



May 18, 2013 | Volume 3 | Issue 15

Representative Dan Huberty



CAPITOL OFFICE

Capitol Extension E2.722
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768
Phone: 512.463.0520

DISTRICT OFFICE

4501 Magnolia Cove
Suite 201
Kingwood, TX 77345
Phone: 281.360.9410

E-MAIL

District127.Huberty@house.state.tx.us

Staff Contact Information:

CASEY CHRISTMAN

Chief of Staff

Casey.Christman@house.state.tx.us

MAGGIE IRWIN

Legislative Director

Maggie.Irwin@house.state.tx.us

BEN MELSON

Legislative Aide

Ben.Melson@house.state.tx.us

CHASE BARKER

Legislative Aide

Chase.Barker@house.state.tx.us

Down to the wire...

It seems like only yesterday, we were convening the 83rd Legislature. And now we are merely days away from Sine Die. I have to say, although this is only my sophomore session, it feels much different than last time. Everything seemed to move at a different pace. Items that were considered "Emergencies" in 2011, were barely even addressed in 2013. Issues that hung like ever-present gray clouds over the our heads in the 82nd Session, were rarely even mentioned in the 83rd.

I believe much of this can be attributed to the stark budgetary differences between the two sessions. In the 82nd Session, we had to solve the issue of a \$27 billion shortfall. When we returned this year, we were blessed with a budget surplus that allowed us to refund many of the previously necessary reductions. These differences have caused us to truly reflect on the role and purpose of many governmentally-funded programs. Similarly, we have thoroughly examined the necessity of new or possibly duplicative laws.

With less than two full weeks remaining in this legislative session, we now turn our attention to the perfection and final passage of the more than 4,000 filed bills in the Texas House. In the newsletter below, you will see several pieces of information about what is happening under the Pink Dome. In particular, you will see a legislative update that shows my bills as they progress through the process.

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

Visit Representative Huberty online [here](#).
To Subscribe to our weekly newsletters, click [here](#).
To Unsubscribe to our weekly newsletters, click [here](#).

Texas House Passes SB 1458 to Help Secure TRS Pension Plan

The Texas House of Representatives recently passed Senate Bill 1458 on second reading. The measure is sponsored by Rep. Bill Callegari, Chairman of the Pensions Committee in the Texas House of Representatives, and is authored by Sen. Robert Duncan. There are over 1.3 million members of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) and over 312,000 retirees of the system. This legislation provides much needed improvements to the TRS pension plan through increased contribution rates from the state, school districts, and participants, and a broadened grandfather clause. The bill will accomplish three goals: incentivize the state to maintain a reasonable contribution rate; stabilize the TRS-Care fund and provide a long-awaited cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for educational retirees

Rep. Callegari said, "We have carefully crafted this legislation to ensure the actuarial soundness of TRS over the long term. We have an obligation to our current retirees, our future retirees and our active teachers. By acting to reform the plan now, we have prevented potentially devastating consequences. Without the actuarial soundness this bill permits, retirees will have little hope of ever receiving an increased annuity, now or in the future."

Before the bill's floor debate, the bill would have provided a COLA to those participants who have been retired for 15 years or more, helping approximately 102,000 retirees. However, Callegari introduced an amendment to expand the recipients to include those who have been retired for 10 years or more, allowing the adjustment to benefit approximately 200,000 retirees — all the while placing TRS in actuarial and financial soundness for the first time since 2001. This legislation passed with a unanimous vote out of the Texas Senate and with the support of all active and retired teacher groups in Texas.

Legislative Update

To view a list of Representative Huberty's legislation, simply [click here](#). For Senate-sponsored bills, [click 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 reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee on May 17. 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 17, it was also reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee. Read more about this bill [here](#).

HB 1035 - This bill gives elected officeholders and candidates the option to file required reports and statements electronically, via e-filing. On May 16, it was reported favorably, as substituted, from the Senate State Affairs Committee. 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). After passing the full Senate and returning to the House for agreement, this bill was sent to Governor Perry on May 16. 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 reported favorably from the Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee on May 14.

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 most recently passed the Senate and was sent to the House for concurrent on May 17, 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 reported favorably from the Senate Education Committee on May 17, 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 passed from the Senate and returned to the House for agreement before being sent to Governor Perry on May 15, and can be viewed [here](#).

Texas House Votes to Provide for More Quality Public Charter Schools

On Friday, May 17, the Texas House of Representatives passed Senate Bill 2, the charter school reform legislation. The bill is carried in the House by Rep. Jimmie Don Aycok, Chairman of the House Public Education Committee, and authored by Sen. Dan Patrick, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education. The measure passed with strong, bipartisan support in a collaborative effort to improve schools for all Texas children. Public charter schools serve more than 150,000 students across Texas, with more than 100,000 students on waiting lists.

