



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DAVID COOK

District 96 Newsletter

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Committees

- Calendars
- Criminal Jurisprudence, Vice Chair
- Juvenile Justice & Family Issues

STATE OF TEXAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



INTERIM REPORT

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is an honor to serve as your State Representative for House District 96. Since the 88th Regular Session and four (4) Special Sessions adjourned on December 5, 2023, I have enjoyed being back in the District attending community events, visiting with constituents, and speaking about our legislative victories.

During the period in between regular legislative sessions, the Lt. Governor and the Speaker of the House issue "Interim Charges" for their respective chambers, which are directives to Legislative Committees to conduct research on certain topics in preparation for crafting legislative solutions the following Session. Committee hearings are held on Interim Charges and permit issue experts, advocates, impacted individuals, and the public to testify before lawmakers. In this newsletter, you will find highlights of House Interim Charges which may be of interest to you.

The 89th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature will convene on January 14, 2025 and I look forward to getting back to work for you! Constituent input is invaluable to the legislative process. I appreciate you taking the time to review this newsletter and hope this information is useful to you. I also welcome your thoughts, questions, and ideas on legislation to introduce next Session. Please free to reach out to my office by phone at (512) 463-0374 or by email to david.cook@house.texas.gov to provide feedback.

It is the honor of a lifetime to represent you in the Texas House and to fight for the values of House District 96.

God Bless You and May God Bless the Great State of Texas,

Representative David L. Cook
State Representative
House District 96



HOUSE INTERIM CHARGES

★ **Early Childhood Education Industry** (House Committee on International Relations & Economic Development) – “Evaluate the current state of the early childhood education industry. Review current early childhood policies and evaluate their effectiveness, including barriers to enter the Child Care Services program.”

★ **Adherence to Texas Election Laws** (House Committee on Elections) – “Evaluate the Secretary of State’s Election Audit Program’s findings and solicit information regarding emergent election issues in other counties. Make recommendations to ensure counties faithfully adhere to Texas election laws and those tasked with administering and enforcing the law receive appropriate resources and training.”



Rep. Cook with Lori Williams of the Mansfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Congressman Jake Ellzey

★ **Alleviating Road Traffic** (House Committee on Transportation) – “Identify the state’s most congested roadways and review state forecasts for future congestion and the expected impact on economic activity. Evaluate TxDOT plans for alleviating congestion and consider the necessity of additional options to ensure economic development, congestion, and safety goals are achieved in a timely manner with reduced cost to public tax dollars.”

★ **Professional License Portability for Military & Spouses** (House Committee on Defense & Veterans Affairs) – “Evaluate compliance statewide with Section 19 of the Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-333, 50 U.S.C. §4025a), concerning the portability of professional licenses of service members and spouses and make recommendations to ensure that service members and their spouses may, under appropriate circumstances, continue to practice under a license issued by another jurisdiction.”

★ **Economic Challenges Impacting Insurance Premiums** (House Committee on State Affairs) – “Examine the impact of current economic challenges on the escalating costs of insurance premiums, including factors contributing to the withdrawal of insurance providers from certain markets. Investigate solutions to help Texans more easily and affordably obtain property and casualty insurance coverage. Evaluate long-term strategies for shifting from state-funded insurance programs to sustainable private market alternatives.”

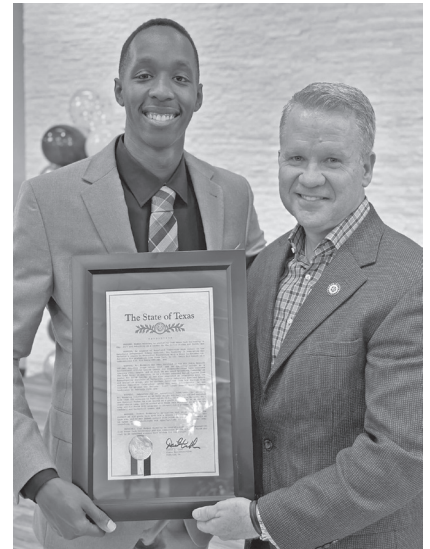
★ **Reliability of Clean Water Access** (House Committee on Natural Resources) – “Evaluate the causes, durations, and incidences of boil water notices issued by public water systems. Identify solutions to keep critical water infrastructure online during public water system failures and consider whether policy changes are necessary to prevent

interruption to the public’s access to clean, reliable drinking water.”

★ **Securing the Border** (House Committee on State Affairs) – “Conduct a review of functions and operations of state agencies involved with carrying out Operation Lone Star as they relate to securing the border and preventing transnational criminal activity. Evaluate whether agencies have sufficient resources and authority to carry out their prescribed duties. Make recommendations to increase the safety and wellbeing of personnel and efficiency of agency operations as needed.”

★ **Early Literacy & Numeracy Outcomes** (House Committee on Public Education) – “Evaluate opportunities to improve students’ foundational early literacy and numeracy outcomes in Pre-Kindergarten through the third grade. Study best practices for identifying students requiring reading and math intervention and providing evidence-based intervention strategies. Recommend changes and evaluate investments to increase the number of students achieving reading and math proficiency by the end of third grade.”

★ **Foreign-Owned Agricultural Land** (House Committee on Agriculture & Livestock) – “Examine foreign ownership of farmland, timberland, and agricultural processing facilities in Texas to determine whether Texas industries and supply chains are adequately protected from threats and disruptions and if further safeguards and restrictions on ownership are needed.”



