

Texas House of Representatives



Lyle Larson

State Representative - District 122

What's New in District 122

Howdy! We hope 2013 is treating you well so far. This Aggie is slowly adjusting to being back in burnt orange territory full time. We've enjoyed hearing from many of you over the last few weeks as the Session gets underway and we look forward to continuing to receive your comments and feedback throughout the process.

The 83rd Legislature is now in its third week, with Representatives and Senators from across Texas convening in Austin to address the state's most pressing business. The first day of the Legislative Session was full of ceremony, family, and friends, as each member was sworn in.

Senate and House members continue to file bills and work to garner support for their legislative initiatives while we anxiously await committee assignments. Last week, members turned in their preference cards, which list the top 3 committees they wish to serve on. The Speaker's office then works to assign each of the 149 members to the 40 standing committees. We anticipate that the Speaker will announce committee appointments next week.

A Little Inside Baseball - the House Rules

One of the first items of business at the start of the Legislative Session is the process of adopting the House Rules: guidelines that the members must follow as they work to pass legislation. Those rules govern all aspects of the legislative process, and must be followed if a member wishes to pass a bill. Several notable changes were made to the House Rules for the 83rd Legislative Session. Among those, the House voted to replace paper forms with iPads, and decided to allow witnesses who wish to testify at committee hearings to enter their information electronically, rather than writing down their information on multiple paper forms.

Additionally, the House approved an amendment to prevent a bill from being subject to a point of order related to a clerical error, like a typo. A point of order is a motion raised in parliamentary procedure that calls attention to a rule that may have been broken. If the point of order is considered and sustained, it can result in the legislation being killed. This measure will hopefully ensure that good legislation is not ignored simply due to a clerical mistake.

Team Larson's Legislative Agenda

With roughly 6 weeks until the bill filing deadline, we currently have 33 pieces of legislation as part of our agenda for the 83rd Legislative Session. Our initiatives include providing funding to bolster our state's water supply, protecting our state's sovereignty, restoring truth in budgeting (specifically the way in which the Legislature spends dedicated funding for roads, parks and trauma hospitals), just to name a few. To view the bills we've filed so far, please [visit this link](#) and let us know what you think of our legislative agenda.

All About the Money - the Texas Budget for the 2014-15 Biennium

The Legislature received its first glimpse at the House and Senate budget proposals for the 2014-15 biennium this week. The state received approximately 12 percent more revenue than the previous biennium, due in large part to the strong economic activity in many sectors, especially in oil and gas production. HB 1, the initial budget draft filed in the House, came out to \$187.7 billion for the two year period. The initial House and Senate budget fund public education enrollment growth and ensure a constitutionally mandated balanced budget. There's no doubt that there will be plenty of discussion as the budget process continues, and we look forward to working with the Appropriations Committee and other House members to pass a fiscally conservative budget that funds the core functions of state government: education, healthcare, public safety, water availability and transportation.

Gun Policies in Light of the Connecticut Tragedy

In the wake of the tragedy that took place last month in Connecticut, members and the public at large have openly discussed what we should do to try to prevent this from happening again. We are all at a complete loss in attempting to explain the heartache. While the culprit has been cast to perdition, those affected will never be made whole in this lifetime. We pray for forgiveness and understanding for this senseless action, and hope that light will begin to permeate the edge of the darkness that has set in. We hope that this never happens again, but understand why folks are looking for ways to prevent these kinds of horrific acts.

While the federal response includes 23 executive orders - primarily dealing with gun policies - it's clear that we need to enforce existing laws dealing with thorough background checks but also strengthen our mental health community and determine better ways to protect our precious children. While increasing gun control measures may seem like a solution to some, most Texans believe this is counter to their Second Amendment right and judging by the legislation filed in the last few weeks, most elected officials agree. We look forward to working with various individuals and experts in this arena to determine how we can help create solutions that will aid in preventing such horrific tragedies, while protecting our Second Amendment right.

Water, Water Everywhere

Legislators and media alike are calling 2013 the "water session," and we're right in the middle of the discussion. In the wake of the 2011 drought, water security and sustainability has vaulted to the center of many legislator's minds. We're working hard to ensure the proper and efficient funding of Texas' water plan. But, we're also looking into creative ways to guarantee that every Texan has access to their water needs.

In the coming weeks, we look forward to penning legislation that will make it easier for desalination plants and aquifer storage and recovery facilities to operate throughout the state, with the goal of alleviating some of the water pressure felt by groundwater and surface water plants.

As you may know, Allan Ritter, Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, [recently filed HB 4 and HB 11](#), which would allocate \$2 billion of the rainy day fund to develop a revolving fund to pay for water projects throughout the state. In light of the historic 2011 drought, it's clear we can't afford to keep kicking the can down the road when it comes to ensuring Texas has the water supply necessary to support our growing population. We want to know what you think about about this proposal. Please take a moment to share your position in [this survey](#).



Meeting with representatives from groundwater conservation districts from across the state, including Mike Mahoney from Evergreen GCD and C.E. Williams from Panhande GCD

In the News

As always, please feel free to contact me if I may ever be of assistance to you by phone at (210) 402-5402 or by email at lyle.larson@house.state.tx.us.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lyle Larson'. The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'L' and a cursive 'y'.

Lyle Larson