



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE BROOKS LANDGRAF

DISTRICT 81  
ANDREWS · ECTOR · WARD · WINKLER

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 2017



### STATE REPRESENTATIVE BROOKS LANDGRAF

Dear Fellow West Texans,

The work of the Texas Legislature has finally concluded for the year. As a result of our work, the State of Texas continues to be America's bedrock for economic opportunity and sound state governance. We, as the Texas Legislature, worked with Governor Greg Abbott to pass a fiscally-responsible state budget that is balanced, efficient, and does not raise taxes on our fellow Texans.

It was an honor to once again serve as your voice in the Texas House of Representatives, taking the knowledge and wisdom from discussions with so many of you back to the Texas Capitol to introduce key legislation of which all West Texans can be proud.

As your state representative, my work on your behalf focuses on doing what's best for Texas, but also fighting to ensure that the specific needs of Andrews, Ector, Ward and Winkler counties are addressed in our state government.

Please feel free to contact me if you have a concern or issue that that you may need help with, and please consider providing feedback in the attached survey. Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve. I look forward to continuing my fight to keep Texas the best place in the nation to live, work, and raise a family.

God Bless Texas,

Brooks Landgraf

**Committees:**

Energy Resources • Environmental Regulation  
Local & Consent Calenders



Rep. Brooks Landgraf At Work On House Floor



DISTRICT 81 – ANDREWS, ECTOR, WARD, AND WINKLER COUNTIES  
EL 312 • P.O. Box 2910 • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768-2910 • 512-463-0546 • BROOKS.LANDGRAF@HOUSE.TEXAS.GOV • WWW.HOUSE.TEXAS.GOV  
DISTRICT OFFICE: 119 WEST 4TH STREET, SUITE 205 • ODESSA, TEXAS 79761 • 432-332-0937



## LEGISLATIVE RECAP

### 85TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION SUMMARY

The Legislature is comprised of two chambers: the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate is made up of 31 members, while the House has 150. A bill must pass with a majority vote in both chambers before it can be sent to the governor to be signed into law.

This year's regular session of the Texas Legislature began on January 10th and ended May 31st. The Texas Constitution requires the Texas Legislature to meet for 140 days every odd-numbered year. The Constitution also authorizes the governor to call the Legislature to convene in a special legislative session to take up specific items. Gov. Abbott exercised that authority earlier this year, and the Senate and House met for an additional 30 days at the Capitol during July and August.

Both legislative sessions were productive and produced conservative results for Texas. I was proud to do my part to work successfully to pass pro-life legislation which defunded Planned Parenthood at the state level, and banned partial-birth and dismemberment abortions. We also passed measures to increase necessary funding for mental health treatment, and restructured the Department of Family Protective Services to better meet the needs of vulnerable children in the state's foster care system.

To better protect the constitutional rights of our fellow Texans, I voted for legislation that Gov. Abbott signed into law, to protect religious liberty under the First Amendment, and to reduce the red-tape fees for handgun-carrying licenses under the Second Amendment. We also made a large stride in protecting the sanctity of fair elections process by cracking down on mail-in ballot fraud. Under Gov. Abbott's leadership, we also passed convention-of-states legislation so that Texas' sovereignty can be reasserted at the federal level.

After years of the federal government's refusal to secure the border, the Texas Legislature reaffirmed our efforts to secure the border by voting to continue our DPS border surge of 250 trained and equipped state troopers along the Rio Grande. We also put an end to "sanctuary cities" in our state, and will hold local governments accountable when they refuse to enforce laws aimed to prevent illegal immigration.

While more work needs to be done to better educate all young Texans and prepare them for the future, we were successful in making incremental improvements to schools and our state's universities.

### IMPROVED PUBLIC EDUCATION

I'm in favor of repealing the "Robin Hood" system of school finance because it has a tremendously negative impact on our school districts in the Permian Basin, and it doesn't appear to be helping other schools across the state who are supposed to benefit from it. I proudly introduced legislation to repeal Robin Hood, but we simply didn't have the votes to make it pass during the legislative sessions this year.

Even though a repeal of Robin Hood fell short, we were able to make incremental improvements in school funding, particularly for West Texas schools. Many of the school districts in the area I serve will receive part of a \$150 million hardship grant related to the Additional State Aid for Tax Relief program.

We also took steps to fulfill a promise to Texas' retired teachers by ensuring that their pension plans and health insurance coverage are maintained moving forward. Because the state made a promise many years ago, I believe we should keep that promise because it's the right thing to do. It also sends a message that we want to continue to attract the best and brightest to be teachers in Texas classrooms, and that we will treat our teachers well.

