



## Representative Dan Huberty



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### **The Home Stretch**

With only 17 days left in the legislative session, time is really beginning to fly. This week was full of deadlines. Monday, May 6th, was Day 119 in this 83rd Legislative Session. This marked the final day that House Committees could report House Bills or House Joint Resolutions from their committees and onto the body as a whole. The next day, May 7th, or Day 120, marked the last day that a Floor Calendar considering House Bills could be distributed to the members. In other words, even if a House Bill made it to the Calendars Committee by that day, it could essentially be pronounced "dead", if it was not included on the Daily House Calendars distributed for the remainder of the week. Unfortunately, lots of pieces of legislation meet this end. In the Texas Legislature, the calendar can be your friend, or your enemy.

Wednesday, May 8th, or Day 121, marked a similar deadline, but for the Local & Consent Calendar. Any House Bill that had been considered eligible for Local & Consent and was not included on the final calendar distributed by that committee, can also now be considered dead.

Yesterday, May 9th, marked the 122nd of our 140 Day Session, which served as the final day for a House Bill on the Daily or Supplemental Calendar to be considered in the Chamber on Second Reading. However, just making the Calendar does not ensure survival for a House Bill. If a bill is not actually called up for debate on the floor, it may face a slow death as long debate on any bill set earlier on the calendar may push it past the 12 AM deadline.

Now we have reached the 123rd Day of Session. All House Bills set on a Daily or Supplemental Calendar for Third Reading and any bills on the Local & Consent Calendar for Second or Third Reading must pass out of the House Chamber by midnight tonight. After this weekend, the members will return on Monday to face even more deadlines and a mere two weeks before the session comes to a final close.

As always, please feel free to contact my office with any questions you may have regarding the 83rd Legislative Session. You can reach the Capitol Office at 512-463-0520, or my District Office at 281-360-9410.

Sincerely,

Dan Huberty  
State Representative- District 127

## House Members Pass HB 500 for Major Tax Reform

On Wednesday, May 8, the Texas House of Representatives passed significant tax reform legislation by an overwhelming margin. The effort was led by Rep. Harvey Hilderbran, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, who authored House Bill 500. The legislation will provide \$667 million in tax relief for Texas businesses, with much of the relief going to small businesses, the backbone of our economy. Rep. Hilderbran said, "We have worked hard to strengthen our economy by creating a positive business climate that encourages growth, investment, and job creation. We set out to implement a plan to make the margin tax simpler and fairer, while at the same time providing relief to taxpayers."

House Bill 500 permanently exempts businesses with gross revenues of \$1 million or less from paying the margin tax. The current exemption is set to expire next year. Rep. Hilderbran added, "The reforms contained in HB 500 will provide meaningful tax relief to small businesses across Texas and will help our economy grow. We know this tax exemption directly results in business growth and job creation, so it's time to make it permanent." In addition, Hilderbran included an amendment that extends the exemption to businesses grossing more than \$1 million annually by creating a guaranteed \$1 million deduction. The tax overhaul also provides tax fairness by ensuring that the "cost of goods" deduction is offered to all businesses equally, not just a few special interests. The bill changes how the tax is applied to specific industries, including businesses engaged in rental, auto repair, transportation, real estate and medicine.

## Legislative Update

During the 83rd Session, Representative Huberty carried a robust legislative package covering issues from public education, elected official reporting, municipal utility districts and power generation. Below, you will see a quick review of where his active bills are in the process. To follow these, or other bills of interest, [Texas Legislature Online](#) can serve as a very useful website. To view a list of Representative Huberty's legislative package, simply [click here](#). To see a list of Senate bills being sponsored by Representative Huberty, [click here](#).

**HB 222** - This bill makes a small but affective change to the notification process for schools in the public education grant (PEG) program. On May 7, it was heard in the Senate Education Committee. You can read more about the bill [here](#).

