

TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE

EDDIE MORALES, JR.

DISTRICT 74

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

Friends,

The Legislature adjourned on Monday, May 31st. Governor Abbott will call us back for a special session, but we don't yet know when it will be.

Here's what happened in the Texas House in the 2021, 87th Legislative Session:

As my freshman legislative session has come to a close, I want to take the time to reach out to you all and show you the good we were able to achieve. I could not have made it through this legislative session without the help of all the constituents who reached out and gave their input, all the local elected officials that kept us updated, all the work from my staff, and the support from my family.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you in the Texas House.





Throughout my 2020 campaign for State Representative, I focused on issues like broadband access, mental health, education opportunities, job skills, job creation, healthcare, and transportation infrastructure. With the winter storm's crisis, we saw even more ways the state needed to change, prepare, and ensure that type of devastation never happens again. I am proud to say that I authored, co-authored, and joint-authored bills that addressed these issues.



In order to make improvements to the state's school finance system, I co-authored HB 1525 to direct over \$2 billion in funds to public schools to address the costs of COVID learning loss and winter storm Uri. HB 1525 also adjusts the small and mid-sized Career Technology Education allotment to ensure smaller ISDs are not penalized for providing CTE instruction.



The Texas House considered and voted on Senate Bill 1. I am proud to have worked alongside my fellow Representatives to add amendments to include \$352.6 million in all funds for Women's Health Programs, including Healthy Texas Women, Family Planning, and Breast and Cervical Cancer Services.

House Bill 133, which I co-authored, also provides for six months of Medicaid coverage for new mothers.

House Bill 4, another bill that I co-authored, improves access to health care for Texans, especially those in rural and medically underserved areas. This access is expanded through telehealth and telemedicine services.

House Bill 3924 authorizes the Texas Farm Bureau to offer a health benefit plan to its members.

House Bill 1535 expands the current medical marijuana program in Texas for both the number of medical conditions allowed and the amount of THC allowed.



Law Enforcement

I am proud to have co-authored House Bill 1900 which will penalize cities that defund their police departments.

I authored HB 4667 that would allow DPS to transfer their old Eagle Pass DPS office to the City of Eagle Pass for the Police Department and Sheriff's Department to use in the future.



In order to help our Veterans in House District 74, I am proud to have co-authored the following legislation:

House Bill 33: which measures to facilitate the award of post-secondary course credit leading to workforce credentialing based on military experience, education, and training.

House Bill 139: state occupational licensing of certain military veterans and military spouses. Making it easier for those military veterans and their spouses to have their occupational licenses laterally transfer as they move around the state for work.

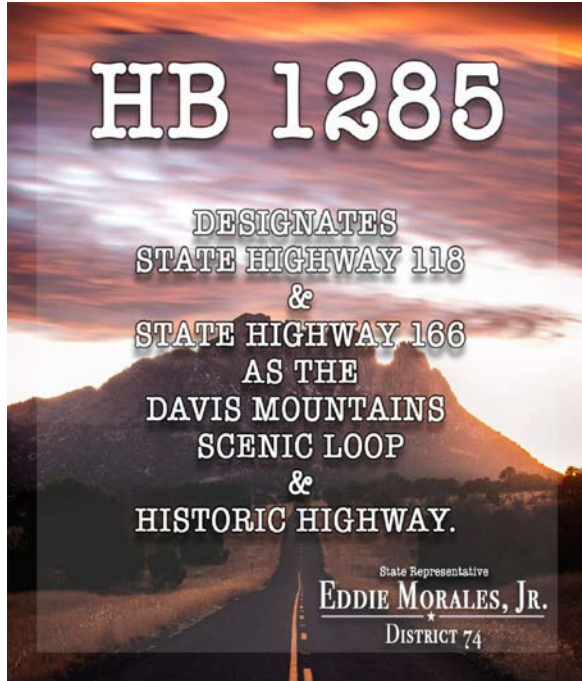


Winter Storm Uri

On top of the unprecedented times we were already facing, Winter Storm Uri came in February and added to our woes. Unfortunately, the winter storm highlighted the flaws with our electric grid, and millions of Texans suffered because of it. I am proud to have co-authored the following legislation to make sure that Texans are covered in light of any other natural disaster.

