



# CANDY NOBLE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ DISTRICT 89



## 88TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



**CANDY NOBLE**  
DISTRICT 89

Dear Friends,

I love serving on your behalf in the Texas House.

The 88th Legislative Session has come to a close, but Special Sessions have kept us working in Austin for a good bit of the year. We've tackled some big issues, including record-breaking state revenue that resulted in historic Property Tax relief and reform. We continued to balance our budget using the strict measures (population plus inflation growth) allowed by our Texas Constitution, while meeting our obligations to fund our schools, roads and crucial border security.

This newsletter will highlight some of the successes we achieved that will help ensure that Texas remains an amazing place to live, work, and raise a family. This term has been a busy one. I am serving on four committees: Ways and Means, Human Services, Select Study Committee on Sustainable Property Tax Relief, and the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Community Based Care Transition. Each committee requires a great deal of time reading all of the bills and resolutions that are considered, 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. 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.

It was exciting to pass bills that were suggested by some of you. I'm grateful for those who see a lack in our laws and reach out to me with some outstanding legislative ideas. House District 89 folks are the best.



Also included inside is a brief, simplified summary of the fourteen 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 7th. For more detailed information on the amendments, please visit [tlc.texas.gov/publications#ale-section](http://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*  
Candy Noble

## ★ THE TEXAS PLAN FOR PROPERTY TAX RELIEF ★

I am a proud co-author of SB 2 and HJR 2 which provide a total of \$18 billion in property tax relief making this the *largest tax cut in Texas history*. A plan this big requires that Texans vote on it as Constitutional Amendment Proposition 4. Reducing property taxes, providing relief to small business owners, and reforming our appraisal system will ensure economic growth and prosperity, a signature victory for all Texans.

**Lowering School Property Tax Rates** – With \$7.6 billion of relief through compression, SB 2 reduces the school property tax rate by 10.7 cents. In combination with the tax rate compression in the state budget, this buy-down results in over 20 cents of compression and \$12.9 billion dedicated to tax relief.

**Increasing the Homestead Exemption** – Increasing the mandatory Homestead Exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000 means that homestead owners will have \$100,000 of home value that is not taxable. If you are over 65 or have a disabled exemption and your taxes are already frozen, you are not left out. Under this bill, you will receive the full benefit of previous and future homestead exemption increases.

**Non-homestead Property ‘Circuit Breaker’** – Creating a three year pilot program (2024-2026) for all non-home-

steaded properties valued at \$5 million and under (both residential and commercial) will limit these property owner’s taxable value to a maximum increase of 20% per year.

**Accountability and Transparency** – SB 2 will ensure that our appraisal system is more accountable and transparent by creating three elected members to the Central Appraisal Districts board of directors for counties with a population of 75,000 or more, including Collin County. It also provides a petition option for appraisal board candidates in place of paying a filing fee. These new members will be elected in May.

**Relief for Small Businesses** – For business tax relief, SB 3 doubles the current franchise tax exemption to \$2.47 million and removes the requirement to file a no-tax due franchise tax return.

## ★ ACROSS THE FINISH LINE ★

I was honored to carry and pass 20 bills this session to protect our kids and elderly, help secure the integrity of our elections, eliminate government red tape, protect our tax dollars from fraud, and more. Here are just a few highlights:

**SB 1849** creates one search engine, instead of four, “Do Not Hire” registries so that those who are known to engage in abuse, neglect, exploitation, or misconduct with children and the elderly will not have access to them in the future. This bill will allow for one search of lists by the Texas Education Agency, our Juvenile Justice Department, Department of Family and Protective Services (CPS), and the Health and Human Services Commission (they look into allegations of abuse and exploitation of our elderly population) to allow all those who hire in these areas to identify bad players and avoid employing them, in doing so protecting our most vulnerable Texans.

**SB 1469** protects preschools from hiring those who have been accused of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

**SB 1471** permits our accredited private schools in Texas to have access to the FBI and TEA’s Do Not Hire list, so that we don’t “pass the trash” from our public schools to our private schools.

**SB 1192** requires anyone working for our Health and Human Services Commission to pass a background check, ensuring that those with access to personal and sensitive information are trustworthy.

**HB 793** gives parents who have had their children removed by CPS more options to obtain their court-ordered services and achieve family reunification more quickly.

**HB 1959** allows our peace officers to move their own children to a different school or district if they need to do so. Those who lay their lives on the line for us each day need to be assured that their own children are safe from those who might harm them.

