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December 15, 2017

Thank you for subscribing to my newsletter. Please be sure to share the newsletter on Facebook with your friends and family to keep them updated on the most recent information from Austin and House District 127.

This edition of my disaster newsletter series contains many positive updates from across the Gulf Coast, as well as some of our usual business. In the newsletter that follows, you'll read about Leadership Lake Houston's Government Day, an internship posting for our district office, great news from the public education community in the Gulf, and a few housing updates around the state.

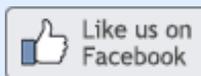
I am pleased to report that the District Office is now open! Now that the office is back online, the district is in need of motivated interns. If you or someone you know is interested, please see the job description below.

Our Capitol office has received an overwhelming caseload since Hurricane Harvey hit our community. I appreciate your continued patience as my office addresses each of your concerns as soon as they can. The rate at which your concerns are addressed should increase now that the district office is back online.

As always, please feel free to contact me or my staff directly with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dan Huberty



House District 127 News

Leadership Lake Houston - Government Day

Class 7 of Leadership Lake Houston held their annual Government Day on Tuesday. My Chief of Staff, Casey Christman, serves as a Day Chair along with Kim Brode, with Congressman Ted Poe's office, and Jason Stuebe, the Interim Humble City Manager.

The group heard from Congressman Ted Poe, County Judge Ed Emmett, Mayor Sylvester Turner, Council Member Dave Martin, Humble Mayor Merle Aaron, Commissioner Jack Cagle and more. Attendees said it was one of the best Leadership program dates, thus far.



District Office is Now OPEN and is Urgently Seeking Interns

After several weeks of trying to reestablish internet connection and reliable phone lines, the district office is now open! The District Office is in desperate need of interns to assist with various tasks. The job description is below:

District Internship Position

The District Office of State Representative Dan Huberty is seeking an unpaid intern to assist with office duties starting immediately. This opportunity will offer students or recent graduates a chance to learn about the legislative process and become familiar with the daily activities in a district office during the interim.

This position requires a good work ethic and dedication to the task at hand. Duties may include researching legislation, greeting guests, answering phones, assisting with daily administrative tasks, scheduling and constituent casework. Other duties may also be assigned.

Start date is as soon as able with a negotiable end date. Work hours are from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., but an applicant may choose to work part-time, either half-days or select days of the week.

Interested parties should send a letter of interest and resume to Casey Christman at casey.christman@house.texas.gov. For questions, please call 281-360-9410.

Deadline: Until filled.

The Texas House of Representatives is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment of the provisions of services. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you require reasonable accommodations during the application process, please call 512.463.0865

Hurricane Harvey Recovery Resources

Plea for Three

The Lake Houston Area Long Term Recovery Task Force created by The Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce has coordinated a mass letter writing campaign to ask the State of Texas take to immediate

PLEA FOR THREE



LAKE HOUSTON

action on three items to help the Lake Houston Area recover and prevent future flooding: Remediation, Reduction and Representation.

Chairman Huberty is in complete support of the Plea for Three campaign. He is hopeful that this movement will cause statewide leaders to act swiftly and decisively. With the full weight of the Lake Houston community behind this campaign, he believes that statewide elected officials will have no choice but to acknowledge the needs of the area. Huberty appreciates the Lake Houston Area Chamber spearheading this effort and encourages all residents to participate in this much needed call to action.

Visit RecoverLakeHouston.com to see how you can get involved and to watch the newest video for the campaign!

Commissioner Morath waives RETESTING requirements for grade 5 and 8 students



Commissioner of Education Mike Morath announced that he is removing the requirement to conduct grade placement committees and any related June 2018 State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) retests in fifth and eighth-grade for districts within the Presidential Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Harvey.

In a letter to school districts, Commissioner Morath stressed that his decision was based on TEA's commitment to our districts and students, with the priority of ensuring that those affected by the storm can make instructional decisions that are in the best interest of students.

The announcement comes following [a letter from Governor Greg Abbott](#) asking the Commissioner to consider ways to help relieve some of the pressures on students in areas most affected by Hurricane Harvey. In addition, Commissioner Morath took into consideration input provided by members of the House Public Education Committee and Senate Education Committee at recent hearings regarding the hurricane's impact on school districts.

"It is my objective that all children graduate from our public schools equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to be college or career ready," said Governor Abbott. "However, in times of crisis, it is important to re-examine some regulations related to accountability placed on those living in devastated areas. That is why I support Commissioner Morath's decision to ease STAAR retest requirements in fifth and eighth-grade within the area devastated by Harvey."

Fifth and eighth-grade students must pass STAAR reading and math assessments to be promoted to the next grade level. If a student does not pass the tests after three tries, the student must be retained unless a Grade Placement Committee, composed of a principal, teacher, and the student's parents, unanimously agrees to promote the child to the next grade level. State law gives the commissioner the ability to waive this law, when necessary.

Under the Commissioner's waiver, if a student in a district or charter within the Presidential Disaster Declaration fails the second test administration, districts will not be required to administer a third test and will have local discretion on whether that student should advance to the next grade. However, districts will be able to continue to administer the third test in June 2018 if they believe it to be in the best interest of the students.

In his notification to school systems, Commissioner Morath also advised superintendents that there would be no schedule changes for this school year's STAAR test administrations. That decision comes following an Oct. 2 Texas Education Agency (TEA) survey to gauge the interest of districts in delaying the STAAR May testing window in the impacted regions by two weeks.

