



# CANDY NOBLE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ DISTRICT 89



## 87TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



**CANDY NOBLE**  
DISTRICT 89

Dear Friends,

I love serving on your behalf in the Texas House.

The 87th Legislative Session has come to a close, but Special Sessions have kept me working in Austin for a good bit of the year. During the Regular Session, we tackled some big issues, including a state budget impacted by Covid-19. We continued to meet our obligations to fund our schools, and worked on many issues that our state has been facing during Covid - definitely obstacles we never anticipated just two years ago at the conclusion of the last session. This newsletter will include some of the highlights of successes we achieved, accomplishments that will help ensure that Texas will remain an amazing place to live, work, and raise a family.

This term has been a busy one. I am serving on three Committees: Ways and Means, Human Services, and Resolutions Calendars. Each committee requires a great deal of time reading all of the bills and resolutions that are heard, and then listening to the testimony of those who come or submit an opinion on that issue. The work of the state is serious business and I do my best to represent you well, digging into the details of each bill to determine if the bill is necessary and helpful for Texas.

Thank you to all who have called, sent emails and letters, or visited our office in Austin during the sessions to share your thoughts or advocate for, or against, a bill. It was both helpful and encouraging to have your input.

Also included inside is a brief, simplified summary of the eight proposed constitutional amendments that will be on your November ballot. Constitutional amendments differ from regular legislative bills in that they require statewide voter approval. You will have a chance to make your preference known by voting on November 2nd. For more detailed information on the amendments, please visit <https://tlc.texas.gov/publications#ale-section>. For your convenience, important election dates are listed on the back page of this newsletter.

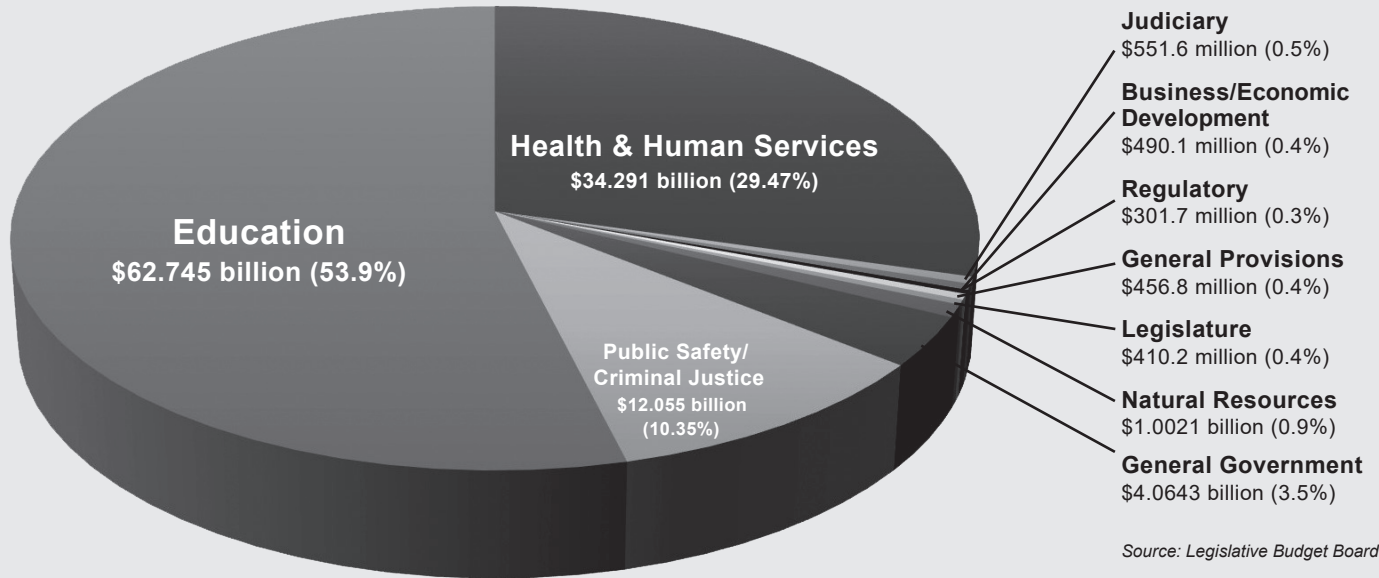
Thank you for the honor of serving as your State Representative in the Texas House. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our office if we can be of service.

