



VIKKI GOODWIN

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • DISTRICT 47

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There are just over five weeks left of the 86th Legislative Session, and we still have a lot of work to do! There have been whispers of a Special Session – if we don't meet the Governor's demand for property tax reform. We've actually passed a bill that will lower property taxes – the school finance bill which lowers school property tax rates – but now the Governor wants to artificially slow budget growth in our cities and counties.

The problem is that roughly 70% of the city and county budgets are comprised of public safety dollars – salaries for our police, firefighters, and emergency responders. It will be a tough pill to swallow to have to lay off safety personnel, which is why so many legislators are against HB2/SB2. To add insult to injury, the state leaders are now talking about a 1% increase in the sales tax. While the tax cap on city and county governments doesn't lower anyone's taxes to the point of relief, they are



talking about increasing revenue with a regressive tax that affects the vast majority of Texans. It doesn't add up.

What many of us would like to see is our property taxes stabilized at the new lower rate as a result of the state paying its fair share of public school funding.

Progress on My Bills

Safety Corridors Bill (HB 2814)

I have several bills that were voted out of committee and are awaiting their turn on the House Floor. One bill is "Dr. Babineaux's Bill" named after the doctor who lost his life in a car accident on Hwy 71. My bill will allow TxDOT to create safety corridors similar to work zones, and the fines for speeding will be twice what they normally are. I know...no one wants to get a ticket, particularly one that doubles the fine. However, Texas highways have become very unsafe places. Did you know that car accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers? And that there has been a death on a Texas highway every day for the last 18 years? We must change driver behavior, and that's what my bill intends to do. When there are significant consequences for driving over the speed limit or texting while driving, maybe we will change our behavior and save lives.

Financial Literacy (HB 1182)

My first bill on personal financial literacy for high school students was heard on the House Floor on Monday and passed the House on Tuesday. Now it is up to the Senate to pass it, too, and send it along to the Governor.

Shady Hollow (HB 3821)

This week my bill to help Shady Hollow residents implement uniform voting rights related to annexation was heard in the Land and Resource Management committee. The bill seeks to allow all residents, and not just 35% of residents, to have a vote on annexation. It was fun to see nearly thirty residents come to the Capitol to show their support with their SHAVE t-shirts on (Shady Hollow, a Vote for Everyone). I am pleased to report that the bill was voted out of the committee. I will continue to work with residents of the community to ensure that their voices are heard at the Capitol.

Out in the District

Local Breweries

Last weekend, my staff and I enjoyed a tour of three craft brewers in the district so we could learn more about the regulations for craft beer production and sales. One of the bills I have co-authored would give local craft breweries the ability to sell a six-pack of beer directly from the brewery (HB 672). It was very interesting to learn about the people behind Hitmaker, Jester King and Family Business, and to sample their products. These breweries are quite a draw for tourists as well as locals. The bill is currently in the Licensing and Administrative Procedures Committee awaiting a hearing.

Lake Travis High School

I also spent time speaking with students at Lake Travis High School last Friday. It is fun to spend time learning what issues are important to young people who will be voters in a few short years.

Coming Soon – Onion Creek Town Hall

Please join me for my upcoming Town Hall in Onion Creek on Tuesday, April 23, 7:00-8:30 PM. I will give an update on the session so far and will have a panel of experts to answer questions on flooding, transportation, and other issues important to South Austin residents. This Town Hall will be in the Onion Creek Country Club.

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