Currently, there is a cap of 215 on the number of charters that can be awarded in Texas. As of November 2012, there were 209 of these charters already awarded, leaving room for only six more charters to be awarded. Senate Bill 2 will, over a period of time, increase this cap to 275 charters. This increase is necessary to meet the overwhelming demand by parents and students for more quality public charter schools.

Rep. Marsha Farney, a member of the House Public Education Committee, said, "Increasing the availability of new charters and streamlining the processes for renewal and replication of well-run existing charter schools will provide much needed public education options for Texas families." She added, "As we oversee each of these new charters, it is important to ensure that we hold all schools to the highest level of accountability. This legislation will further strengthen the state's ability to close poorly performing charter schools that are not meeting the needs of our students."

Rep. Brandon Creighton said, "Leadership has worked tirelessly to bring forth sound education reform. The legislation we passed today increases the availability of quality public education options for the schoolchildren of Texas and applies new accountability and transparency measures to these schools."

Texas House Takes Strike at Medicaid Fraud with SB 8

The Texas House recently passed SB 8, an omnibus bill that seeks to address the rampant problem of Medicaid fraud, waste, and abuse. The bill is carried in the House by Rep. Lois W. Kolkhorst, Chair of the Public Health Committee in the Texas House of Representatives, and is authored by Sen. Jane Nelson, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. The legislation contains a host of measures designed to proactively ensure that Medicaid dollars are spent only on appropriate services. Among other provisions, SB 8 will create a special team to look for spending anomalies in the Medicaid program and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which will help the state stay aware of new trends in fraud and abuse.

Currently, the state can only seek recovery from Medicaid providers after the crime is committed, sometimes months or years after the offense, in what is commonly known as the "pay and chase" model. Under SB 8, new teams will use sophisticated software to monitor unusual Medicaid billing patterns as they are reported, thus starting investigations earlier in the process. Kolkhorst said, "Every penny that is fraudulently taken out of the Medicaid system isn't just a theft of taxpayer dollars, it means less care for those who are truly needy. This bill is a response to the fraud we continue to see in our public state health services. We're creating new ways to make sure that our precious state tax dollars are truly going to those who need them most."

SB 8 also gives new tools to the Inspector General of the Health and Human Services Commission to pursue fraud, waste, and abuse in nearly every health and human services program that is offered in Texas. From 2004 to 2011, the Office of Inspector General identified more than \$6 billion in fraud, waste, and abuse in Texas public health programs.

The bill also adds oversight for private EMS licensing. In recent years, investigators have uncovered millions of dollars in fraudulent Medicare and Medicaid billing schemes by ambulance providers. Because there is very little oversight of Medicaid ambulance providers, owners under investigation can simply shut the business down and reopen a new version of the same business. This legislation provides safeguards against that practice. "The hope is that SB 8 will ensure that illegitimate Medicaid billers cannot continue to defraud the system," Kolkhorst said.

Humble ISD Trustee Election Results - May 11, 2013

The 2013 Humble ISD School Board Election saw a higher number of voters in this election than many years in the past. The election also had more candidates and positions open for election than past years. The biggest upset for the event was Angela Conrad's win for Position 3 over 20-plus year incumbent Bonnie Longnion. Conrad received a total of 2,165 votes over Longnion's 1,828 votes. Another board seat to watch was the battle for Humble ISD Position 6 which was left open when former board member Dave Martin retired to serve as the City of Houston Council Member. Heath Rushing won the seat with 2,179 votes.

2013 Election Results (by Trustee Board Position)

Position 1	Robert Sitton
Position 2	Keith Lapeze
Position 3	Angela Conrad
Position 4	Charles Cunningham
Position 5	Brent Engelage
Position 6	Heath Rushing

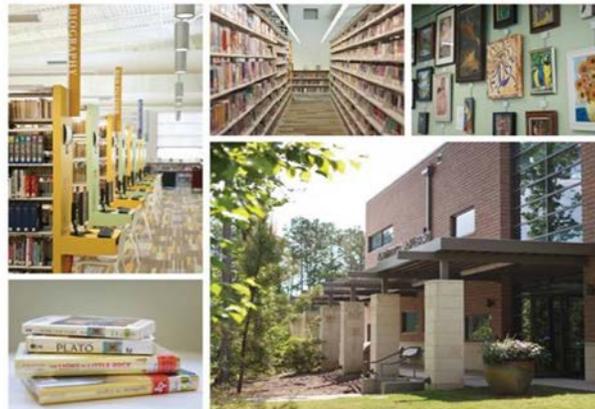
Representative Huberty named to the Conference Committee for HB 5

HB 5 conference committee consists of Representatives: HB 5 conference committee consists of Senators:

- Jimmie Don Aycock (R-Killeen)
- Joe Deshotel (D-Beaumont)
- Larry Gonzales (R-Round Rock)
- Dan Huberty (R-Houston)
- Eddie Rodriguez (D-Austin)

- Dan Patrick (R-Houston)
- Tommy Williams (R-The Woodlands)
- Leticia Van de Putte (D-San Antonio)
- Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo)
- Robert Duncan (R-Lubbock)

Reception for Expanded Hours at Kingwood Library - March 23 @ 4 PM



Please join Precinct 4 Commissioner R. Jack Cagle and the Harris County Public Library system to celebrate

Expanded Hours at Kingwood Library

4400 Bens View Lane, Kingwood 77339

Thursday, May 23 at 4 p.m.