Respectfully,

  
Candy Noble

## 2022-23 GENERAL REVENUE

Total: \$116.368 billion



## CUTTING EXPENSES

**\$248.5 BILLION**

Total Budget Appropriation For The 2022-23 Budget Cycle

**\$13.5 BILLION**

Less Than The Previous Budget (About A 5.2% Decrease)

**3% DECREASE**

In Total State Funding Included In The Budget

**\$15.5 BILLION**

Decrease In Federal Funding Included In The Budget

**\$15.5 BILLION**

Decrease In Federal Funding From The U.S. Government

**\$11.6 BILLION**

Projected Balance For The "Rainy Day Fund"

## SUMMARY

The state is tightening its belt and being smart with taxpayer dollars. SB 1 is a balanced budget that stays well below all Constitutional spending limits. Included is our commitment to fully fund public education, the health care needs of our most vulnerable Texans, border security efforts, and more. Here are some highlights from the 2022-23 State Budget.

## HEALTH CARE \$34.2 BILLION

**\$352M**

for women's health programs, \$10.2M more than current spending.

**\$164.2M**

to lower CPS caseworker workloads, expand Community-based care for foster children, and increase capacity in the foster care system.

**\$8.4B**

in behavioral health funding across 25 state agencies.

**\$76.9M**

to serve more individuals with intellectual, developmental, and physical disabilities on the community waiver interest list.

## PUBLIC EDUCATION \$46.5 BILLION

**\$664M**

for targeted programs to help students and schools affected by the pandemic.

**\$464M**

for increases to Foundation School Program formula funds & various student allotments.

**\$11B**

in federal funding delivered directly to schools.

## OTHER KEY INITIATIVES

**\$34 million**

for counties to purchase new auditable voting machines & an increase of \$1.4 million for training county election officials.

**\$30.2 billion**

to the Department of Transportation for highway planning and design, construction, maintenance and preservation.

**More than \$1 Billion for Border Security** - the budget includes an increase in funding for border security, bringing the total allocation to more than \$1 billion. A majority of that funding goes to the 700 Texas National Guard members deployed, the DPS operations on the border, and surge operations when additional personnel are needed for border protection efforts.

# ★ NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS ★

## ERCOT REFORM

During February's winter storm, an estimated 3.3 million Texans were without power. Gov. Abbott quickly designated ERCOT reform as an emergency item. The Legislature was quick to study the issue and pass bills intending to prevent the massive outages experienced during the winter event from ever happening again. While the State of Texas does not produce electricity, we do have oversight of those who do.

**SB 3** reorganizes how we manage our power grid, making multiple reforms to ensure that Texas is prepared for natural disasters. These reforms include:

- making changes to the membership of the PUC to provide greater government oversight.
- creating the Texas Electricity Supply Chain Security and Mapping Committee to better prepare Texas' grid for potential supply-chain disruptions.
- ensuring that all services necessary to provide power to Texas' homes and businesses are budgeted for and protected from weather emergencies.
- creating a statewide power outage alert system so that utilities can quickly react to outages.

**SB 2** reforms the governance of ERCOT by:

- establishing residential requirements for board members.
- requiring members to have expertise in industry-specific areas.
- prohibiting those with fiduciary standing in the electric market from participating.

**HB 17** ensures homeowners, builders, and businesses have the ability to decide how best to meet their energy needs by preserving customer choice and access to energy sources in Texas.

**HB 1510** provides the funding mechanism necessary to ensure winterization of Texas' power grids.

**HB 1520** provides securitization financing for gas utilities to recover extraordinary costs from February's storm and requires a study of measures to mitigate similar future costs.

## TEXAS PANDEMIC RECOVERY

Texas has the 9th-largest economy in the world and we are committed to keeping Texas strong on business and jobs. The Legislature has been working on efforts to aid businesses in recovering from losses due to Covid-19. From lockdowns to limited capacity openings, we passed a number of bills this session to help ensure businesses, especially small businesses, are protected and able to once again flourish.

**SB 6** provides retroactive lawsuit protections for large and small businesses, religious institutions, non-profit entities, healthcare providers, first responders, and educational institutions.

**HB 1195** protects small businesses by not taxing them for receiving paycheck protection loans.

**HB 5** creates a broadband expansion plan to deliver high-speed internet to underserved areas in Texas.

**HB 7** creates a stopgap solution to ensure Texas' unemployment fund remains solvent without crushing Texas small businesses that pay into the fund.

## STRENGTHENING YOUR RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS

Texas is well-known as a pro Second Amendment state. This session, the Texas Legislature made sure the Lone Star State stays that way by passing several priority bills to protect gun rights for Texans.



*Rep. Noble working with colleagues on the House Floor.*



*It is always fun seeing folks from home. Enjoyed visiting with this group from Fairview.*

**HB 1927** The Firearm Carry Act allows all law-abiding Texans age 21 and older to carry a holstered handgun for personal protection if they are qualified to purchase a gun legally in Texas.