House Bill 16: bans variable-rate plans that resulted in exorbitant bills for residential customers.

House Bill 17: ensures residential and commercial consumers have a choice in choosing their source of energy.



This session I passed **HB 1285** to designate 2 highways in West Texas as the Davis Mountains Scenic Loop & Historic Highway to help increase tourism.

Additionally, I sponsored and passed **SB 941** to create a statewide scenic byways program. This bill will help the 30 scenic byways in Texas draw down additional federal funding. All the other 49 states had this program in place. Texas was the last state left to join this program and I'm excited to have accomplished that my freshman session.

House Bill 5 aims to make broadband more accessible in rural areas. As House District 74 is largely rural, it is important for the residents of our district to have access to broadband, and the services that it connects them to. House Bill 5, which I co-authored, is the key to making measurable progress towards closing the digital gap for Texans.

House Bill 3853 is another bill that I co-authored that makes broadband easier to access by allowing broadband to be provided by an electric utility.

**HOUSE BILL 5:
BROADBAND FOR TEXANS**

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the need for reliable access to Internet and exposed the breadth of ways in which connectivity impacts daily life. House Bill 5 aims to make measurable progress towards closing the digital gap for Texans.

THE PROBLEM: The digital divide continues to widen and leads to social and economic gaps between those who have access to Internet and those who do not. Now is the time for the state to step in and help close the gap for the many Texans that still lack access or face barriers to the subscription of broadband.

316,717
HOUSEHOLDS
OR
900,000
TEXANS
are unserved by
broadband according
to Connected Nation
Texas

THE SOLUTION: HOUSE BILL 5

- Creates the Broadband Development Office within the Office of the Comptroller, which will:
 - Prepare the State Broadband Plan | Texas is currently one of only six states without a state plan. This puts Texas at a disadvantage when applying for federal dollars.
 - Participate in proceedings at the Federal Communications Commission | Federal broadband maps have traditionally been inaccurate. Texas can complement the FCC's new mapping initiative by actively working to improve its accuracy.
- Produce the Broadband Development Map | With granular, address level data the state can better identify which areas of Texas need the most help.
- Administer the Broadband Development Program | This program will make certain that any private, federal, or state funding is ready to be delivered to applicants so service can be expanded as soon as possible.

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:
AARP | AT&T | Digital Texas Coalition | E-Health Alliance | Greater Houston Partnership | North Texas Commission | ROV Partnership | Texas 2036 | Texas Association of Counties | Texas Electric Cooperatives | Texas Farm Bureau | Texas Telephone Association | & Many More!



Chinese Wind Farm in Val Verde County

I helped pass legislation to stop the Chinese Wind Farm in Val Verde County. Although my bill to allow the commissioner's court to stop the construction of the wind farm did not pass, I joined efforts with Representative Tan Parker and co-authored House Bill 4359 to stop companies with ties to the Chinese government from connecting to our power grid. The Senate version, SB 2116, is the version of the bill that ultimately passed, and was recently signed by Governor Abbott. This project, if implemented, could jeopardize Laughlin Air Force Base, which has a 2 billion dollar economic impact on the community annually.

HB 2172

Allows for Maverick County to charge a 2% hotel occupancy tax to use towards the Maverick County Airport.

State Representative
EDDIE MORALES, JR.
DISTRICT 74

Maverick County's 2% Hotel Occupancy Tax to fund improvements for the airport fully passed through the House but the stand-alone bill died in the Senate. However, I amended this bill onto three other bills to give it several chances at passing. **The language passed as an amendment to Senate Bill 696.** This bill has passed both chambers and has been sent to the Governor for his signature.



JUNE 2021 National Men's Health Week

Men's Health Week takes place June 14-20, 2021. Throughout Men's Health Week, Planned Parenthood encourages early detection and treatment of preventable health problems among men and boys. In addition, this week serves as an opportunity for policymakers, health care providers, and the community to engage in conversation about the importance of regular medical check-ups, early detection and treatment for men's health.