### ADVANCED PRO-LIFE POLICIES

The special session was a win for pro-life policies. For example, House Bill 214 was passed to remove mandatory coverage for elective abortions from health insurance plans, regardless of whether it is a government plan or a private plan. Additionally, thanks to our efforts, Texas taxpayer funds will no longer be used to provide abortions, and state funds are now more readily available for alternatives to abortion and other women's health needs. Lastly, I was very proud to co-author legislation that now makes partial-birth abortions and dismemberment abortions illegal in Texas.

### CRACKED DOWN ON MAIL-IN BALLOT FRAUD

Mail-in ballot fraud has quickly become a problem in certain parts of Texas. Any ballot fraud in any part of our state dilutes the votes of all Texans. Thankfully, we successfully cracked down on this already-illegal practice by elevating existing penalties for those who knowingly or intentionally deceive, mislead, or misinform voters, or otherwise commit fraud with a mail-in ballot. This new law will eliminate electronic signatures on applications for mail-in ballots, require signature verification and ballot board committees to reject fraudulent ballots that are not a match.

### ADDRESSED MATERNAL MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY

The Health and Human Services Commission has been directed to evaluate options to address the most prevalent causes of maternal death, such as postpartum depression. Legislation we passed at the Capitol this year will also screen pregnant women for substance abuse and domestic violence, and provide needed treatment and resources to expectant mothers and new mothers.



*Monahans Legislative Day*



*Winkler County Legislative Day*

# TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

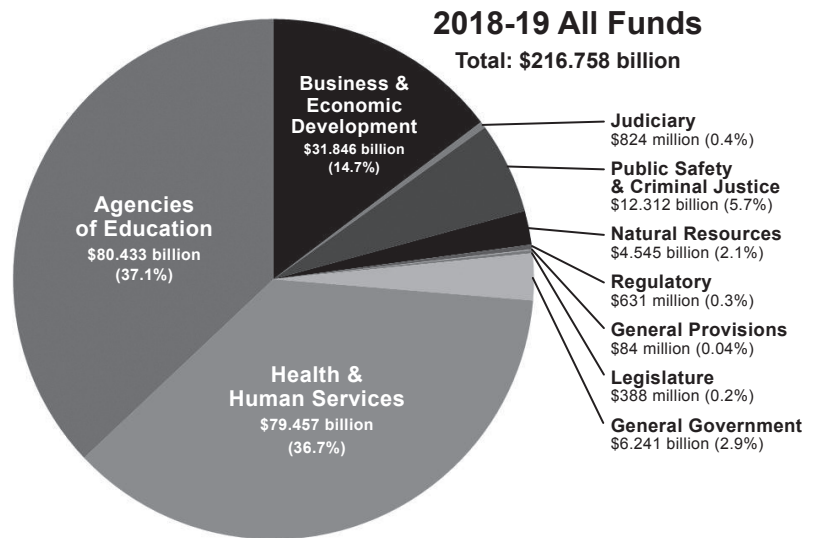
## FIGHTING FOR TEXAS

The 85th Legislative session concluded with a balanced two-year budget supporting conservative measures to bolster our state's economy. Below is a summary of the newly-passed state budget.

### 2018-2019 STATE BUDGET

The Texas Constitution requires the Texas Legislature to write and pass a budget during each regular legislative session. This budget determines the allocation of funding for state programs and services during the 2018-2019 biennium.

Included in the \$216.8 billion dollar budget, public education will receive \$80.4 billion, public safety and criminal justice will receive \$12.3 billion, transportation infrastructure will receive \$31.9 billion, and health and human services will receive \$79.5 billion, which must be spent to meet the state's federal Medicaid obligations. Nevertheless, this budget is fiscally conservative because it does not raise taxes, and actually reduces the size of state government on a per-capita basis.



NOTES: (1) Includes certain anticipated supplemental spending adjustments if applicable. (2) Excludes Interagency Contracts. (3) Biennial change and percentage change are calculated on actual amounts before rounding. Therefore, figure totals may not sum due to rounding.



Andrews County Legislative Day

the Texas Fuels legislation does not raise taxes or fees for Texas taxpayers. Instead, the funding will be covered by an existing, underutilized state fund that was established to reduce vehicle emissions in Texas as part of a deal to keep the EPA from over-regulating our state.

### PUSHED BACK AGAINST FEDERAL OVERREACH

Texans' call for a Convention of States was heard loud and clear this year at the Capitol. The Texas Legislature passed legislation that serves as an application to Congress for a convention for states to convene for the limited purpose of imposing fiscal restraints on the federal government, limiting the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limiting the terms of elected officials, including members of Congress.