**HB 2622** names Texas a Second Amendment Sanctuary State, providing a layer of protection against federal overreach.

## ELECTION INTEGRITY

Voting in a free and fair election is the most basic of American rights. This Legislature passed several bills protecting the election process with the goal of assuring voters of the security of our elections and restoring faith in the process across our state.

**HB 1264** makes the process of removing deceased persons from voter rolls more efficient.

**HB 1128** clarifies who may be lawfully present at a polling place, early voting ballot board, and central counting stations.

**HB 2283** bans private donations. This law will prohibit election administrators from accepting large donations from private individuals and organizations for the purposes of administering elections.

**HB 574** increases the penalties for conducting fraudulent activity in elections. The bill would make statute consistent by elevating some current election-related offenses from misdemeanors to felonies and would appropriately punish individuals who committed election fraud.



# ★ NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS ★

## PUBLIC EDUCATION

This session, the Texas Legislature passed public education bills that will play a pivotal role in providing the most efficient and supportive education possible to our students.

**HB 1525** is phase 2 of School Finance Reform. This bill increases the Foundation School Program formula funding and various student allotments. Additionally, HB 1525 made some fixes to the School Finance Reform from the 86th Legislature to provide more equity for rural districts.

- The state's contributing rates are increasing in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) from 7.5% in 2020-21 to 7.75% in FY 2022 and 8.0% in FY 2023, assuring that TRS is solvent both now and in the future.

## RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The Texas House and Senate stood proudly united to pass important bills to protect religious freedom and ensure that no governmental entity has the power to close a house of worship.

**HB 1239** ensures no church or house of worship is closed by government overreach.

**SB 581** preserves private property owners' right to religious expression by prohibiting homeowners' associations (HOAs) from adopting restrictive rules to remove religious displays on a homeowners' property.

**HB 525** confirms religious organizations and their activities are essential at all times, including during a declared state of disaster.

**SJR 27** (on your November ballot) gives voters the opportunity to strengthen religious freedom by changing the state Constitution to include a ban on local officials closing houses of worship.

## PROTECTING INNOCENT LIFE

The 87th Regular Session was one of the most-Pro-Life Texas Legislative sessions in state history. From the Texas Heartbeat Act to a pre-ban on abortions, we delivered on major victories for two very prominent Pro-Life bills this session.

**SB 8** The Texas Heartbeat Act is necessary to protect more lives of unborn children. By prohibiting abortion after a fetal heartbeat is detected, this law ensures that an unborn child is carried to the full term of a woman's pregnancy. This law provides an exception for a woman experiencing a valid medical emergency, as determined and documented by the physician.

**HB 1280** sets the stage for Texas to fully ban abortions 30-days after the U.S. Supreme Court issues a decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*. Rather than waiting for a new legislative session, this new law allows Texas to immediately take action to protect lives.

### In the state budget:

- \$100 million in funding Alternatives to Abortion programs.
- \$352.6 million in funding for women's health programs, an increase of \$10.2 million from the previous budget cycle.
- Maintains the state's ban prohibiting abortion providers from receiving state funds or participating in family planning.

## HEALTHCARE FOR TEXANS

Texans want three things when it comes to their own healthcare: access to care, affordability, and control over their ability to make their own healthcare decisions. This session featured monumental changes in how we approach all three of these priorities by expanding telehealth, using existing programs to help reduce the costs of prescription drugs for Texans in need, and expanding options for coverage.

**HB 4** broadly expands telemedical services eligible for reimbursement, including preventive health, case management, physical therapy, and more. This includes face-to-face telemedical services, audio-only, and text message services in certain cases.

**HB 3752** creates the Texas Mutual Health Coverage Plan available to individuals & small businesses who lack traditional health insurance.

**HB 3924** authorizes the Texas Farm Bureau to offer a health benefit plan to its members. This will give rural access to more competitive health plans.

**SB 1137** requires a hospital to disclose health care costs, standard charges and shoppable services upon request to their patients to avoid surprise billing.

**HB 18** establishes a self-replenishing fund to give 3 million Texans access to prescription rebates that will reduce the cost of prescription drugs. This program will serve the uninsured and under-insured.

**HB 2658** eliminates government red tape for children in Medicaid.

My staff and I are here to serve you. Constituents of House District 89 are encouraged to contact my Capitol and District offices for assistance on state issues. We can also help you with:

- Researching Legislative Information
- Arranging Capitol Tours
- Assisting with State Agencies
- Ordering Congratulatory Certificates, Resolutions, and Texas Flags

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions, comments, or concerns!



