



State Representative Lyle Larson
TX HD-122

04.19.2011

Weekly Recap #14
What's new in District 122

The tempo of activity on the House Floor is picking up dramatically. The House has been spending more time in Session, voting on legislation affecting a wide range of issues. Last week, the House passed SB 18, strengthening property rights by limiting eminent domain authority.

Earlier this month legislation effectively killing the Trans-Texas Corridor (TTC), HB 1201, was passed with strong bipartisan support. We've had a lot of correspondence regarding the status of the TTC and was supportive of driving the death nail into the largest land grab in Texas history!

HB 684, our tent jail bill, was voted favorably out of the County Affairs Committee. We are working to ensure it gets set for a full vote of the House in the coming weeks. Any assistance you may provide would be extremely helpful. Please call your representative and ask them to urge the Calendars Committee to set HB 684 for a vote.

Last week in the Natural Resources Committee hearing, we discussed options for funding the state water plan created by the Texas Water Development Board. As we're experiencing extreme drought conditions statewide, the discussion surrounding planning for our water needs for the next several decades has become more urgent. The state water plan includes surface water projects, desalination projects and groundwater conservation efforts, with a projected cost of \$31 billion (2010 dollars). During the hearing, folks discussed several options for funding the plan, including: removing the sales tax exemption on bottled water or levying a \$1.50 tap fee on both residential and commercial hookups or charging an additional \$.14 per thousand gallons of water used.

This week, 2 of our bills will be heard in committee. They include:

HB 1628: Truth in Budgeting - Texas Parks and Wildlife

Currently, the state collects a tax from the sale of all sporting goods in Texas. The revenue is supposed to fund functions of the Texas Parks and Wildlife. Unfortunately, less than half of this money actually funds this agency and as a result, many of our state parks are in dire need of maintenance. As an avid hunter and fisherman, I have always been passionate about the outdoors. Maintaining our parks system should be quite simple, as the state levies a tax on sporting goods that was meant to support the function of the Texas Parks and Wildlife. Continuing our quest to restore truth in budgeting, and in an attempt to halt the funding crisis our parks are facing, my fellow Texas House members John Kuempel and Four Price and I filed HB 1628, which would require that our state parks and historical sites receive the entire amount of revenue raised from the Sporting Goods Sales Tax as intended in the 1993 legislation filed by Senator John Montford. Specifically, the bill requires that Texas Parks and Wildlife Department receive 94 percent and the Texas Historical Commission receive the remaining 6 percent. We believe this legislation is the next step toward ensuring fiscal discipline and restoring truth in budgeting in the Texas Legislature.

HJR 149: Better Budgeting for Texas

This legislation would require members of the Legislature to meet for a mid-biennium special session if the Comptroller releases revenue estimates that are more than 5 percent below or above the projected revenue estimate. HJR 149 would provide a better planning process for the Legislature to use when we face situations like the current budget crisis. Simply put, it would allow the Legislature to weigh in on current revenue projections provided by the Comptroller and make appropriate adjustments to the budget between Legislative Sessions.

If you wish to testify for any of these bills, please contact my office as soon as possible at (512) 463-0646!

At the Capitol and in the District



With Doctor of the Day, Michael Dominguez, and Honorary Page, Mikayla Dominguez



With members of the San Antonio Board of Realtors

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. Please continue to let us hear from you!

Best,