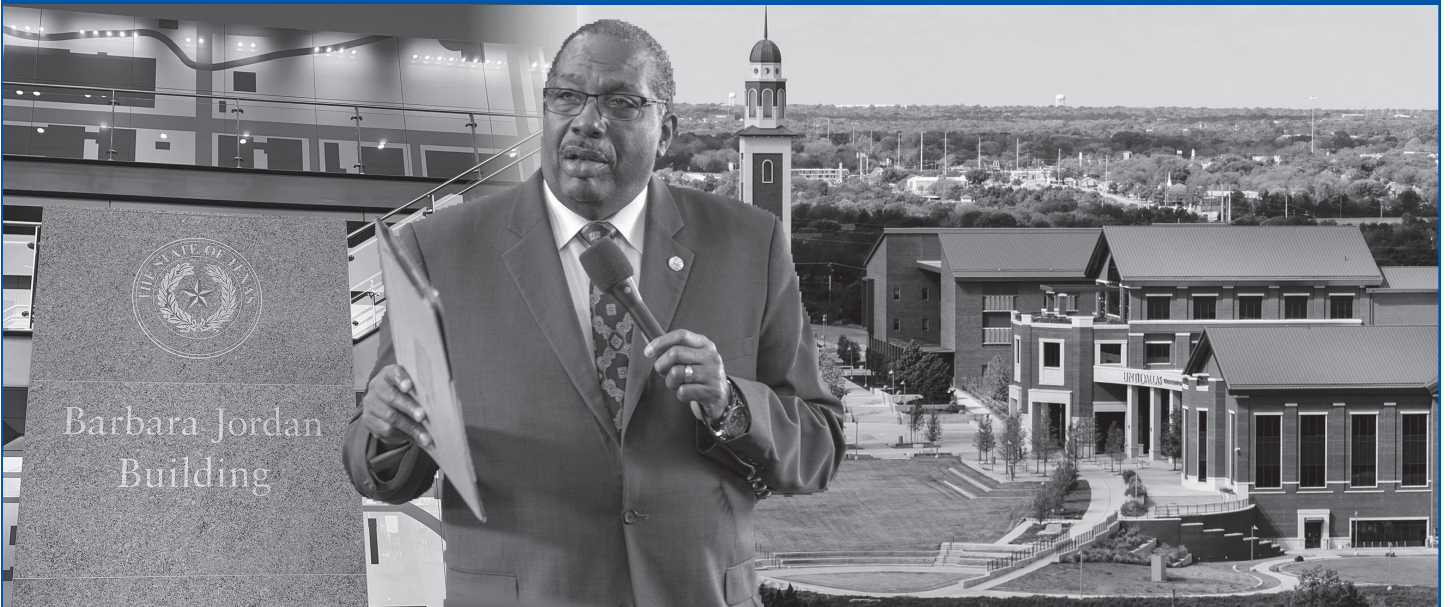


# SENATOR ROYCE WEST



## The Capitol Report / Fall 2023

### *Dear Constituents and Friends,*

*True to form, each session of the Texas Legislature takes on its own individual character. The 88th can be defined by a historical budget surplus that would bolster plans for the next two-year cycle, not to forget the unwavering promise of property tax relief. There remains the specter of fierce debate over school vouchers. And for me, the position Texas has taken on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs that address college admissions and hiring at our institutions of higher education is of high importance.*

*For FY24-25, an unencumbered \$32.7 billion was projected to be available for appropriation from the biennium that ended August 31, 2023, making some \$188.2 billion for general purpose spending according to the Comptroller. The surplus itself is so staggering that it alone is larger than the total budget of 24 states.*

*So the question begs, what do you do with this much money when it is well known that Texas still leads the nation in its number of uninsured citizens, including a rate of uninsured children that's more than twice the national average? But the clamor was not to spend more tax dollars on its neediest. Rather, the most volume from state leaders for how the surplus will be spent was applied to property tax relief.*

