

ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas
House of Representatives



January 21, 2017

Friends,

Yesterday, Donald Trump was sworn in as the 45th President of the United States of America. I am excited to see how the new administration will handle issues important to Texas. The federal government is currently in a state of transition while the 85th Legislature is hard at work.

The State Budget

The Texas Constitution requires the Legislature to balance the budget without borrowing against future receipts. The appropriations bill details the state's spending plans. Information on revenue comes from the Comptroller of Public Accounts, who tells the Legislature, through a Biennial Revenue Estimate, how much money will be available.

Facing challenging economic forecasts, Comptroller Glenn Hegar announced lawmakers will have \$104.87 billion in state funds to meet the needs of Texans for the next two years, a 2.7 percent decrease from the previous session two years ago.

Each session the House and the Senate file a budget bill and then the two chambers work to resolve differences ultimately adopting a final budget. The House filed a budget proposal that took the first step towards producing a balanced budget that reflects the priorities of the Texas House while not increasing taxes.

Some highlights of the House budget proposal are:

- Public Education – Provides funding to pay for expected enrollment growth of 165,000 students over the next two years. In addition, it includes \$1.5 billion for public education that is contingent upon the passage of legislation that reduces recapture and improves equity in the school finance system.

- Child Protection – Provides \$268 million to bring stability to the CPS workforce and reduce employee turnover, including the higher salaries and additional employees at CPS that were approved in late 2016 and recommended by Governor Abbott.
- Mental Health Care – Increases funding for behavioral health by \$162 million. This increased funding would help eliminate wait lists for mental health services and would improve services for Veterans with PTSD. This also funds the priorities of the House Select Committee on Mental Health, which focuses on early intervention, judicial training, and increased capacity.
- Border Security – Provides the \$663 million necessary to maintain the border security initiatives approved by the 84th Legislature, specifically hundreds of new state troopers along the border.

While this is the very beginning of the budget process and we still have a long way to go before final adoption, I am confident that the Texas House will ultimately pass a conservative budget that Texans can be proud of.



I enjoyed visiting with Brandon Day and David Riggs of the Garland Firefighters Association this week.



Rowlett's Joey Grisham, David Berman, City Manager Brian Funderburk, and Director of Economic Development Jim Grabenhorst met with me to discuss upcoming legislation that could affect the City of Rowlett.



Kevin Crank of Sachse visited me to discuss the Texas Moving Image Industry.

It is an honor to serve as your State Representative. Please continue to communicate your views on issues that are important to you.

Sincerely,

Angie Chen Button

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