*I love showing children around the Capitol.  
Here's four of my grandkids at my desk on the House Floor.*

# ★ CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION ★

## PROPOSITION 1, HJR 143: Charitable Raffles at Rodeo Venues

**The Ballot Will Read:** *“The constitutional amendment authorizing the professional sports team charitable foundations of organizations sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association or the Women’s Professional Rodeo Association to conduct charitable raffles at rodeo venues.”*

**Summary:** Currently several professional sports organizations in Texas are allowed to conduct raffles for their charitable foundations at their events. Prop 1, if passed, would allow Professional Rodeo Associations to be included on the list of groups that may hold raffles to benefit their charities.

## PROPOSITION 2, HJR 99: County Bonds for Underutilized Areas

**The Ballot Will Read:** *“The constitutional amendment authorizing a county to finance the development or redevelopment of transportation or infrastructure in unproductive, underdeveloped, or blighted areas in the county.”*

**Summary:** Currently, the Texas Constitution allows an incorporated city or town to issue bonds or notes to finance the development or redevelopment of an area of their jurisdiction. Prop 2, if passed, would allow counties to also issue bonds or notes for the same purpose, with limits on the amounts allowed and prohibiting a county from using these bonds for toll-road infrastructure.

## PROPOSITION 3, SJR 27: Protecting the Right to Worship in Person

**The Ballot Will Read:** *“The constitutional amendment to prohibit this state or a political subdivision of this state from prohibiting or limiting religious services of religious organizations.”*

**Summary:** When an emergency happens in Texas, this proposition will affirm the U.S. Constitutional First Amendment right to freedom of religion and assembly by protecting churches from being shut down in Texas. Prop 3, if passed, would confirm that those who do the work of the religious organizations are needed during a crisis, affirming that churches are always essential to the fabric of Texas.

## PROPOSITION 4, SJR 47: Eligibility Requirements to Run for District Judge or Justice

**The Ballot Will Read:** *“The constitutional amendment changing the eligibility requirements for a justice of the supreme court, a judge of the court of criminal appeals, a justice of a court of appeals, and a district judge.”*

**Summary:** This proposition, if passed, would require anyone eligible to run for the offices of Justice on the Supreme Court of Texas, the Court of Criminal Appeals or a District Court of Appeals to have practiced law in Texas for 10 years, be a resident of Texas, and not have had their law license suspended or revoked during those 10 years. Under Prop 4, District Court Judge qualifications will include the same eligibility requirements, except the term during which they must have practiced law or served as a judge must add up to 8 years.

## PROPOSITION 5, HJR 165: Uniform Ethics Standards for Judges and Judicial Candidates

**The Ballot Will Read:** *“The constitutional amendment providing additional powers to the State Commission on Judicial Conduct with respect to candidates for judicial office.”*

**Summary:** Currently the constitution gives the Texas Commission on Judicial Conduct the authority to investigate complaints against judges and justices and impose discipline when appropriate, including suspending or removing them from office for violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct. Prop 5, if passed, would authorize the Commission to investigate complaints and take similar actions against candidates for judicial office for misconduct, therefore holding them to the same ethical standards.

## PROPOSITION 6, SJR 19: The Right to an Essential Caregiver for In-Person Visitation

**The Ballot Will Read:** *“The constitutional amendment establishing a right for residents of certain facilities to designate an essential care giver for in-person visitation.”*

**Summary:** During Covid-19 senior living facilities locked down, denying patients and residents visits from their loved ones. Prop 6, if passed, will assure seniors, and others in nursing facilities, that at least one person will always be able to check, in person, on that resident’s well being.

## PROPOSITION 7, HJR 125: School Tax Exemptions for Some Surviving Spouses

**The Ballot Will Read:** *“The constitutional amendment to allow the surviving spouse of a person who is disabled to receive a limitation on the school district ad valorem taxes on the spouse’s residence homestead if the spouse is 55 years of age or older at the time of the person’s death.”*

**Summary:** Prop 7, if passed, would allow for a surviving spouse of a disabled person, if the surviving spouse was at least 55 years old when their spouse passed away, to continue to receive a break on their homestead’s school taxes.

## PROPOSITION 8, SJR 35: Tax Exemptions for the Surviving Spouse of our Fallen Soldiers

**The Ballot Will Read:** *“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a member of the armed services of the United States who is killed or fatally injured in the line of duty.”*

**Summary:** Currently there are a few Texans who are exempt from paying property taxes, including 100% disabled veterans. Prop 8, if passed, would include the surviving spouse of a service member killed or fatally injured in the line of duty.

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*Committees: Ways and Means • Human Services • Resolutions Calendars*

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## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION DATES:

**OCTOBER 4, 2021**  
DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE

**OCTOBER 18, 2021**  
EARLY VOTING BEGINS

**OCTOBER 29, 2021**  
EARLY VOTING ENDS

**NOVEMBER 2, 2021**  
ELECTION DAY