**HB 462** - Frequently referred to as the "Common Core" bill, HB 462 would prohibit the adoption of an appraisal process or criteria on the performance of teachers, as well as, the adoption of any common core or national curriculum standards by the State of Texas. It was referred to the Senate Education Committee on May 9. You can read more about the bill [here](#).

**HB 866** - This piece of legislation addresses the current over burdensome amount of testing related to the newest state test, STAAR. It would allow for high-performing students to "test out" every other year of 3rd through 8th grade. On May 7, it was also referred to the Senate Education Committee. You can read more about this bill [here](#).

**HB 1264** - The bill requires school districts to report the number of enrolled students who are identified as having dyslexia via the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Most recently, it was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee on May 8. You can read more about the bill [here](#).

**M.U.D. Bills (HB 1593, 1594, 1800 and 1801)** - These bills deal with the powers and duties of Municipal Utility Districts #422, 423, 504 and 505 in Harris County. They were referred to the Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee on May 7.

**HB 2049** - This bill would allow a qualifying cogenerator to sell electric energy at retail to more than one purchaser of the cogenerator's thermal output. It was referred to the Senate Business & Commerce Committee on May 7, and can be viewed [here](#).

**HB 2607** - Currently, school district employees must have the representative in person when appealing a grievance. This bill would allow their attorney or representative to be present via a telephone conference call. It was also referred to the Senate Education Committee on May 7, and can be viewed [here](#).

**HB 2961** - In order to prevent ever-prevalent identity theft, this bill would prohibit school districts from using employee social security numbers as an identifier. It was reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee on May 10, and can be viewed [here](#).

## House Members Pass Tax Relief for Small Business Owners with HB 213

The Texas House of Representatives passed House Bill 213 by State Representative Harvey Hilderbran, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. The measure is designed to promote small business development and preserve tax relief in Texas by permanently extending a tax exemption for small business. In 2009, the Texas Legislature temporarily raised the franchise tax revenue exemption for small businesses to \$1 million, offering tax relief to nearly 40,000 additional small businesses across Texas. Rep. Hilderbran filed legislation in 2011 to make that exemption permanent and the Legislature extended it for two more years.

Rep. Hilderbran said, "The Texas economic engine is powered on the strength of our small businesses because they are responsible for creating the vast majority of jobs in our state. Keeping taxes low and maintaining an employer-friendly environment has helped make Texas a leader in job creation, and extending the franchise tax exemption we first enacted three years ago will help keep us there."

In the 12 months prior to September, Texas added 270,000 jobs to its payroll, growing at a rate of 3.1 percent. However, the growth rate for the entire U.S. for that same period was only 1.7 percent. A year after the legislature passed the 2009 exemption, the U.S. Department of Commerce reported that Texas created more jobs than any other state, and the Wall Street Journal credited the state's low taxes and employer-friendly environment with helping make Texas the "job creation capital" of the nation. The legislation was strongly supported by the National Federation of Independent Business, the nation's leading small business advocacy organization. Will Newton, NFIB Texas Executive Director, said, "This exemption has saved approximately 40,000 small businesses from economic hardship and the prospects of state tax liability even when faced with no profits. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of those in leadership, Texas is now a model for other states on economic vitality and business growth."

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## DPS Urges Texans to Prepare Early for Hurricane Season

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is reminding residents about the upcoming hurricane season and urging individuals to start preparing now for any possible storms. Hurricane season begins June 1 and continues through Nov. 30. "Hurricanes and tropical storms can wreak havoc on the lives of residents in a storm's path. Although Texans living along the coast are the most vulnerable, powerful storms can have far-reaching effects on the state as a whole," said DPS Director Steven McCraw. "Since early planning and preparation can greatly increase the protection of life and property, residents should begin taking precautions now."

All Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas are subject to hurricanes or tropical storms. Because the strongest winds in a hurricane are not located precisely at the center, it is possible for a storm to affect conditions over land even if landfall does not occur. Hurricanes can cause catastrophic damage to coastlines and areas several hundred miles inland, and winds can exceed 155 miles per hour. In addition, hurricanes and tropical storms can also spawn tornadoes, create storm surges along the coast and cause extensive damage from flooding. Long-range meteorologists from Accuweather and Colorado State University are expecting a more active than normal hurricane season for 2013. Estimations on the number of named storms this year range from 16 - 18, which would be an increase from the historic average of 12. Of these, only 8 or 9 are expected to become hurricanes. Forecasters say warm water across the Atlantic and Caribbean, coupled with less frequent wind shear, could result in the above-normal number and strength of storms. The biggest concerns for the U.S. coast this year include the stronger-than-usual possibility of a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico; a hit in Florida, which has largely escaped hurricanes since 2005; and another hurricane striking the East Coast in the wake of last year's devastating Superstorm Sandy.

Here are several measures residents can take now to prepare for potential storms: Assemble an emergency kit that includes essential documents, supplies and provisions; Review hurricane evacuation maps, and select a route for you and your family; Plan how all family members and pets will evacuate safely; Consider any special needs for individuals with disabilities or the elderly; Stay informed about changing weather conditions in and around your area. For more information on these tips and other ways to prepare for the 2013 hurricane season, please visit: [www.texasprepares.org](http://www.texasprepares.org).

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## **From Humble ISD: Coming Soon - Online Registration for All Returning Students**

Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, parents will need to update student registration information online. The previous, paper intensive process has been replaced with an online option for all parents using Home Access Center (HAC). For those parents who have not set up a HAC account, we encourage you to do so in preparation for next school year. To set up a HAC account, go to this web page: <https://eshac.humble.k12.tx.us/homeaccess/>. Instructions for setting up a HAC account can be found here: <http://www.humbleisd.net/cms/lib2/TX01001414/Centricity/Domain/4140/2013-HAC-Manual.pdf>.

From August 5, 2013 through September 6, 2013, the update information link in HAC will allow parents to update their student's information online. Parents will need to use this link to add, change or remove contact phone numbers. Additional information such as health inventory, responsible use policy and other pertinent forms can be updated online.

For assistance, you may contact your campus until June 13. If you require assistance setting up a HAC account during the summer, a summer support line will be open from June 17 through August 12. For summer support for HAC set up, please call [281-641-8183](tel:281-641-8183). Please prepare for the coming change by creating your HAC account or contact your campus registrar for assistance.

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## **Texas House Passes Bill to Help Law Enforcement Stop Human Traffickers**

On Thursday, May 9, the Texas House of Representatives closed a loophole for "smuggling on foot" with the passage of House Bill 793, authored by Rep. J.M. Lozano. The measure will close a legal loophole that failed to address people who traffic undocumented persons across the border by foot.

Currently, state law imposes a criminal penalty on a person who intentionally uses a vehicle to either conceal a person from law enforcement or to flee from law enforcement officials who are attempting to arrest the smuggler. While the current law helps law enforcement stop traffickers who are using vehicles to smuggle undocumented persons across the state, it does nothing to address smugglers who traffic people by foot through private land. The legislation makes it an offense for a person to assist, guide, or direct three or more individuals to enter or remain on agricultural land without the effective consent of the property owner. An offense under this section is upgraded to a third-degree felony if the smuggler, an accomplice, or any of the smuggled persons knowingly possess a firearm.

Incidents of human trafficking of undocumented persons have become more apparent in recent years. Last year, the Brooks County Sheriff's Department rescued 659 undocumented persons who were abandoned by smugglers on private property. Additionally, ranchers and law enforcement discovered 129 dead bodies — a figure that doubled from the previous year and was six times higher than in 2010. Lozano said, "This legislation provides law enforcement greater authority to handle the human trafficking crisis on our border. By closing this loophole, smugglers will no longer be able to subvert the law by sneaking people through the state by foot. Additionally, this bill will protect the rights of property owners who deal with the real issue of individuals using their land for illegal smuggling operations."

