

TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE
EDDIE MORALES, JR.
DISTRICT 74

BREWSTER • CULBERSON • HUDSPETH • JEFF DAVIS • KINNEY • LOVING • MAVERICK • PECOS • PRESIDIO • REEVES • TERRELL • VAL VERDE

Friends,

Here's what happened in the Texas House this week:



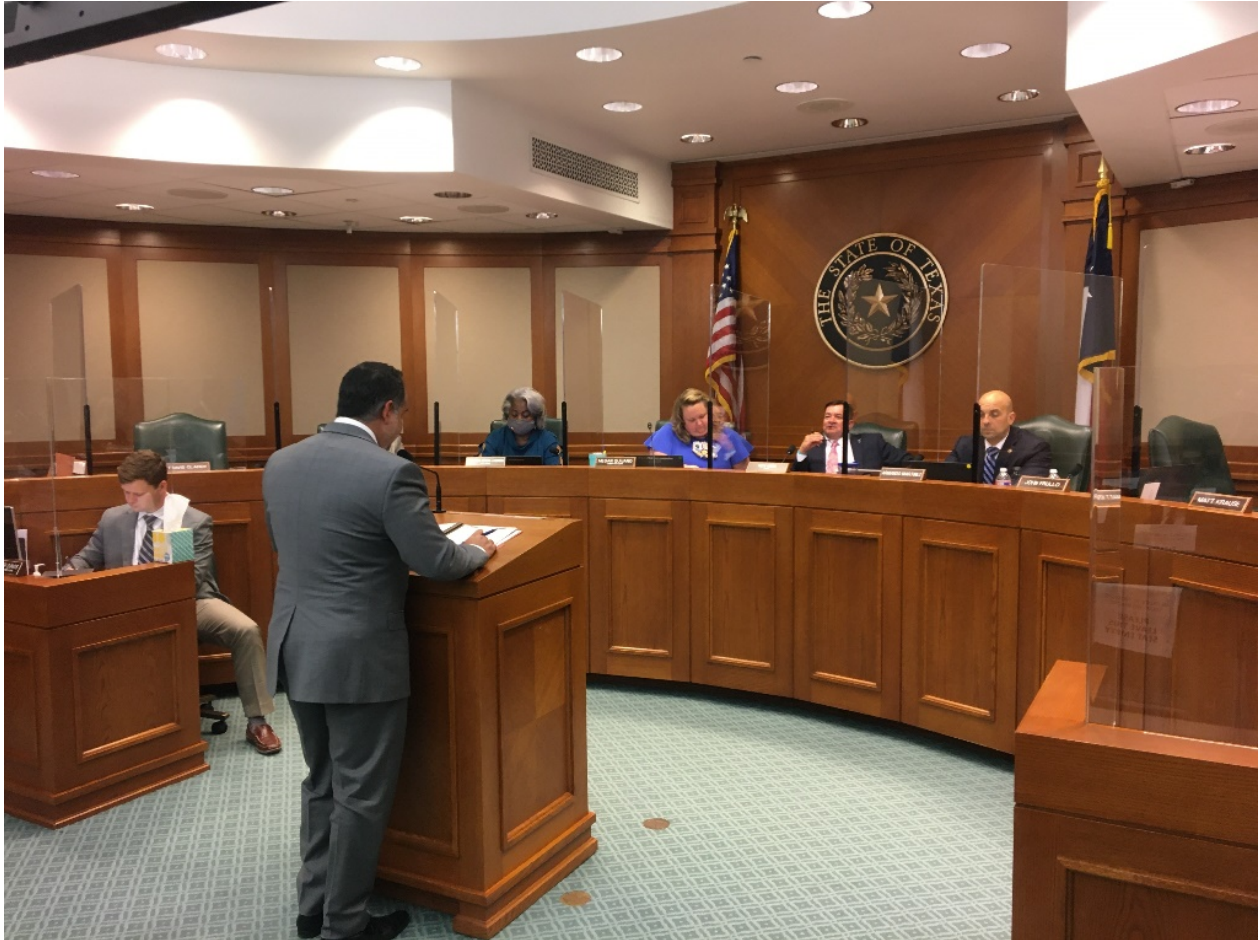
(Left) Representative Eddie Morales and (Right) Del Rio Mayor Bruno Lozano

Staying true to the sentiment of maintaining an open dialogue with local elected officials, I had the privilege of having Del Rio Mayor, Bruno Lozano in our office on Wednesday.

