



Dear Friends,

I hope this e-mail finds you and yours doing well. This weekend we will be with our immediate and extended family, celebrating the greatness of America with fireworks and parades, great food and fellowship. We'll give thanks to God for our freedoms and liberties and will remember and honor the brave and heroic men and women who have sacrificed so much to secure those freedoms for each of us and for our posterity.

We truly live in the greatest Nation in the history of the world. And though we have our scars and our divisions, I am abundantly proud to be an American. And I hope you are too.

As for our legislative responsibilities here in Texas, it's hard to believe that we gaveled out of the regular 87th Legislative Session just over one month ago. We accomplished a lot during the regular legislative session - but we also recognize there is more work to accomplish on your behalf, which is why I'm glad the Governor called us back for a special legislative session, commencing next Thursday, July 8th.

But to briefly recap what we accomplished during the regular legislative session:

We passed a **balanced and conservative budget** that doesn't raise your taxes yet still funds the core competencies and priorities of our state government, including over \$1 billion for border security, fully funding public education, appropriating \$26.5 billion for highway planning, design, construction, and maintenance and \$34 million for Election Integrity.

In response to the terrible winter storm, we advanced major **ERCOT reforms** with the passage of SB 2 and SB 3 among many other bills. SB 2 will reform the governance of ERCOT by requiring members to be residents of Texas - a change I immediately called for upon finding out that many board members resided outside of Texas. SB 3 institutes multiple reforms to ensure that Texas is prepared for future natural disasters including: rules preventing lengthy rolling blackouts, issuing fines to utilities that are not prepared for severe weather events, creating a statewide power outage alert system, and more. I'm pleased that we were able to provide real solutions for our constituents to ensure that what happened in February never happens again.

We protected your **Second Amendment** rights by proclaiming Texas as a Second Amendment Sanctuary State and passed HB 1927 which allows law-abiding citizens to carry a holstered

handgun without requiring a license to carry. I consider it one of our greatest duties to safeguard your fundamental rights and liberties and that includes the right to defend yourself and your family.

I'm especially proud of the **Religious Freedom** bills that were passed this session. Included in those is my constitutional amendment, SB 27, which gives Texas voters the opportunity to strengthen religious freedom by changing the state Constitution to include a ban on local officials closing houses of worship. After all, in times of crisis, we shouldn't limit the church, we should unleash it!

As a **Pro-Life** champion, I was proud to be a Joint-Author Senate Bill 8, the Texas Heartbeat Act. This bill is uniquely crafted and represents the smartest, strongest pro-life bill ever passed by a state legislature and it ensures Texas remains on the front lines in the fight for life. Additionally, we increased the funding to the state's Alternatives to Abortion program by 25% and passed HB 1280 which will ban abortions in Texas immediately following the Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade.

I was proud to author and sponsor **SB6** which supports businesses, healthcare providers, religious institutions, schools, and first responders who helped Texas fight the COVID-19 pandemic by giving them **limited liability protection** for their good faith efforts to follow health and safety protocols during the pandemic. These essential employees helped keep our state running during an uncertain time and they should not be rewarded for their hard work with frivolous lawsuits.

As mentioned, we fully funded the Legislature's commitment to **public education** including \$60 million for supplemental special education services, in addition to increasing the state's contribution rates to TRS, and investing in higher education. Additionally, as promised, we worked hard to lower the high-stakes nature of the STAAR exam and banned the reckless academic curriculum known as "critical race theory."

We also **strengthened Texas' commitment to healthcare** by funding over \$350 million towards Women's Health Programs such as Healthy Texas Women and increased funding for breast and cervical cancer services. We increased coverage for new moms on Medicaid and increased access to affordable prescription drugs. Additionally, we improved access to healthcare for Texans, especially those in rural or underserved areas, by allowing multiple services to be provided via telemedicine.

And we **backed the blue**, just as we promised, provided additional funding to **combat human trafficking**, and made monumental strides in **criminal justice reform**.

That said, we didn't get it all done. The clock ran out on the legislative session while essential pieces of legislation were left on the table. But the good news is that Governor Abbott has called us back in to a special legislative session, commencing next week. And I am excited and eager to get back to the Texas Capitol to finish the work we started on your behalf.

We have a lot to celebrate today, and every day - as citizens of the Lone Star State and of the United States of America, the most exceptional Nation in the history of the world. I hope you'll find time to stop this weekend and to recognize that our blessings far outweigh our challenges. Our freedoms are greater than our fears.

The best days for America are still ahead. I believe it with all my heart. And I'll continue to work my heart out on your behalf, doing everything I possibly can to make it so.

God Bless You... and God Bless America!



All my best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Leach".

Jeff Leach

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