Not enough men get the checkups and preventative care they need. Men are less likely to visit a doctor until they are experiencing the symptoms of a serious ailment. As of 2020, 37 percent of Texas men report having no primary care physician.

Trans men need regular sexual health check ups too – which may include things like Pap tests, chest exams, STI testing and treatment, and birth control. All of these services are available at Planned Parenthood health centers.

TESTICULAR CANCER

The average age of diagnosis for testicular cancer is 33 years old. Testicular cancer is very rare before puberty and becomes more common afterward. It is most often diagnosed in young and middle-aged men, but can occur at any age. **About half of testicular cancer occurs in men between the ages of 20 and 45 years. White men are at the greatest risk of getting testicular cancer** and are four to five times more likely to have testicular cancer than black men and three times more likely than Asian-American men.

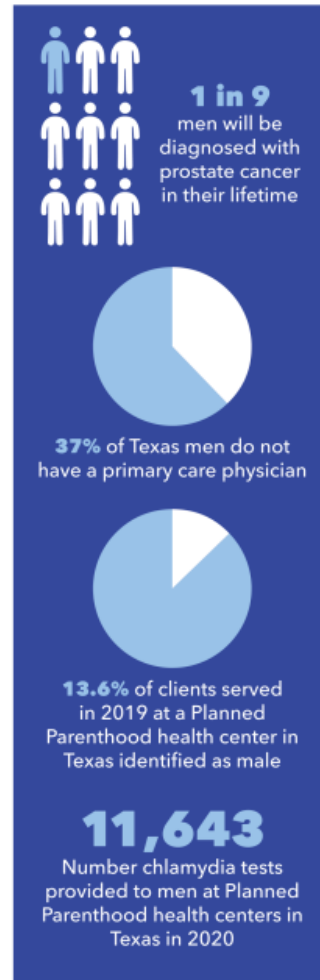
HIV & STD TESTING

Texas has the 8th highest AIDS/HIV infection rate in the country. In 2017, males accounted for 81 percent of all infections classified as stage 3 (AIDS) among adults and adolescents. Young people ages 25-29 made up the highest rate of HIV diagnoses in 2017. In addition, Texas has the 25th highest rate of chlamydia and syphilis and has the 27th highest rate of gonorrhea transmission in 2018. Each year, **Planned Parenthood health centers provide more than 4.7 million STI tests and treatments, including more than 740,000 HIV tests. Between 2007 and 2017, Planned Parenthood saw a 42 percent increase in male patients.**

PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S HEALTH SERVICES FOR MEN

Planned Parenthood health centers provide basic health care for men, including:

- Testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections
- Urinary tract infection testing and treatment
- Testicular and prostate cancer screening
- HPV vaccines
- Vasectomies (varied by location)
- General health care services (anemia, diabetes, high blood pressure, thyroid screening and referral)



For more information, please contact Laura Gorsky, Governmental Relations and Political Affairs Manager at Laura.gorsky@pptexasvotes.org and at (703)298-7306

Men's Health Week takes place June 14-20, 2021.

This week serves as an opportunity for policymakers, health care providers, and the community to engage in meaningful conversation about the importance of regular medical check-ups, early detection, and treatment for men's health. Planned Parenthood plays a crucial role in providing basic health services for men such as testicular and prostate cancer screenings, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, HPV vaccines, and more.

Happy Pride month! Equally as important as the bills we passed, are the bills we opposed and helped kill.

Senate Bill 29 was a discriminatory bill meant to target transgender kids who participate in school sports. We opposed this bill and successfully used the deadlines to ensure it died.

We also opposed and successfully killed **HB 1399** which would have denied professional liability insurance coverage for and prohibited surgery procedures and treatments for gender transitioning, gender reassignment, or gender dysphoria.

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!

Eagle Pass has plenty of vaccines!

[Vaccine Locator](#)



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Eddie Morales, Jr." The signature is stylized and fluid.

State Representative Eddie Morales, Jr.

The House of Representatives is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. In compliance with the Americans with

Disabilities Act, if you require reasonable accommodations during the application process, please call (512) 463-0865.