### SAVED LIVES OF FOSTER CHILDREN

The 2018-2019 budget will add \$40.9 million to help foster families and providers. In addition, \$80 million will add nearly 600 additional caseworkers, decreasing caseloads. These budgeted dollars will also redesign and expand into a number of areas, including adding \$8.8 million to prevention and early intervention programs. The sum of these efforts will keep Texas' most vulnerable children safer and better positioned to enjoy normal lives and grow to be productive members of society.

### PASSED TEXAS FUELS LEGISLATION

Texas Fuels legislation I authored was signed into law by Gov. Abbott and serves as a major win for the Texas energy industry, particularly in the Permian Basin. As a result of my legislation, Texas government fleet vehicles will now be running on natural-gas based fuels. In effect, our state's fleet vehicles can now run on fuel that is abundantly found here in the Permian Basin. The other impacts of this legislation will be that there is more transparency in certain taxes and fees, economic and job opportunities in natural-gas producing regions of the state will increase, and the air in Texas will become cleaner. Importantly,



Rep. Landgraf Presiding Over House of Representatives



# LEGISLATIVE WINS FOR WEST TEXAS

## CHRIS KYLE MEMORIAL HIGHWAY HONORS HOMETOWN HERO

I was proud to introduce and pass legislation to name State Highway 191 in Ector County as the “Chris Kyle Memorial Highway.” This stretch of highway in Odessa runs directly adjacent to the new Chris Kyle Memorial Plaza, which is a tribute to the Odessa-born U.S. Navy SEAL, who is considered one of the most lethal snipers in American history, with 160 confirmed enemy kills. Chris Kyle spent countless hours as a leader helping his fellow veterans with their transition back into civilian life. His life story was portrayed in the film “American Sniper.” The dedicated stretch of road and memorial will serve as a reminder of the service of Chris Kyle and his fellow veterans. Equally important, it will remind all of us who travel on the Chris Kyle Memorial Highway that our freedom comes with a price.

## DPS TROOPER MEMORIALIZED ON I-20 IN WARD COUNTY

Similarly, after being asked by members of the West Texas law enforcement community, I introduced a bill earlier this year to honor a fallen state trooper who was killed in the line of duty more than a decade ago. I proudly filed and passed a bill that has named a stretch of I-20 in Ward County as the “Trooper Billy Jack Zachary Memorial Highway.” Trooper Zachary was killed while making a routine traffic stop on New Year’s Day in 2006 along the stretch of highway that now bears his name. I hope this measure honors his memory and legacy, and that we will all be more mindful of the sacrifices our first responders make to keep us safe.



*Odessa-Midland Legislative Day*



AUSTIN TX 78768-2910  
PO BOX 2910  
BROOKS LANDGRAF  
TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE





# CONSTITUENT SURVEY



Name(s) of person filling out survey: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you support providing more funds to build newer and safer roads for West Texans?

Yes  No

Do you support a repeal of the "Robin Hood" school funding plan that takes money from West Texas schools and redistributes it to other parts of the state?

Yes  No

Do you support a reduction in the number, frequency, and impact of standardized tests?

Yes  No

Do you support unlicensed open-carry of handguns in Texas?

Yes  No

Please circle the most important legislative issue:

*Border Security*

*Criminal Justice Reform*

*Energy Policy*

*Healthcare*

*Public and Higher Education*

*Religious Freedom*

*Second Amendment Rights*

*Tax Relief*

*Transportation*

What do you believe is the single most important issue facing Texas today?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any other comments or concerns?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



*Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. With your important feedback, I can better serve as your voice in Austin when the Texas Legislature meets again.*

*Sincerely,*

*Brooks Landgraf*



*Representative Landgraf, his wife, Shelby, and their daughter, Hollis Rose, visit Gov. Abbott*



# BROOKS LANDGRAF HOUSE DISTRICT 81 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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Austin, Texas  
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Austin, Texas 78768-2910  
P.O. Box 2910

**BROOKS LANDGRAF**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE



## CONTACT REP. BROOKS LANDGRAF

### MAIL:

P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas  
78768-2910

### CAPITOL OFFICE:

Capitol Building E1.312  
Austin, Texas  
(512) 463-0546  
Fax (512) 463-1051

[brooks.landgraf@house.texas.gov](mailto:brooks.landgraf@house.texas.gov)

### DISTRICT OFFICE:

119 West 4th Street, Suite 205  
Odessa, Texas 79761  
(432) 332-0937

House Website:

[www.house.state.tx.us/members/member-page/?district=81](http://www.house.state.tx.us/members/member-page/?district=81)

**Committees:** Energy Resources, Environmental Regulation and Local Consent & Calenders

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