Of the 309 districts surveyed, there was a 59 percent response rate. Of the districts responding, 69 percent (representing almost one million students) requested that TEA maintain the current testing windows published on Sept. 11, 2017. A summary of that information (PDF) can be found <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=51539619337>.

Districts should continue to plan for administration of end-of-course exams on May 7-11 and for grades 3-8 math and reading, grade 5 science, grade 8 science and social studies, Algebra

II, and English III on May 14-18.

Finally, Commissioner Morath advised that no decisions have been made related to district and campus accountability ratings for Harvey-affected districts, campuses and charter schools.

"I have taken steps to collect information on the number of students impacted by the storm as well as information on facility damages," said Commissioner Morath in his letter. "We will soon ask for information about staff who have been impacted by the storm. We will use all of this data to inform decisions as we adopt accountability rules in the spring."

Commissioner Morath did note that TEA will be requesting a waiver from certain federal accountability/school improvement requirements to ensure the state has maximum flexibility as any decisions are made. He continues to explore all options.

More information will be shared once it is made available.

GLO and HUD Announce Mortgage Relief Program for Impacted Texans

Hurricane Harvey affected nearly 50,000 square miles of Texas and damaged or destroyed more than a million homes," said Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush. "While we rebuild, many Texas homeowners are facing a second struggle of returning to work and making mortgage payments. To help these Texans, the GLO is proud to team with our disaster recovery partners at HUD to help those who need help avoiding foreclosure or assistance in financing repairs to damaged homes. Texans who are having trouble making payments should contact their service providers to learn about available resources or call the FHA Resource Center at (800) CALL-FHA. Reach out now to get help."

[Click HERE to read more about programs designed to assist disaster victims who need mortgage assistance.](#)

Direct Housing Update

DIRECT HOUSING DASHBOARD



HURRICANE HARVEY FEMA-4332-DR-TX

Cumulative Totals as of 6:00 PM CMT, 12/12/2017

Disaster Assistance Still Available for Certain Texans

Late applications will be reviewed for possible approval, but applicants will have to submit a letter explaining why they were not able to apply before the deadline. After registering late, a notification will be sent to the applicant:



- After receiving the notification, the applicant must submit a letter to FEMA that includes an explanation for the late application, with supporting documentation.
- Extenuating circumstances may include: hospitalization, death of an immediate family member, or personal or business travel.
- Explanation letters must be submitted (postmarked if sent via mail) within 60 days of the notification letter from FEMA.
- FEMA will review for approval or denial.

For Your Information

Comptroller's Office Accepting Match the Promise Scholarship Applications through December 31

Comptroller Glenn Hegar reminded Texans that the application deadline for Texas Match the Promise Foundation scholarship awards is Dec. 31, 2017.

Match the Promise scholarship awards are available for fifth through ninth graders:

- who are beneficiaries of a Texas Tuition Promise Fund (TTPF) account, the state's prepaid college tuition plan,
- whose families have an annual income of \$100,000 or less, and
- who are Texas residents and a dependent for tax purposes of a Texas resident.

The Match the Promise Foundation, in cooperation with the Comptroller's office, offers these competitive matching scholarships to encourage Texas families to save for college. Approved recipients can receive scholarships of tuition units worth up to \$1,000 at today's prices, while top-scoring recipients also can receive one-time grants of tuition units worth \$2,000 at today's prices.

"The Match the Promise Foundation scholarships reflect our belief in the importance of higher education," Hegar said. "They can help get young Texans ready for success in our fast-paced economy."

Eligible applicants may enroll in the TTPF during the scholarship application period if they haven't already done so. To be considered for a scholarship, students must write a career essay and meet other requirements. If approved, recipients will have until Aug. 31, 2018, to meet the contribution requirements of the scholarship program. Scholarship applications and other information can be found at MatchThePromise.org or by calling 800-531-5441, ext. 3-7570.

Match the Promise is funded by individuals who have donated the cash value of property held in the state's unclaimed property program, as well as by donations from individuals, businesses and organizations and by state employees through the State Employee Charitable Campaign. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) federal tax-exempt public charity and is eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions from

Constituent Resources

Need Assistance?

Our office is always ready to assist you. Call or email us and we will do our best to help. Many State Agencies also have hotlines or citizen assistance offices to assist you. That contact information is available at this link, in alphabetical order:

<http://www.lrl.texas.gov/genInfo/stateAgencies.cfm>

House District 127 Live Updates

All of the relevant information our office has gathered in regard to response and recovery of Hurricane Harvey is posted immediately to our Facebook page. Be sure to "like" us so that you can have the most up-to-date information.



Upcoming Events

December 2017

See an event you're interested in? Click the links on each date to learn more about the event's details. Under each link, you can find R.S.V.P. information, exact times, locations, and much more.

This color box indicates an event related to Hurricane Harvey.

This color box indicates a general purpose event.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 The Prophet's Birthday	2 8th Annual Snowball Run
3 Candlelight Remembrance	4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day BizCom - Kingwood	8	9
10	11 Pachyderm Christmas Party with State Rep. Dan Huberty	12 Hanukkah Begins at Sunset House Committee on Energy Resources - Midland, TX Elected Officials Reception	13 LHACC Chamber 101 House Committee on Human Services - Austin, TX	14 BizCom - Summer Creek	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23

			Hanukkah Ends at Sunset	First Day of Winter		
24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day <i>Capitol and District Offices Closed thru. January 2nd</i>	26 Kwanzaa (thru. Jan. 1)	27	28	29	30
31 New Year's Eve						

Contact Information

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**Molly Spratt
Legislative Director**

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