*It took more than a 140-day Regular Session, a first 30-day Special Session in June, part of a second Special Session in July and sharp narratives from the state's "Big 3" leaders before agreement was reached. Key to the new tax plan is an increase of the homestead exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000. A provision on the November Constitutional Amendment ballot would cap appraisals on non-homestead residential and commercial properties valued below \$5 million for three years, if approved. Proposition 2, with voter approval, will give cities and counties the ability to provide property tax relief to childcare centers.*

*Looming at the time of this writing, is the promise of another Special Session to approve what's called Education Savings Accounts. I call them vouchers; public taxpayer dollars set aside to pay private school tuition. In addition, controversy still surrounds the Governor's Operation Lone Star effort to control migrants crossing Texas' southern border.*

*Next to nothing was done to protect Texans from rising gun violence, but the Legislature will spend \$10 more for each of 5 million students and \$15,000 more per campus to help make schools safer. A new state law largely strips cities of local authority. The promise of the American dream is being tested by the dismantling of DEI. This was one of the most hotly contested issues of the legislative session and promises to be in the future.*

*The direction Texas is headed was decided at the ballot box. A different direction must be decided the same way. 2024 is an important year. **VOTE!***

*Thank you all!*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Royce West".

**Senator Royce West**  
District 23



*State Senator Royce West & Mrs. Carol West*

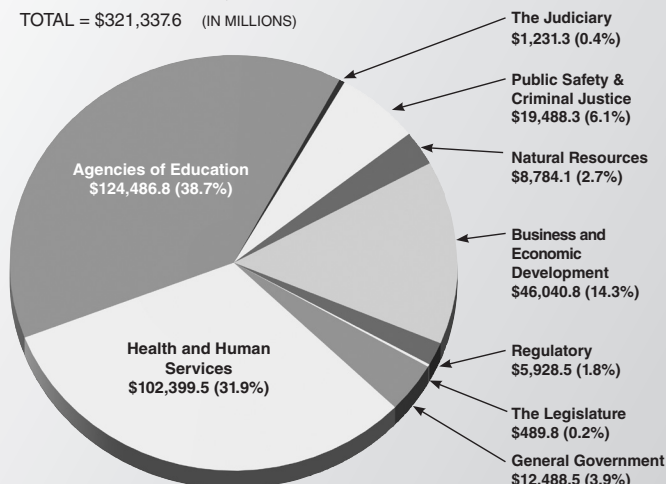


# CAPITOL REPORT

## 2024-25 BIENNIUM CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON HOUSE BILL 1 LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

### FUNDING BY ARTICLE, ALL FUNDS

TOTAL = \$321,337.6 (IN MILLIONS)



NOTES: Appropriations for the 2024-25 biennium made in Article IX are included in the functional articles shown. Funding excludes Interagency Contracts. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD ID: 8117

## The Budget

The FY24-25 budget will be explained using two broad categories: ALL FUNDS and General Revenue (GR). ALL FUNDS adds federal dollars to state-generated funds. GR comes from state taxes and fees, including the sales tax, franchise taxes paid by certain Texas businesses, natural gas/oil and other motor vehicle-related taxes and fees.

In ALL FUNDS, **HB1**, the budget bill, appropriates some \$321.3 billion. General Revenue spending for the biennium totals \$144.13 billion, which is \$13.77 billion more than for FY22-23. The ALL FUNDS budget will spend \$18.04 billion more for FY24-25. But Texas will actually receive about \$15 billion less in federal funding due to the absence of COVID dollars that infused the 2022-23 budget. According to the Comptroller, the FY24-25 budget also contains \$3.8 billion carried over from 2021 when the use of pandemic money resulted in GR savings.

As always, the majority of the budget is spent on Education and on Health and Human Services. Combined, they will consume 70.6% of the ALL FUNDS budget and 79.70% of GR spending. Half of GR funding will go to Education. We should have spent even more to include teacher pay raises! However, \$1.4 billion will be spent on campus-based, school safety measures.

Projected sales tax revenue will make up 53% of GR, totaling \$87.9 billion, which is 9.1% more than collected for 2022-23. Another \$4.3 billion in GR will be available for the budget because higher local property tax revenue will result in the state spending less on the Foundation School Program that helps fund public schools.