**HB 1299** makes it clear that only the voter may sign the carrier envelope of their mail-in ballot, and must do so with original ink on paper to protect voters from someone using their signature without their permission.

**HB 219** requires a mortgage lender to release your home’s deed of trust when you pay off your loan. I was shocked to find that Texas had no such regulation, and that some bad actors in the lending community were not releasing those paid-off liens.

**SB 65** eliminates an unfair sales tax on transcripts for our private Texas Universities.

**HB 198** exempts travel trailers from state inspections.

**SB 745** expands the prosecution of healthcare fraud. When it comes to our tax dollars, we want to make sure that our money is being spent wisely. Each year almost half-a-billion dollars in Medicaid fraud is discovered by our Attorney General and Ombudsman offices. This bill will now allow them to also investigate and prosecute fraud in our other state healthcare systems: Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Healthy Texas Women. I expect this bill to result in a great deal of tax dollars being recovered in the years ahead so that those who are truly needy will get the benefit of these programs instead of the shysters who find a way to make money off of our state’s healthcare programs.

**HB 4077** when a homestead property’s owner turns 65, this bill requires each county’s chief appraiser to automatically apply the additional \$10,000 exemption, to which seniors are entitled on their school district taxes, without the resident being required to fill out an application or form.

**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!



*Rod Rabum of Fairview came to testify for HB 198, a bill idea he brought to me to eliminate travel trailers from state inspections.*

# ★ NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS ★

MOST OF THESE BECAME EFFECTIVE ON SEPTEMBER 1

## PROTECTING TEXANS ONLINE

**HB 4** creates rights for Texans online by regulating the use of customer data by businesses. With the Texas Data Privacy and Security Act Texans are given more control over how their personal data is collected and used online.

**HB 18** the Securing Children Online through Parental Empowerment (SCOPE) Act protects children from the harmful effects of social media by requiring parental consent for minors to use digital services.

**HB 1181** restricts children's access to pornographic materials online. Under the new law, those who allow children access to these pornographic materials will be held liable for damages.

**SB 1893** establishes a state policy on the use of social media services and applications such as TikTok that pose potential security risks to the state.

## EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SAFETY

**SB 10** provides a cost-of-living adjustment and a 13th check for retired teachers in Texas (Constitutional Amendment Prop 9).

**HB 900** prevents sexually explicit and inappropriate literature from being in public school libraries. The bill also establishes an explicit content rating system for book vendors selling to public school libraries so that parents and teachers are aware of each book's content.

**HB 1605** allows parents to access and review instructional materials, improves curriculum for students and increases professional development tools for teachers.

**HB 3** provides schools with a new standard of emergency preparedness and response, while also increasing state funding through the school safety allotment.

## HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM

**HB 8** establishes a new dynamic state funding formula and levels for public junior college and workforce development.

**SB 15** requires student-athletes at Texas universities compete based on biological sex.

**SB 17** eliminates Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) offices at Texas Public Institutions of Higher Learning.

**SB 18** reforms the appointment, review, and dismissal processes for professor tenure.

**HB 1595** creates the Texas University Fund to keep university research competitive across Texas and the nation (Constitutional Amendment Prop 5).

## HEALTHCARE REFORM

**SB 490** requires health care providers itemize all services and supplies when billing patients.

**SB 14** is a compassionate solution that will ensure children are protected from medically unnecessary and irreversible gender modification treatments.

**HB 44** prohibits providers from refusing to provide health care services based solely on the patient's refusal or failure to obtain a vaccine.

**HB 25** allows for the wholesale importation of prescription drugs from Canada through the Texas Wholesale Prescription Drug Importation Program.

**HB 3162** makes much needed pro-life reforms to the Texas Advance Directives Act for end-of-life care.



*Enjoyed spending time with Bethany Jaquess of Allen when she served as an Honorary Page in the Texas House.*

## BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

**HB 2127** directs local governments to forgo regulating issues that are already addressed at the state level. This provides regulatory stability and certainty that enables business owners to expand their businesses to other cities within Texas with more consistency, creating more jobs and prosperity in the process.

**SB 833** prohibits insurance companies in Texas from using environmental, social, or governance (ESG) factors to determine rates. This will ensure insurers charge similar rates for similar hazards and help prevent external pressures from influencing insurers' business decisions.

**HB 14** streamlines the approval process for property development and building reviews by requiring local governments to utilize third-party reviewers if they fail to complete such projects in a timely manner.

**HB 19** creates a specialized business court system to address complex business cases, streamlining the court process.

**HB 17** holds district attorneys accountable for their misconduct and provides an avenue for their removal.

## OTHER NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**SB 12** bans commercial businesses from hosting sexually oriented performances in front of children and makes it an offense for a person to engage in a prohibited sexually oriented performance.

