



State Representative Lyle Larson  
TX HD-122

02.22.2011

Weekly Recap #6

**What's new in District 122**

Last week was quite eventful as committees began their first meetings and the U.S. Census Bureau released data from the 2010 census. While many government organizations, banks and the post office were closed on Presidents Day, the Texas House was in session. Here in E2.816, we've continued to research legislation, meet with constituents and file bills that we believe will bring positive change to Texas government.

**Rep. Larson's "Share the Bill" bill**

Did you know that the State of Texas has no idea exactly how much is spent to provide state services to undocumented immigrants?

For decades, Texas taxpayers have speculated how much we spend to provide state services to illegal immigrants. With a projected \$27 billion budget shortfall, Texans should demand to know how much it's costing them to provide these services to individuals who are in this country illegally. Estimates for this figure are as high as \$4.5 billion.

How many legitimate Texas taxpayers – for whom state funded agencies were set up to serve – are forced to do without because undocumented immigrants are unfairly burdening our system?

According to a December 2006 study by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts entitled *Undocumented Immigrants in Texas*, "Calculating the impact of undocumented immigrants on the Texas economy and state budget is at best an educated guess. This is a result of the difficulty in calculating the number of undocumented immigrants in the state and the number who access state paid services. It is difficult to count a population that does

not *want* to be counted, **particularly when the law allows them access to many government services without regard to citizenship**, such as those delivered by public hospitals and public schools.”

*Undocumented Immigrants in Texas* includes a detailed analysis of the cost to provide state services to illegal immigrants. In several places throughout the document, the authors remind us that all of the data provided is based on estimates and educated conjectures, because, as they put it, “Any estimate of state costs associated with undocumented immigrants is imprecise due to the difficulties involved in determining their numbers” and “Because the Texas Health and Human Services Commission makes no distinction between legal immigrants, undocumented immigrants, refugees and those awarded asylum, costs attributed to undocumented immigrants must be estimated.”

**Yesterday, I filed legislation, HB 1553, which would require every agency, individual, nonprofit organization, and public or private entity that receives state funding to determine and report citizenship information before rendering services.** This will include agencies and organizations that provide health care, education, corrections, welfare and any other service that is partially or completely funded by the state.

In order to hold other countries accountable for hosting their citizens, we must have real, true numbers – not estimates. With documentation of how much we spend to provide services to undocumented immigrants, we can draft an invoice to send these countries’ governments, demanding reimbursement for services rendered. **We will finally have the ability to share the bill.**

We should apply this strategy to every country in the world whose citizens are here illegally. To use Mexico as an example, if we continue to host millions of its citizens, we must request reimbursement or compensation from the Mexican government for services rendered. If they are unwilling or unable to provide money, we should accept payment in the form of resources such as oil and minerals. Mexico, the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest exporter of oil to the U.S., is rich in minerals like oil and gas, though much of it hasn’t been developed. The United States could facilitate the extraction of mineral resources as payment for hosting Mexican citizens, while creating jobs for folks in Mexico.

Illegal immigration isn’t simply a threat to our sovereignty. This problem has huge financial implications that affect every Texas taxpayer. Now is the time for us to take action. If you agree, please encourage your legislators to support HB 1553, the "Share the bill" bill!

### **Other legislative news**

Last week, I joint and/or coauthored the following legislation:

- HB 1094 by Rep. Joe Farias, which requires cities and counties to disclose campaign contribution information online. We will continue to support legislation that will ensure transparency in government.
- HB 926 by Rep. Linda Harper Brown, which would allow the Department of Public Safety to release information for voter registration verification.
- HCR 66 by Rep. Kelly Hancock, which urges Congress to put an end to the EPA's overreaching action in attempting to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources.
- HB 126 by Rep. Ken Legler, which requires drug testing for applicants and recipients for unemployment compensation benefits.

### **Redistricting 2011**

As you may know, 2010 U.S. Census data was released last week. District 122 is the 6th most populated House district in Texas. We experienced a 71 percent increase in population in just 10 years. We look forward to the challenge that redistricting will bring and we'll keep you posted as we move forward with the process.

### **Rep. Larson in the news**

Last Tuesday folks across Bexar County came to the Capitol as part of VIVA San Antonio Legislative Day. We hosted hundreds of San Antonians throughout the day in our office. We also attended a reception in the evening hosted by the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce. We were thrilled to have so many constituents in Austin last week!

At the Capitol



Rep. Larson with District 122 residents who came to the Capitol to support homeowners' associations.



Rep. Larson with constituents representing various credit unions in San Antonio.

If we may be of assistance to you, please feel free to contact our Capitol office at (512) 463-0646 or [lyle.larson@house.state.tx.us](mailto:lyle.larson@house.state.tx.us). Please continue to let us hear from you!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lyle Larson", is written below the text "Best,".