**HB1** provides \$9.4 billion in ALL FUNDS for mental health. Another \$2.2 billion for behavioral health is included in **SB30**, the Supplemental Appropriations bill. A total of \$80.8 billion in ALL FUNDS spending will go to Health & Human Services agencies for Medicaid.

The Legislature used \$5 billion to establish the Texas Broadband Infrastructure Fund to help ensure that high speed internet is available throughout the state. Another \$5 billion was used to create the Texas Energy Fund to support the construction and modernization of energy generation facilities. More than \$5.1 billion will be spent on border security. Up to \$5 billion may be spent on retired teachers, dependent on the passage of **HJR2** in November.

In Texas, the acronym PUF stands for the Permanent University Fund whose revenues come from fees paid by oil and gas and other energy producers for their uses of state land. Since 1876, these royalties have exclusively

benefited the University of Texas and Texas A&M, much to the ire of other state universities. Until now! The budget appropriates \$3 billion to establish the Texas University Fund, contingent on the passage of **Proposition 5** in the November Constitutional Amendment Election.

## Property Tax Relief

Long-promised is \$18 billion in property tax relief that will help homeowners by lowering the taxes paid to fund public schools, the biggest driver of property tax bills. Paying down tax dollars not collected by school districts will cost the state \$12 billion (more than currently) of the \$18 billion over two years.

**HB2**, passed during the second Special Session in July, will raise the homestead exemption that had been at \$40,000 since 2019, to \$100,000. It is projected to save homeowners an average \$1,000 annually. Critics say it should have included direct help for renters. A House backed measure to address steep rises in appraisals will benefit owners of non-homestead residential and commercial properties. The appraisals for these properties valued at less than \$5 million will be reduced by 20% for a three-year trial period.

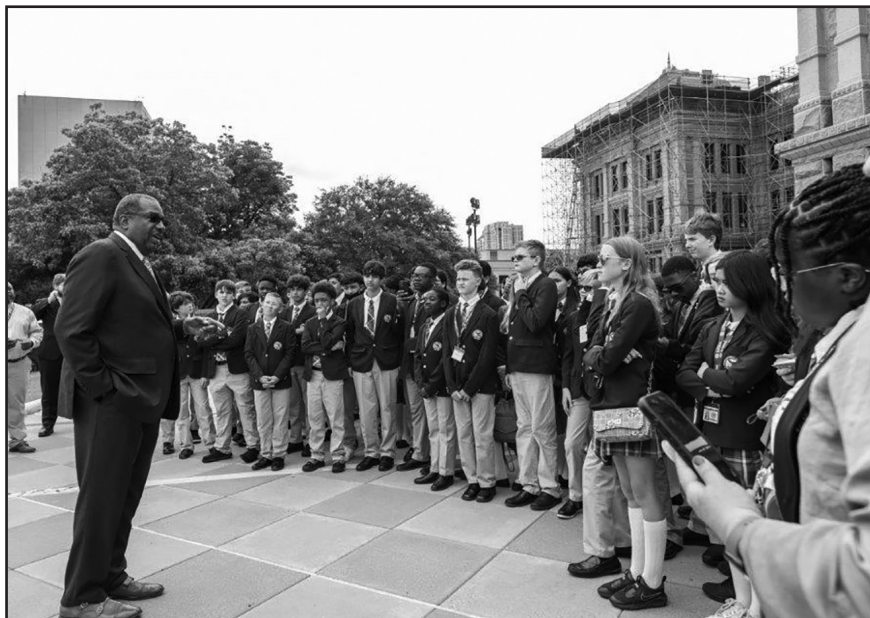
## Education

We as lawmakers missed the mark twice when it comes to public schools. We were not able to raise the basic allotment from the \$6,109 per student amount that's been in place since 2019 and we did not approve a pay raise for teachers. Problems arose when bills raising teacher pay were hijacked by voucher advocates. The budget includes \$3.2 billion to fund enrollment growth.

Retired teachers' wishes came true. Under **SB10**, all retired teachers age 70 or older before September 1, 2023 will receive a one-time check for \$2,400. Those who are 75 by that date will receive \$7,500. Combined, it's projected that 290,000 retirees will benefit. If **HJR2** is approved by voters in November (2023), retired teachers will also receive a one-time cost of living adjustment. Between **HJR2** and **SB10**, nearly \$5 billion will go to deserving, retired Texas educators.