**HB 6** imposes harsher criminal penalties for controlled substance offenses, and the criminal offenses for the production and distribution of certain opioids, like fentanyl.

**HB 9** establishes the Texas Broadband Infrastructure Fund to increase access to high-speed internet. This bill is especially important to the more rural parts of HB 89, where some residents still have only antiquated internet available (Constitutional Amendment Prop 8).

**SB 29** prevents state and local governmental entities from enforcing masks, vaccine mandates, and closures of businesses and schools.

**HJR 132** takes a proactive step to ban the state from EVER imposing a wealth tax on its citizens (Constitutional Amendment Prop 3).



# ★ CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION ★

## PROPOSITION 1, HJR 126: PROTECTING FARMERS AND RANCHERS

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment protecting the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management."

**Summary:** Farmers and ranchers who work their crops and herds within city or county boundaries often deal with differing city or county regulations and restrictions. This amendment seeks to address the issue of overregulation by constitutionally protecting landowners' right to engage in certain generally accepted agricultural practices on their own property.

## PROPOSITION 2, SJR 64: PROPERTY TAX RELIEF FOR CHILD-CARE FACILITIES

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment authorizing a local option exemption from ad valorem taxation by a county or municipality of all or part of the appraised value of real property used to operate a child-care facility."

**Summary:** This proposition grants counties and cities the option to grant a partial (not less than 50%) or a total property tax exemption for child-care facilities. Proponents have the goal of making childcare more accessible and affordable, while opponents are concerned that Property Tax exemptions for a specific population shift the tax burden to other property owners.

## PROPOSITION 3 HJR 132: PROHIBITING A WEALTH TAX

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual wealth or net worth tax, including a tax on the difference between the assets and liabilities of an individual or family."

**Summary:** If passed, this proposition would ensure the State of Texas could not issue a wealth tax or a tax on the net worth of an individual or family. Other states, considering imposing this tax, deem accumulated wealth, such as money in savings or a trust, taxable (making it different from an income tax, which is paid on what you earn). This amendment would prohibit that form of taxation from being imposed in our state.

## PROPOSITION 4, HJR 2 (SPECIAL): PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to establish a temporary limit on the maximum appraised value of real property other than a residence homestead for ad valorem tax purposes; to increase the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district applicable to residence homesteads from \$40,000 to \$100,000; to adjust the amount of the limitation on school district ad valorem taxes imposed on the residence homesteads of the elderly or disabled to reflect increases in certain exemption amounts; to except certain appropriations to pay for ad valorem tax relief from the constitutional limitation on the rate of growth of appropriations; and to authorize the legislature to provide for a four-year term of office for a member of the board of directors of certain appraisal districts."

**Summary:** This amendment would provide property tax relief in three specific ways. It would increase the homestead exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000. It would compress or buy down all property owner's taxes by an additional 10.7 cents per \$100 of taxable value. Non-homestead exempted properties, including rental and commercial properties, would have an appraisal cap of 20% for those valued less than \$5 million for the tax years 2024-2026, after which these properties would revert back to the current no cap situation. Additionally, for counties with a population of 75,000 or more, like Collin County, the Appraisal Review Board of Directors will have four more directors added. The county tax assessor-collector will be an ex officio director and the other three positions will be elected by the voters.

## PROPOSITION 5, HJR 3: TEXAS UNIVERSITY FUNDING

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment relating to the Texas University Fund, which provides funding to certain institutions of higher education to achieve national prominence as major research universities and drive the state economy."

**Summary:** The purpose of this amendment is to enhance our Texas public universities research funding and capabilities. This proposition would rename the state's current "National Research University Fund" to the "Texas University Fund" and add \$3.5 billion from general revenue into the fund. Additionally, it allows monies earned as interest from the Economic Stabilization Fund to be deposited into the new account.

## PROPOSITION 6, SJR 75: CREATING THE TEXAS WATER FUND

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment creating the Texas water fund to assist in financing water projects in this state."

**Summary:** It is anticipated that the water needs in Texas will increase 9% while water supply is projected to decline by 18% over the next 50 years. This fund, if established, would support acquisition of water and the needed infrastructure to transport that water. Water sources would include water from other states, desalination projects, produced water treatment plants, aquifer storage and recovery, and potable water reuse projects.

## PROPOSITION 7, SJR 93: CREATING THE TEXAS ENERGY FUND

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the Texas energy fund to support the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities."