We had a wonderful conversation regarding SB 1474/HB 3675 (Ports to Plains) and I wholeheartedly support the bills. Expanding the Ports to Plains corridor into an interstate highway is the first step to the corridor creating a significant economic impact in our district.

This kind of communication between myself and local elected officials is something I consider to be extremely important. I am grateful to Mayor Lozano for stopping by, and I hope that we can continue this kind of open dialogue in order to continue to help the communities we represent.

I had the privilege of laying out six bills this week in front of different House Committees. In between these bill layouts, we heard bills and debates on the House floor, as well as had other committee hearings in House Homeland Security and Public Safety, House Administration, and House Defense and Veteran's Affairs.



Next Thursday we are considering Senate Bill 1, our state's budget. It is set to be a long night in the Texas House as we consider this bill and the hundreds of amendments that are usually filed. Know that we are hard at work for you, to make sure funds are spread fairly to the right agencies and organizations. I plan to offer amendments to add funding for 2 grant programs, one that would give grants to local law enforcement agencies along the border and one that would give grants to medical students who do their residency in a rural area. I will keep the priorities of our rural and border communities in mind as we vote through the long list of amendments to the state budget.

BIENNIAL REVENUE ESTIMATE

January 2021

Before each regular legislative session, the Texas Comptroller issues the Biennial Revenue Estimate (BRE) to inform lawmakers of the funds available to spend on state programs through the next two-year budget period. Due to the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, lawmakers can expect a negative beginning balance as they begin writing the 2022-23 state budget.

Revenue Available for General-Purpose Spending

In Billions of Dollars

		2020-21	2022-23	CHANGE
General Revenue-Related (GR-R) Tax Collections	+	\$97.41	\$103.93	\$6.52
Other GR-R Revenue	+	\$15.03	\$15.65	\$0.62
Total GR-R Revenue	=	\$112.44	\$119.58 SUBTOTAL	\$7.14
Beginning Balance	+	\$4.84	-\$0.95	-\$5.79
Total GR-R Revenue & Fund Balances	=	\$117.28	\$118.63 SUBTOTAL	\$1.35
Revenue Reserved for Transfers to the Economic Stabilization and State Highway Funds	-	\$4.32	\$5.83	\$1.51
Amount Needed for Transfer to the Texas Tomorrow Fund*	-	N/A	\$0.27	\$0.27
Total Revenue Available for General-Purpose Spending	=	\$112.96	\$112.53 TOTAL	-\$0.44

* The original, constitutionally guaranteed prepaid tuition program is projected to have a cash shortfall of \$271 million in the 2022-23 biennium. The BRE assumes the shortfall will be paid from general revenue.

Note: Totals may not sum because of rounding.

Glenn Hegar

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

As we have recently had some rough weather, it is important to take note of essential items in your inventory. Keep stock of these items, like batteries, generators, flashlights, and fuel containers. You never know when Texas will be hit with a big storm, and it is important to be prepared.

The Texas Comptroller, Glenn Hegar, wants to remind Texans that they can purchase certain items tax-free during the state's sales tax holiday for emergency preparation supplies, which begins at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, April 24, and ends at midnight on Monday, April 26. The graphic above outlines which emergency preparation supplies qualify for tax exemption if purchased for the stated sales price.

April 24-26, 2021

Sales Tax Holiday


FOR EMERGENCY PREPARATION SUPPLIES

<p>Less than \$3000 Portable generators</p> <p>Less than \$300 Emergency ladders Hurricane shutters</p>	<p>Less than \$75 Axes Batteries, single or multipack (AAA, AA, C, D, 6 or 9 Volt) Can openers - nonelectric Carbon Monoxide detectors Coolers and ice chests for food storage - nonelectric Fire Extinguishers Fuel containers Ground Anchor systems and tie down kits Hatchets Ice Products - reusable and artificial Light Sources - portable self-powered (including battery operated) Mobile telephone batteries and mobile telephone chargers Radios - portable self-powered (including battery operated) - includes two way and weather band radios Smoke detectors Tarps and other plastic sheeting</p>
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**State Representative
Eddie Morales, Jr.**

The House of Representatives has made significant headway by passing HB 4, 18, 133, and 290. These bills are part of a bipartisan legislative package to ensure that healthcare in the Lone Star state is accessible and affordable to all 29 million Texans.