According to Center for Homeland Defense and Security data, there's been 104 school shootings in Texas since 2000. We hope change will begin with the passage of **HB3**, the result of legislative hearings after what happened in Uvalde. The bill upgrades school safety and security measures, improves emergency preparedness and response and makes sure campuses are equipped to communicate internally and with law enforcement. **HB3** also instructs school districts to have at least one, armed security person on each campus. This comes at a time when there is a nationwide shortage of officers.

Two other bills on school safety passed into law. My **SB999** requires anyone who provides active shooter training for schools to be approved by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE), the state's licensing agency for officers. And **HB1905** requires school districts to allow access to school safety training to private schools, child-care facilities and organizations that serve children off-campus.



Senator West visited with 130 7th graders from International Leadership of Texas Charter Schools for their Texas Capitol tour on May 15.

# CAPITOL REPORT



There were smiles all around when the Grandmother of Juneteenth, Ms. Opal Lee, returned to the Capitol May 18 for the placement of her portrait in the Senate Chamber.

## Higher Education

Texas has made strides in modernizing higher education. Advances allow students to earn college credits while still attending high school. My **SB25**, approved by the 2019 Legislature now ensures that credits earned in community colleges transfer to 4-year universities and guides students to choose degree plans earlier.

For early college high school students, my **SB1887** will steer focus toward a major earlier. The bill requires students to choose associates degree courses that are on the path to a bachelor's degree or help prepare them for the workforce. **SB1887** also creates the "Texas Direct" associates degree that requires a notation to be added to students' community college transcript that indicates completion of lower division courses that will transfer to 4-year universities.

Post-secondary education will be further enhanced by **HB8**, which I co-sponsored in the Senate. The bill provides funding for students to enroll and complete degree or credential-earning courses while enrolled in high school or junior college. Students could transfer to four-year universities or pursue non-credit hour workforce education training that targets growing, high-demand industries. **HB8** also creates the Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) grant program to help economically, disadvantaged high school students pay for enrollment in dual credit courses.

Overall, the 24-25 budget provides \$9.9 billion in formula funding for Texas' colleges and universities, an increase of \$1.1 billion over FY22-23.

## Increased Financial Aid

The budget contains \$1.54 billion for financial aid programs. Combined, the Texas GRANTS Program that targets public college and university students, along with Tuition Equalization Grants that assists Texas' private college students, the Texas Transfer Grant Program and the Texas Leadership Scholars Program will receive \$149.3 million more in funding.

Grant funding also increased for Texas' community college students and for state and technical college students. Funding for the Tuition Educational Opportunity Grant's (TEOG) Community Colleges Program will increase by \$125 million over FY22-23. TEOG grants that award state and technical college students will also receive \$14 million more than for FY22-23.

## The University of North Texas at Dallas

UNT-Dallas received \$42.7 million for 2024 and \$42.49 million for the 2025 fiscal year. This includes \$3.54 million each year of the biennium for expansion funding, \$950,000 each year of the biennium for the Student Success Initiative, \$1.75 million each year of the biennium for the Center for Socioeconomic Mobility and \$2.8 million for the UNT-Dallas College of Law for the biennium. Another \$6 million that's part of the UNT-Health Science Center budget is designated for health-related programs at UNT-Dallas.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs

While higher ed took positive steps for future generations of Texans, we may have also taken a step back. **SB17** will disband programs at Texas' colleges and universities that address diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in hiring and enrollment. I, along with hundreds who testified in Senate and House Committee, strongly opposed **SB17** supporters' claims that DEI programs discriminate by providing preferential treatment based on race.

**SB17**'s opponents say DEI programs do not provide race-based advantages. DEI backers say the programs are designed to assist students, who due to race, ethnicity, background, disabilities, sexual identity, culture or gender, may experience disadvantages that require structural assistance for struggling students. Concerns are that **SB17** will cost Texas more of its best and brightest, who may choose to attend college out of state and also make Texas unattractive to higher ed professionals.