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## **Houston Public Library Summer Reading Program June 1 - August 1**

Go Under Cover by reading your favorite books during the 2013 John P. McGovern Foundation Summer Reading Program. This is a free program held June 1 - August 1 that rewards reading with a free book for the home. To participate, read or listen to books, enter book titles or time read on your online reading log either at home or with the help of your librarian. Upon completion, go to your local Houston Public Library (HPL) location to pick up your prize at the 5, 10, 20 and 30 book levels. Through August 1, visit any HPL location or register from your computer. Early registration begins Wednesday, May 1, 2013, at [www.houstonlibrary.org/summer](http://www.houstonlibrary.org/summer). For more details on the program and prizes call 832.393.1313, or beginning Wednesday, May 1, visit [www.houstonlibrary.org/summer](http://www.houstonlibrary.org/summer). For more information about HPL visit <http://www.houstonlibrary.org/> or call 832.393.1313.

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## Fall Creek Elementary 4th Grade Capitol Visit

On Tuesday, Representative Huberty had the honor of hosting a fantastic group of fourth grade students from Fall Creek Elementary. About 120 students, and another 70 parents, had an exciting day in their state capital city. Through Education in Action, the group visited The Bob Bullock Museum and learned all about The Story of Texas. When the group arrived at the Capitol Building, they had the opportunity to tour the building and grounds and participate in a scavenger hunt. They also had an opportunity to meet with their State Representative, Dan Huberty. Before he headed back to the House Chamber, he gave the students a brief overview of the Capitol and the importance of what occurs here every other year for 140-day legislative sessions.

The group then headed inside to see the beauty that is the Texas Capitol Building. They visited the House and Senate Chamber galleries to watch the members at work. Representative Huberty even recognized the group from the House floor. Soon after, the students had to hop back on the buses to get home, but not before they received one last surprise. Each student was given a goody bag with several treats inside. One of the items was a large travel map of Texas, donated by the Texas Department of Transportation. Mrs. Brown specifically requested the maps to use for a project the students complete each year. They are required to plan a summer vacation road trip. They must use the map to decide their destinations, and travel costs and stay within their \$1,000 budget. It is an educational project that requires the students to use a real map and the internet to plan their trip.



## Leadership Lake Houston Book Drive

The second class of Leadership Lake Houston has reached the end of their term. Just as their predecessors, this class must conduct a community service project. They have chosen to host a Book Drive to collect reading material for the library at Northbelt Elementary. Gently used or new books can be dropped off at any of the locations listed below. The drive started in early April and will conclude on Saturday, May 10th.

Books can be donated at any of the seven collection sites listed on the flyer to the right. The library is in need of books aimed at students in Kindergarten through fifth grade. In particular, bilingual books are needed to fully furnish the library.

Take some time to give back to your community and donate books to the 2013 Leadership Lake Houston Book Drive for Northbelt Elementary.

Leadership Lake Houston Book Drive

**GIVE the GIFT of READING**

April 1 - May 10

Bi-lingual books too!

Donate new or gently used books for Kindergarten - 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Northbelt Elementary.

Book donations are accepted at:

Lone Star College Kingwood - Classroom Building A & Performing Arts Center  
20000 Kingwood Drive, Kingwood 77339

Edward Jones - Robert Sitton  
18455 W Lake Houston Parkway, Humble 77346

Humble ISD Administration Building  
20200 Eastway Village Drive, Humble 77338

Lake Houston YMCA  
2420 W Lake Houston Parkway, Kingwood 77339

James Eggers ISC Building  
4810 Magnolia Cove Drive, Kingwood 77345

Chick Fil A Fall Creek  
9525 N. Sam Houston Parkway, Humble 77396

Lake Houston Chamber of Commerce  
110 W Main Street, Humble 77338