Celebrating Redmon Warmesley's Texas Tech graduation and admission into the United States Space Force.

★ **Conservation of Texas Farm & Ranch Lands** (House Committee on Culture, Recreation, & Tourism) – “Evaluate the purpose and effectiveness of the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program. Identify the trends and impacts of land fragmentation given the state’s rapid population growth and proud legacy of private land stewardship and evaluate the risks of increased foreign ownership of Texas land resulting from fragmentation. Examine the ecological and economic benefits of existing land conservation programs and the potential future role of strategic conservation initiatives to assist in the preservation of critical natural resources for the benefit of Texans in future generations.”

★ **Strong School-to-Workforce Pipeline** (House Committee on Higher Education) – “Evaluate the alignment of postsecondary success incentives across PK-12 and higher education systems, as well as the tri-agency collaboration between PK-12, postsecondary education, and workforce to advance the ‘Building a Talent Strong Texas’ goals outlined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.”

HOUSE INTERIM CHARGES

★ **Communications Interoperability** (House Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety) – “Study the communications challenges of first responders and emergency personnel. Make recommendations, considering the need for a cross-agency communications upgrade or statewide interoperability plan, to increase reliable, available, and modern communications for public safety and emergency response purposes in communities across the state.”

★ **Support for Texans with Intellectual Disabilities** (House Committee on Human Services) – “Evaluate access to Home and Community-based Services (HCS) waivers, including the interest list, effects of inflation on the cost of services, and availability of services and service providers. Consider the long-term stability of long-term services and supports in waiver programs and consider alternative delivery models.”

★ **Juvenile Justice System Outcomes** (House Committee on Juvenile Justice & Family Issues) – “Evaluate the system for adjudicating and disposing of cases involving delinquent conduct and determine whether changes to juvenile court proceedings and improvements to the planning and funding for services to keep children in the juvenile justice system closer to home will lead to better overall outcomes for youth and public safety.”

★ **ESG** (House Committee on Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services) – “Examine the ways in which environmental, social, and governance (ESG) policies are contradictory to fiduciary duties and the resultant detrimental effect on investors.”

★ **Educational Opportunity** (House Committee on Public Education) – “Consider issues and matters to increase educational opportunities in Texas to ensure that students and families have increased options to attend a high-quality school, regardless of circumstance. Evaluate the use of education savings accounts in other states and make recommendations for a Texas program, including suggestions on eligibility and prioritization of applicants.”

★ **Property Tax Relief** (House Committee on Ways & Means) – “Study and make recommendations to build on the historic property tax relief provided by the 88th Legislature, including whether Texas’ economic performance and state tax revenues support further compression of school district tax rates; whether to extend the limitation on appraised value of certain non-homestead real property past the current expiration date of December 31, 2026; whether to maintain the homestead exemption at its current rate; and whether to further reduce the limit on appraised value of homesteads.”

★ **Housing Affordability** (House Committee on Business & Industry) – “Evaluate the impact on housing prices and rent caused by institutional buyers to determine whether policy changes are needed to ensure families and individuals are not unfairly priced out of homeownership.”

★ **Protections Against Fraudulent Deeds** (House Committee on Business & Industry) – “Examine the proliferation of fraudulent deeds purporting to convey the sale or transfer of real or personal property. Recommend policy changes that will better protect potential victims from this illicit activity.”

HOW CAN WE HELP?

★ **State Agency Assistance** – Having trouble cutting through the bureaucratic red tape? Whether you are having issues renewing your driver’s license, receiving unemployment insurance, applying for an occupational license, etc., please contact my office for assistance.

★ **Capitol Tour** – If you have plans to travel to Austin, my office can assist you with setting up a tour of the Capitol. Complete with visits throughout the capital grounds, these tours cover the rich and extensive history behind the construction of our State’s Capitol, including a behind-the-scenes tour of the Texas House and Senate chambers.

★ **Flag Requests** – Texas flags flown over the State Capitol make great gifts and are available for purchase. All flags are accompanied with a beautiful state certificate encompassing the seal of the Texas House of Representatives.

★ **Congratulatory Resolutions** – At no cost to you, my office is equipped to assist you in marking a special occasion by crafting an official proclamation issued by the Texas House of Representatives. Whether you are commemorating a birth, marriage, anniversary, retirement, or special occasion, please contact my office to learn more.

★ **Honorary Page Program** – The Texas House of Representatives holds a longstanding tradition of hosting the Honorary Page Program for young Texans to exposure to state government. During each legislative session, each House member may appoint up to 10 students to serve a half-day as a Page in the Texas House Chamber. The program is for students between the ages of 8-18. Page participants are tasked with various duties on the House floor and receive an official badge and commemorative photo. If you or someone you know is interested in serving as a Honorary Page, please contact my office to learn more.

★ **Meetings & Events** – If you would like to meet with me face-to-face or have an event invitation, please contact me at david.cook@house.texas.gov.



Rep. Cook leading the Pledge of Allegiance during special session.

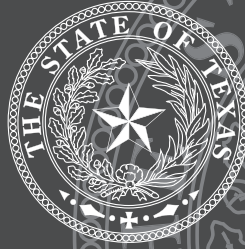
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★ ★ **ELECTION DAY** ★ ★
TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 5TH

POLLS OPEN 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY

EARLY VOTING:
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21-FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2024

LAST DAY TO REGISTER: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7TH