Compromise between the House and Senate helped diffuse acrimony between lawmakers and college professors. **SB18** as filed, would have banned tenure for professors, which opponents say would have severely impaired Texas' institutions ability to recruit top-flight faculty. Critics called it an assault on academic freedom. The House amended, approved bill codified terms for tenure already used by institutions, but makes granting of tenure subject to school officials.

## Health & Human Services

Two bills will go a long way to help address near acute shortages of medical professionals. I co-authored **SB25** that creates the Nurse Faculty Loan Repayment Program and the Nursing Innovation Grant Program. In a state as big as Texas, there are not enough trained nurses who are willing to return to learning institutions to help teach others interested in nursing. The bill encourages more nurses to teach by raising the amount of loan payment assistance offered by the state.

**SB25**'s other component, the Nursing Innovation Grant Program, funds colleges' and universities' efforts to recruit and retain nursing education faculty by providing funding for clinical nurses to become part-time instructors and for nursing faculty to receive clinical training at medical facilities.

I authored **SB532** to address Texas' critical shortage of mental health professionals. The bill reduces the length of time mental health professionals must work at a mental health facility from five to three years and also increases the percentage of loan repayment assistance available to those eligible.

We were able to gain the support needed to pass **HB12** on maternal mortality. Numerous studies, including the state's 2022 report, highlighted the disproportionate number of African American and other minority women who died postpartum, due to the lack of care for mothers without private insurance. **HB12** extends Medicaid coverage from six to 12 months following delivery. **HB12** is a lifesaver.

Since Kinship Care was first approved in 2009, we have continued to work to make the program better and more efficient. Kinship Care programs provide an alternative to foster care placement by qualifying family members for legal custody of children in need of a stable living environment.

This session's bill, **SB135**, requires the Department of Protective and Family Services to maintain electronic records of home studies for any family member or designated caregiver who is being evaluated for child placement. The lack of verifiable home study records, which are required by law, have resulted in placement delays.

When it was not palatable for some lawmakers, I worked with former colleague, the late Rep. Ruth Jones McClendon on opioid antagonist bills to help keep people alive who struggle with addictions. My bill, **SB998**, requires the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) to develop a training program on the symptoms of opioid-related drug overdose and on how to administer opioid antagonists. TABC must also make training available online. **SB998** applies to bars and night clubs, but not to restaurants that sell alcohol.

No parent wants to receive a call saying their child has overdosed on drugs. Knowing this, **SB867** adds higher ed institutions to the list of entities where opioid antagonists should be made available. Just in case!

Some who attempted to return to work after the pandemic



# CAPITOL REPORT

discovered that many childcare facilities were closed due to higher costs, a problem compounded by fewer paying families. **SB1145** looks to relieve the part of rising costs caused by property taxes, by providing a full or partial property tax exemption for qualified facilities. The exemption must be approved by local jurisdictions and will appear on the ballot as **Proposition 2** during the November Constitutional Amendment election. **SB1145** would apply to owner-operated child care sites and to spaces rented by child care providers. And property tax savings must be passed along to the child care provider by landlords.

Before COVID, few not involved in logistics were concerned with supply chain issues. Now, they are to blame for high prices, poor service and every product that's not available. The pandemic

access is even worse.

**HB9** looks to eliminate problems of lack of broadband access. The fund will also help upgrade the current 9-1-1 system. However, **HB9's** companion legislation **HJR125**, also requires voter approval in the November election.

**HB5174** will create the Texas Semiconductor Innovation Consortium which will help ensure that Texas remains competitive in the manufacturing of semiconductors and computer chips. The bill also creates the Texas Semiconductor Innovation Fund that can provide matching funds under the federal CHIPS and Science Act. UT Arlington's work on semiconductors and microchips should benefit from **HB5174**.

Many Texas cities adamantly opposed the passage of **HB2127**, calling it an overreach that limits cities' ability to address issues that arise at the local level. **HB2127** supporters say the bill brings uniformity to a confusing patchwork of local regulations across Texas' more than 1,400 cities and towns, by requiring local ordinances to be consistent with state law. Individuals who think they are harmed by local ordinances will be able to sue cities. San Antonio and Houston have filed suit to block **HB2127**. No word yet from Dallas.