**Summary:** This would create the Texas Energy Fund to be administered by the Public Utility Commission to provide loans to upgrade existing dispatchable electric generating facilities in ERCOT that would result in a net increase of 100 megawatts of capacity. This fund would support, through zero interest loans, the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities that produce dispatchable (non-weather dependent) power.

## PROPOSITION 8, HJR 125: CREATING THE BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment creating the broadband infrastructure fund to expand high-speed broadband access and assist in the financing of connectivity projects."

**Summary:** The creation of this fund will build on previous efforts to ensure all Texans have access to broadband. Roughly 90% of all Texans without broadband live in rural Texas. Access to this technology will promote economic development in those areas, allow access to healthcare, where healthcare is scarce, through telemedicine, and provide remote access to education. The fund would be established with \$5 million from the Economic Stabilization (Rainy Day) Fund.

# ★ CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION ★

## PROPOSITION 9, HJR 2: COST OF LIVING RAISE FOR RETIRED TEACHERS

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment authorizing the 88th Legislature to provide a cost-of-living adjustment to certain annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas."

**Summary:** Currently, Texas retired teachers only get a Cost-of-Living (COLA) raise if the legislature funds one. It has been almost 20 years since the last COLA for most retirees. If passed, this amendment will provide teachers, who retired prior to August 31, 2020, a one-time cost-of-living adjustment and an annual COLA contingent on the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) investment returns. Additionally, it will give a supplemental payment of \$5,000 to retirees 75 years of age and older. This investment also increases the member and state contributions to the TRS fund.

## PROPOSITION 10, SJR 87: PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR CERTAIN HEALTHCARE EQUIPMENT AND INVENTORY

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation equipment or inventory held by a manufacturer of medical or biomedical products to protect the Texas healthcare network and strengthen our medical supply chain."

**Summary:** This amendment would give a property tax exemption to medical or biomedical property manufacturers, which are companies that develop and commercialize products to advance public health. Currently, most of these products are produced overseas, and the goal of this amendment is to lower the cost of manufacturing them here, and therefore lower the cost of the medical devices themselves.

## PROPOSITION 11, SJR 32: EL PASO COUNTY PARKS

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment relating to the authority of the legislature to permit conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds supported by ad valorem taxes to fund the development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities."

**Summary:** Allows conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds payable from property taxes for the development of recreation facilities. These bonds, even if this amendment passes, must be approved by local voters. This would add El Paso County to the list of other counties that previously passed this measure. Interesting note: This was a proposed Constitutional Amendment in 2011 and it failed.

## PROPOSITION 12, HJR 134: ABOLISHING THE GALVESTON COUNTY TREASURER

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment providing for the abolition of the office of county treasurer in Galveston County."

**Summary:** The current Galveston County Treasurer ran with the intent to abolish this office. Nine other Texas counties have abolished this office and the duties have been absorbed by other offices. Because this position is in the Texas Constitution, abolishing it requires a change to the Constitution.

## PROPOSITION 13, HJR 107: INCREASING THE MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE OF JUDGES AND JUSTICES

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment to increase the mandatory age of retirement for state justices and judges."

**Summary:** Currently the Texas Constitution requires a state judge or justice to retire at the end of the term during which the judge or justice reaches the age of 75. This change to increase the age from 75 to 79 would allow us to further utilize these experienced judges in our court system.

## PROPOSITION 14, SJR 74: CREATING CENTENNIAL PARKS CONSERVATION FUND

**The Ballot Will Read:** "The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the centennial parks conservation fund to be used for the creation and improvement of state parks."

**Summary:** Currently the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife leases or partially leases land from private corporations which could lead to the land being sold shutting down the park. Currently, no investment can be made without legislative appropriation, and we have missed the opportunity to acquire park land for sale. This fund would allow the department to purchase land and make sustainable investments into new parks, improving current sites, providing grants to local park developments while also supporting land, soil, and water conservation efforts in Texas.



*Had a great time visiting with friends during Collin County Days at the Capitol.*

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*Committees: Ways and Means • Human Services • Select Study Committee on Sustainable Property Tax Relief  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Community Based Care Transition*

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## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION DATES:

**OCTOBER 10, 2023**  
DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE

**OCTOBER 23, 2023**  
EARLY VOTING BEGINS

**NOVEMBER 3, 2023**  
EARLY VOTING ENDS

**NOVEMBER 7, 2023**  
ELECTION DAY



*I enjoy visitors to the Capitol, especially my grandkids!*