(Sign-in at 3:45 p.m.)

Please R.S.V.P. by Monday, May 20 by calling 281-893-3726 or send an e-mail to Kaci Woodrome at kwoodrome@hcp4.net.

Light refreshments will be served.



R. Jack Cagle
Commissioner



Kroger Summer Kids Club

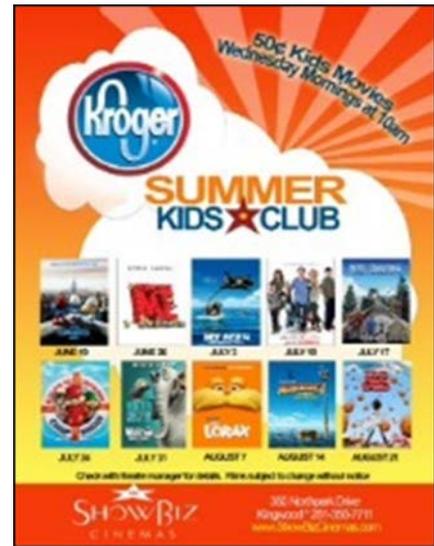
Kroger and ShowBiz Cinemas are teaming up to provide family fun for kids of all ages this summer in Kingwood. The Kroger Summer Kids Club will kick off Wednesday, June 19, and continue every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. for a 10-week mix of G- and PG-rated movies at the ShowBiz Cinemas Kingwood 14 located at 350 Northpark Drive. Admission is only 50 cents and tickets will be available to purchase at the box office or online.

Participants are strongly encouraged to show up at least 30 minutes prior to show time.

The Kroger Summer Kids Clubs movie lineup:

- *The Smurfs* on Wednesday, June 19 at 10:00 a.m.
- *Despicable Me* on Wednesday, June 26 at 10:00 a.m.

Additional showing information available online at www.kroger.com, or go to www.showbizcinemas.com for more information.



DPS Encourages Texans to "Skip the Trip and Renew Online"

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is encouraging residents to beat the summer rush at driver license offices across the state by renewing their license or identification card early or online. The summer months are typically the busiest time of year at driver license offices, and individuals can avoid the crowds during this time. Residents who are eligible can skip the trip to the office completely via online renewal of their license, identification card or change of address at www.Texas.gov.

"The summer months can mean more customers at driver license offices with students and families out of school or off work, but many Texans can avoid the rush or even skip the trip to the office altogether," said DPS Director Steven McCraw. "DPS currently offers several customer-convenient options, including online renewal of licenses and identification cards and our new high-capacity driver license mega centers in major metropolitan areas." Licenses must be renewed in person every 12 years, so an updated photo can be taken and eyesight can be tested. If residents need to come into the office to renew, they can do so within one year prior to the expiration date, which means they can pick a time that is convenient for their schedule. To be eligible to renew online, the expiration date on the card must be within one year. When a resident renews their card, the expiration date on the new card will be six years after the current card's expiration date, even if customers renew early. The renewal fee is the same for online, in-person and telephone renewals. In order to renew online, the card cannot have been expired for more than two years. Requirements for renewing online are available at www.Texas.gov.

If Texans do need to visit a driver license office, DPS is encouraging customers in the major metro areas to visit mega centers in their areas. The six driver license mega centers are located in the Metroplex, Houston, San Antonio and Austin areas and feature technology that allows customers to reserve a place in line before arriving at the office. Customers can virtually enter the line via phone, mobile device or the Internet. The system also allows customers to adjust their place in line – for instance, if they are running late, they can push themselves back in line. Walk-in customers can use self-service check-in kiosks and have the option of returning later, closer to their appointment time. For additional information about the new mega centers and the technology that allows you to get in line before coming into the office, visit:

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/DriverLicense/getinlinebeforeyougo.html>. In addition, driving tests at some locations can be scheduled online without a trip to an office. To find out which offices offer online scheduling for driving tests or to book an appointment, visit:

http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/administration/driver_licensing_control/rolodex/search.asp. Visit the DPS website to make sure you have the proper paperwork (including documents needed for the new residency requirements) before making the trip to the office:

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/DriverLicense/ApplyforLicense.htm>.