Most all of us are annoyed by the amount of spam, unsolicited emails and calls we receive from marketers. **HB4** may help. Similar bills have been passed by other states. They're needed because federal law does not regulate personal data privacy. **HB4** requires businesses not covered by federal law to disclose the sale of consumer data to third party businesses. **HB4** gives consumers the right to obtain a copy of their personal data, to check its accuracy and to opt out of the use of their personal data; enforceable by a civil penalty.

I sponsored **HB1472** that was supported by Habitat for Humanity. **HB1472** amends existing law to increase from 60% to 80% the permissible income of a loan applicant for the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs owner-builder, aka "bootstrap," program. Under the Bootstrap Program, the borrower agrees to provide 65% of the labor needed to build or rehabilitate a house and to do the same for another borrower. The bill requires help from volunteers, friends and family to build or rehab the borrower's house in partnership with a state-certified, owner-builder housing program like Habitat.

We know of students who were sent home from school or told they could not attend activities, even graduations, because of their hairstyles. What we do not know is how many people have been denied jobs and other opportunities for the same reasons. It is why I signed-on to co-sponsor **HB567**, which prohibits discrimination at public schools, in higher education, employment and housing, for hairstyles historically or commonly associated with race. Texas became the 21<sup>st</sup> state to adopt CROWN Act legislation.

## Transportation

Although alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) – the term Texas uses for the various non-gasoline powered automobiles - make up less than 2 percent of 25 million vehicles registered in Texas, the state is laying ground work for the future. Last Summer, TxDOT and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) unveiled statewide plans to build electric vehicle charging stations.

Lawmakers approved **SB505** that creates a new fee for AFV drivers for their use of Texas roads. New cars will pay a two-year, \$400 fee at registration. All other AFV owners will have \$200 added to their annual registration. While **SB505** has drawn critics, the \$200 cost came from a report mandated by **SB604**, passed in 2019, that determined the fee approximates how much is paid in gas taxes each year, per driver.

The passage of **SCR2** will extend **Proposition 7**, which was approved overwhelmingly by voters in the 2015 constitutional amendment election. **Prop 7** directs the Comptroller to deposit a percentage of state sales tax revenue and a portion of motor vehicle sales and rental taxes into the State Highway Fund to help build and maintain non-tolled Texas roads.

Bringing an end to a dangerous, fake, paper, license plate scam was high priority for Texas law enforcement. I gladly took the challenge by sponsoring **HB718** in the Senate. Lax regulations led to an epidemic of fake, paper, temporary, license plates that cheated Texas out of millions in registration fees, helped criminals escape apprehension and resulted in the death of a Grand Prairie



Senator West joined members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for the Dedication Ceremony for the Barbara Jordan State Office Building at the State Capitol on April 17.

brought to light existing problems with food scarcity and hunger, even in Texas.

**HB3323** is the companion to **SB758** that I authored. It calls for the creation of a Food System Security and Resiliency Council to be appointed by the governor. Their job is to create a statewide food system security plan that will protect Texans by ensuring that sufficient and affordable food is available when either natural or man-made disasters strike that could negatively impact food supply.

## Honoring Texas Trailblazers

During the 2021 Session, Ms. Opal Lee was recognized at the Capitol for her efforts that resulted in Juneteenth becoming a national holiday. The energetic nonagenarian returned twice during the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislature. In February, the portrait of Ms. Lee was unveiled. She returned in May for the official placement of her likeness in the Senate Chamber.

The service to America rendered by Houston native, former State Senator and U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Jordan should never be forgotten. In addition to her portrait that honors the first African American woman elected to the Texas Senate, and the first woman to represent Texas in the U.S. House of Representatives, she is now the first African American to have a state building in the Capitol Complex named for her. The official dedication ceremony was held April 17, 2023.

I authored **SB667** that will honor the 52 African Americans who served in the Texas House and Texas Senate from 1870 through 1883 during Reconstruction, by establishing a state historical marker program. For each of these largely uncelebrated men, a historical marker bearing their names, dates of births and deaths if known, will be placed at their grave sites. The markers are to be erected by January 1, 2025.