THE TEXAS HOUSE PLAN ON HEALTHCARE:
**HEALTHY FAMILIES,
HEALTHY TEXAS**
A bipartisan legislative package to ensure healthcare in the Lone Star State is accessible and affordable for all 29 million Texans


INCREASING ACCESS TO CARE

 **EXPANDING TELEHEALTH**
HB 4


- Provides greater access to care for patients who are in underserved communities and codifies the state's ability to reimburse providers for these innovative services in order to incentivize more to provide them

 **INCREASING ACCESS TO BROADBAND**
HB 5

- Unleashes the full benefits of telemedicine by expanding access to reliable, high-speed internet across the state, benefiting patients in underserved communities who have less access to physicians and specialists


 **CARING FOR TEXAS CHILDREN**
HB 290

- Streamlines the Medicaid eligibility process by providing two 6-month periods of continuous coverage for eligible children in the Medicaid program, ensuring that eligible children do not fall off coverage when they need it most


 **EXPANDING ACCESS TO VACCINES FOR VULNERABLE TEXANS**
HB 797

- Allows home care and hospice agencies to administer certain vaccines to medically fragile and elderly Texans in the comfort and safety of their own homes


IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES

 **INVESTING IN BRAIN HEALTH**
HB 15


- Creates the infrastructure needed to invest in research on brain health, including how we make strides in preventing and treating traumatic brain injuries and substance use disorders

 **REDUCING DRUG PRICES FOR THE UNINSURED**
HB 18

- Allows ~3 million qualifying, uninsured Texans to access significantly reduced prices on life-saving medications such as insulin, which benefits the uninsured and prevents costly visits to the emergency room


 **ADDRESSING MATERNAL MORTALITY**
HB 133

- Protects the lives of mothers by continuing Medicaid eligibility for new mothers for the first year of their child's life


 **INCREASING HEALTH EQUITY**
HB 4139

- Creates an office within the Health & Human Services Commission to eliminate health disparities, tackle health equity, and pursue grants to advance this goal

INCREASING AFFORDABILITY OF CARE

 **PROVIDING CONSUMER PROTECTIONS**
HB 2487

- Requires hospitals to disclose prices in advance of providing the services

 **EXPANDING HEALTHCARE OPTIONS**
HBs 3923, 3924 & 3752

- Expand free-market offerings for competitive healthcare coverage for small employers and individuals who are not Medicaid eligible or do not have access to employer-based plans

HB 1285

State Representative Eddie Morales, Jr. has filed HB 1285, designating State Highways 118 and 166 as the Davis Mountains Scenic Loop Highway and a historic highway. The legislation would allow for the County of Jeff Davis to apply for the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act Funds from this act may be used for programs and projects for transportation alternatives (23 U.S.C 133 (h)(3)) (23 U.S.C. 213(b)(1)), including construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, and for projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and people with disabilities. It would also assist in the eligibility to the recreational trails program and the safe routes to school program. HB 1285 would also allow for funding for the designation, interpretation, and marketing of the scenic highway and historic highway.

Representative Morales heard the concerns from the community regarding the 12 items eligible for the Transportation Enhancement Program. Rep. Morales' office has been in contact with TxDOT and has confirmed that the Transportation Enhancement Program no longer exists. The Transportation Enhancement Program replaced by the Transportation Alternatives Program, which has very different parameters than its predecessor.



COVID-19 Vaccine

As of March 29th, all people 16+ can now receive a COVID-19 vaccine in Texas. There are multiple tools to help you find a vaccine. DSHS encourages people to use a tool that works best for them. Click on the link below!

[Vaccine Locator Tools](#)



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink is centered below the word "Sincerely,". The signature is cursive and appears to read "Eddie Morales, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

State Representative Eddie Morales, Jr.

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