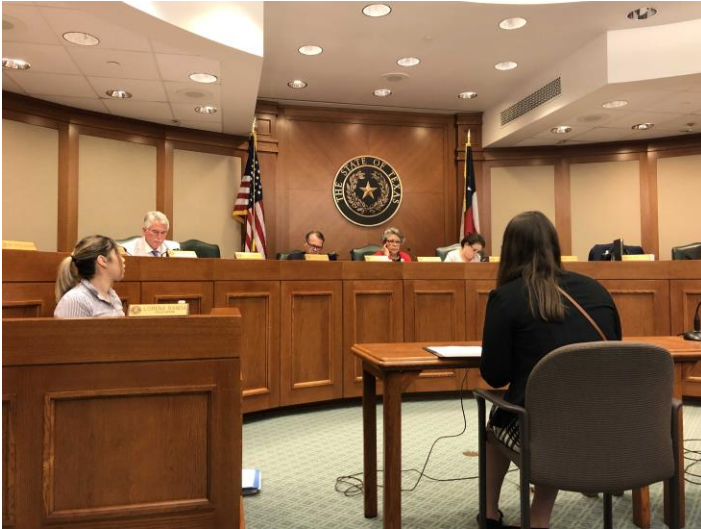
### **House Bill 63**

I believe in Texas we should fully decriminalize cannabis. House Bill 63 by Rep. Joe Moody moves us in that direction, treats Texans more compassionately, and takes a critical step toward a fairer criminal justice system.



By passing this bill, we are reducing the penalties for those possessing small amounts of cannabis. The state of Texas arrests nearly 75,000 individuals each year for marijuana possession, one of the highest rates in the nation. An arrest for carrying small amounts of cannabis should not derail someone's life, make them lose their driver's license, or give them difficulty finding a job or housing.

Instead of harsh fines in the thousands and the possibility of jail time, HB 63 makes it so that possessing small amounts of marijuana may result in a fine not to exceed \$500 with no possibility of incarceration.



### **House Bill 4145**

Many patients, especially veterans and chronic pain patients, use marijuana to alleviate pain and relieve nausea or anxiety. That fact alone should not be grounds to discharge a patient.

Unfortunately, many physicians use urinary drug testing to deny prescriptions and even discharge patients when they discover their patients have used marijuana. So I laid out HB 4145 this week to protect access to care for patients, especially those with chronic pain and anxiety.

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***Recognizing the Texas Hill Country American Viticultural Area***



I am honored to represent part of the Hill Country at the Capitol and so proud to see the area continue to garner national attention and acclaim.



The wine industry, in particular, is a major contributor to the region's economic vitality and cultural vibrancy, and it deserves to be acknowledged and appreciated. That is why I introduced House Resolution 1402 recognizing the Texas Hill Country American Viticultural Area for its contributions to our state.

The Texas Hill Country AVA holds the 2nd highest rate of wine tourism in the entire nation. Next time you're shopping for wine, look for the "Texas Hill Country" label and you'll know your wine was grown using 85% Texas Hill Country AVA grapes!

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### *Honoring the Late Mayor Phillip Taylor*



This week, we honored the former Mayor of Mountain City Phillip Lee Taylor with a memorial resolution on the House floor.

Mayor Taylor dedicated his life to public service, and his passion for taking care of his friends, family, and

neighbors made his community better.

You can view the [memorial resolution dedication online here.](#)

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### *Recent Photos*



TOP LEFT: Declaring April 25, 2019 San Marcos Day at the Capitol with members of the community.

TOP RIGHT: Honoring 7-year-old Will Allen with a Texas flag flown over the Capitol. Since a car wreck left Will in a wheelchair, his positive spirit has inspired the community.

BOTTOM: Staff and I hosting mobile office hours at the Dripping Springs Founders Day and Buda Wiener Dog Races!

[Watch Rep. Zwiener kick off a Buda wiener dog race here!](#)

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## *Get Involved*

Thank you to everyone who has 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!](#)**

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## **Recent Articles**

[Two of Rep. Zwiener's Bills to Fight Sexual Assault Pass Out of Committee](#)

[Rep. Zwiener Recognizes Texas Hill Country for Contributions to State](#)

[Bill Aimed at Pipeline Routing Oversight Reaches Committee](#)

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

[Dark Skies Bill Moves Forward in Legislature](#)

[House Democrats Introduce Bill to Protect Transgender Texans](#)