## Business & Commerce

Texas received \$500.5 million in American Recovery Act funds in 2021 and was appropriated more than \$3.3 billion for broadband expansion and deployment in June 2023. During the 88<sup>th</sup>, lawmakers approved **HB9**, that creates the Texas Broadband Infrastructure Fund using \$5 billion from the state treasury that can be used to match federal funds to provide access to unserved and underserved communities.

Reports say most Dallas County residents have internet access, but we know some are still without service and of places where internet quality is poor. There are parts of Texas where broadband

# CAPITOL REPORT

police officer. People pretending to be car dealers were accessing the state database where they printed and sold real, paper, temporary license tags, not cars. Some duplicated paper tags and sold them to drivers looking to avoid registration or vehicle inspection. This meant different cars with the same license plate number.

**HB718** will eliminate paper, temporary license plates when it is fully implemented in July 2025. Instead, car dealers will issue permanent metal license plates when a car is sold. It prohibits anyone who is not a legitimate car dealer from issuing license plates. Dealers will be provided plates based on the size of the dealership and history of cars sold. **HB718** accommodates online car sales, cars purchased out of state by a Texas resident and cars bought in Texas by a person from another state.

The 88th was the second session a bill was introduced to eliminate vehicle safety inspections. The bill heard in Senate Transportation did not have enough votes to pass. However, another bill, **HB3297** was sent to Senate State Affairs following passage in the House. As of September 1, 2025, those yearly inspections to determine if your car's brakes, tires, turn signals and lights are working will end. So will jobs and businesses that perform safety inspections. However, vehicle emissions tests will still be required in areas across Texas, like Dallas-Fort Worth that are classified as non-attainment areas by the federal government due to air quality concerns. I did not support **HB3297**.

However, I did request and support the inclusion of \$5 million in the budget for the Southern Gateway Deck Park. Supporters say these amenities, like with Klyde Warren Park, help reconnect neighborhoods that were separated when freeways were built.

The budget contains \$1.475 million for a new Texas Department of Motor Vehicles Regional Service Center. For several sessions, we've made the argument that the current Carrollton location is too far away to properly serve District 23 constituents. TxDMV testified to Senate Finance that the number of customers served by the Carrollton Center merits a new office. They are considering a new location in Southern Dallas county along I-20.

## Criminal Justice

Like the temporary license plate bill, legislation I introduced or supported was motivated by local events. **SB840** was brought by Methodist Medical Center following the shooting deaths of Jacqueline "Jackie" Pokuaa and Kate "Annette" Flowers who were killed by a parolee, who legally should not have been armed. **SB840** increases the penalty for assaulting any hospital worker while on duty or on hospital property, from a Class C misdemeanor to a Class A, which is a jailable offense. It does not lower the penalty for more serious crimes.

I co-sponsored another Methodist bill, **SB1004**, that creates a new state jail felony for anyone who attempts to remove, tamper with or disable the ankle monitor worn by a person who is on probation or parole. The former law treated this as a violation of supervision, not a criminal offense.

Catalytic converter theft is a longtime problem for auto owners and law enforcement. It became a bigger problem when it was co-opted by organized crime. It became unacceptable when an off-duty Harris County Deputy Sheriff was killed, with his wife watching, after discovering thieves under his car. **SB224** creates a new, first-time, state jail felony for unauthorized possession of a catalytic converter.

D-FW residents may remember the 2022 kidnapping of a 15-year-old North Richland Hills girl from the American Airlines Center while attending a Dallas Mavericks game with her father. Weeks later, she was found alive by Oklahoma City Police, but had been a victim of trafficking. Her ordeal caused law enforcement to rethink existing law that did not require the report of a missing child to be investigated immediately if the child lived outside the local law enforcement agency's jurisdiction.

**SB2429** will require those reports to be investigated immediately and removed the previous age threshold (14) required for a missing child to be categorized as at "high risk" of exploitation, sexual assault, trafficking or abuse. I signed-on to co-sponsor **SB2429**.

Rodney "RJ" Reese may never forget his walk home from work in February 2021 during Winter Storm Uri. After a call reported a Black man stumbling down the street, police located Reese. Despite telling officers he was fine, they followed him, blocked his path, approached, grabbed and arrested him for being a pedestrian

in a roadway, even though the sidewalks and streets were covered with ice. Reese later told reporters he believed that he was arrested because he is Black. I worked with law enforcement and House authors to find language for **HB1277** that permits a person to walk in a roadway if the sidewalk is obstructed. Pedestrians will also be required to walk on the left side of the road or shoulder facing traffic if there is not a sidewalk or the sidewalk is unsafe.

Although police reform bills, such as banning the use of chokeholds, the duty to intervene, duty to request and render aid, and the Botham Jean Law were approved by the 2021 legislature, other bills, including those named after George Floyd that contained more controversial reform measures were rejected.

**SB1445**, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement re-authorization (Sunset) bill for the agency that licenses and regulates Texas' law enforcement agencies passed into law. It contains reforms that were rejected last session, such as requiring law enforcement agencies to adopt TCOLE model policy or similar language on psychological and medical testing of officers, on use of force, vehicle pursuit, officer conduct, impartial policing and domestic abuse.

**SB1445** requires TCOLE to develop a confidential database to collect officer personnel and misconduct investigation files from local law enforcement agencies for use in completing pre-employment background checks. It also requires TCOLE to choose a national law enforcement database to report any officer license revocations based on misconduct and for law enforcement agencies to also use for applicant pre-employment screening.

Two bills I authored protect those who cannot advocate for themselves. **SB133** prohibits school security or law enforcement from using physical restraints or chemical irritant sprays or tasers on children, age 10 or younger, unless the child poses a serious risk of harm to himself or another person.

**SB1146** requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to create new procedures for the non-emergency transport of women offenders for medical treatment. These new requirements mean the following did not exist: buses to be equipped with bathrooms and stocked with hygiene products, sufficient food to be provided, searches to be performed consistent with federal standards, and an adequate number of beds to accommodate overnight stays. TDCJ is also ordered to expand the use of telemedicine and on-site mobile health units.



Senator West joined Governor Greg Abbott, legislators and law enforcement for the signing of **SB840**, a bill requested by Methodist Medical Center.

I'm frustrated by the legislature's lack of action regarding sensible gun safety. The six bills I filed were among 84 filed on topics like straw purchases, background checks, large capacity magazines, waiting periods for gun sales, emergency protective orders (Red Flag laws), gun storage, reporting of lost or stolen guns, purchases of multiple assault weapons, age limits for assault weapon purchases and others.

Only 12 bills received a hearing. Just three passed from the chamber where they originated. Only one became law. After too many mass shootings and gun-related deaths to count, Americans and Texas victim's families need more than thoughts and prayers.



# T H E C A P I T O L R E P O R T



## HOW TO CONTACT *Senator Royce West*

[www.west.senate.texas.gov](http://www.west.senate.texas.gov)

AUSTIN:  
P.O. Box 12068  
Austin, Texas 78711  
512/463-0123  
FAX: 512/463-0299  
Dial 711 for Relay Calls

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
5787 South Hampton Rd.  
Suite 385  
Dallas, Texas 75232  
(214) 467-0123  
FAX: (214) 467-0050

“Please let me know what you think about the important issues facing our state by going to the following web addresses and filling out my on-line questionnaires. Your input counts.

<http://www.west.senate.texas.gov/survey0001.htm>

<http://www.west.senate.texas.gov/survey0002.htm>“



### **Senator Royce West**

District 23  
P.O. BOX 12068  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711

PRSR STD  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 2468  
Austin, Texas

### *The Home of Champions*

The best and brightest come from Senate District 23. I was delighted to host and showcase at the Capitol, true champions in the classroom and on the field. Players, coaches, parents, and supporters from the UIL State Football championship teams of The South Oak Cliff High School Golden Bears – Class 5A, Duncanville High School Panthers – Class 6A Div. I, and DeSoto Eagles – 6A Div. II were recognized for their athletic prowess, expertise, and leadership this past season. Their recognition at the Capitol galvanized the pride their cities, SD 23 and the state have for each team.



*The South Oak Cliff High Golden Bears*



*DeSoto High School Eagles*



*Duncanville High Panthers*