

Senator Judith Zaffirini



Reports to the Families of District 21

Dear Friends:

A former resident of our Senate District (SD) 21, President Lyndon B. Johnson, said that “the noblest search is the search for excellence.”

President Johnson, who went to college in Hays County and taught public school in La Salle County, was right, and his words reflect my continuing commitment to excellence in public service on behalf of SD 21 families.

The constancy of this commitment is especially important in times of change. Impressive change is reflected not only in the rapid population growth in Central and South Texas, but also in opportunities and challenges spurred by oil and gas exploration in the Eagle Ford Shale. Meanwhile, thousands of new students are enrolling in Texas public schools, community colleges and universities. Budget pressures will test not only our ability to prepare them for success in the 21st century, but also the security of our social safety net programs. We cannot afford to fail.

Change also is reflected in the boundaries of SD 21. The redistricting process has removed all or part of five counties from our district and added new territory in five counties, triggering the bittersweet process of saying goodbye to some constituents and welcoming others.

Fortunately, no matter where in SD 21 we live, our priorities are the same: job creation; educational opportunities for all; public safety; a clean environment; and health and human services, especially for the very young, the very old and persons with disabilities.

I am grateful that Lt. Governor David Dewhurst appointed me to important posts from which I am well positioned to impact the state’s most critical issues. My as-



“Excellence in public service is my commitment to Senate District 21 families.”

– Senator Judith Zaffirini

of my best legislation was suggested by constituents. *Senator Judith Zaffirini Reports to the Families of Senate District 21* is not merely a progress report; it is a call for action and collaboration.

My prayer is that that the Lord will bless us all and strengthen our dedication to excellence and our resolve to build a better Texas.

Judith Zaffirini

Judith Zaffirini

State Senator, District 21

www.zaffirini.senate.state.tx.us

signments include Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee; Co-Chair of the Legislative Oversight Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence and Transparency; and member of the Legislative Budget Board and of the Senate Committees on Administration, Economic Development, Finance, Health and Human Services and Redistricting.

In representing you in the Texas Senate, count on me not simply to prepare, but, rather, to over-prepare. My staff and I continually work closely with constituents and colleagues to develop legislation that will make a difference in the lives of Texas families.

Because our success is enhanced by effective communication, my commitment remains strong to respond to every letter, email and telephone call. Your suggestions and feedback are important to me, especially because some



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES for the very old, the very young and persons with disabilities are among Senator Zaffirini's top priorities. She is shown in photograph 1. with San Patricio County nurses Cecilia Villarreal and Darlene Menn; in 2. with Live Oak Nursing Center employees Alice Riojas of Three Rivers and Becky Sivers of Beeville and resident Danny James; in 3. with Celestino Guerra of Dimmit County at an elderly nutrition center; and in 4. with Christian Escamilla, a Laredo student and valedictorian at the Texas School for the Deaf in Travis County.

Changes Underway for Texas Health & Human Services

While health and human services undergo substantial reform in Texas and the nation, Senator Judith Zaffirini is working tirelessly to improve access to health care for all Texans, especially the very old, the very young and persons with disabilities.

Legislation that she passed during the 82nd Texas Legislative Session resulted in positive developments in 2012. Because of her bill limiting the use of harmful restraints on residents at State Supported Living Centers, the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health and the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services are providing training to two facilities and to community providers statewide.

In 2011 Senator Zaffirini also authored legislation helping chemical dependency treatment facilities serve clients. She worked with Rep. Elliott Naishtat, D-Austin, to pass a bill allowing psychologists, social workers, and counselors to obtain a patient's consent for treatment for chemical dependency. The result was allowing greater continuity of service and fewer delays for persons seeking treatment, leading to better outcomes.

Senator Zaffirini, who secured \$12.3 million for diabetes and obesity prevention in 2009, was delighted in 2012 when Mercy Ministries of Laredo's clinic was selected by The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston and the Stark Diabetes Center to receive a \$1 million grant to help uninsured, financially-challenged patients who have diabetes or pre-diabetes.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed the constitutionality of the 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA). It expands access to health care for thousands of Texans, including by prohibiting insurance companies from denying coverage because of pre-existing conditions and by allowing children up to age 26 to remain on their parents' health insurance.

What's more, because the law requires health insurance companies to spend a certain amount of revenue on health care services instead of on administration or bonuses, 1.5 million Texans have received rebates totaling \$167 million.

The Court also ruled that the expansion of Medicaid in the ACA must be optional for the states. If Texas opts into

the expansion, by 2016 1.4 million persons would receive health care coverage at an estimated cost to the state of \$15.6 billion and a gain of \$101 billion in federal funds over the next 10 years.

"Expanding Medicaid would benefit Texans greatly at minimal cost to the state," Senator Zaffirini said. "It is my hope that the legislature will consider the issue seriously during the next legislative session."

Because much of Texas Medicaid was transferred to a managed care model, a new program was required to reimburse hospitals for indigent health care. Accordingly, Texas negotiated with the federal government to secure the new Medicaid 1115 Waiver, which has required stakeholders to work with state leaders to resolve ensuing problems.

"With so many changes in the state's delivery of health and human services, difficulties and unexpected consequences are inevitable," Senator Zaffirini said. "In our continuing quest for success and improvement, constituents can count on me to always fight for critical life-saving and life-altering programs on which so many depend."

Lt. Governor Dewhurst Prioritizes Business, Job Creation

By Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst

As Texas approaches its 83rd Regular Legislative Session, I reflect back on all the progress we've made over the years, and I remain optimistic about the direction in which our state is heading.

It's no coincidence that Texas is one of the fastest growing states in the country. Within the last decade, our population has grown by 4.5 million people. People are literally voting with their feet for Texas because it is a beacon for jobs and opportunity in the midst of a global economic crisis.

Some ask why Texas is doing so much better than other states, and I always say because we have more Texans than any other state in America. We've got a can-do spirit here that you just can't find anywhere else.

Texas leads the nation in job creation, business relocation and homebuilding. We have more Fortune 1000 companies headquartered here than any other state. From June 2009 to July 2011, Texas created more than 37 percent of all new private sector jobs in America. And we rank first among the few states that have reached pre-recession job levels. Some have called it the



"Texas is the place where every day, anybody from any background or community can scale heights as improbable as they are breathtaking."

– Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst

Texas Miracle, but it's no miracle; it's a lot of hard work.

Recently named America's Top State for Business for the third time by CNBC, Texas is proving to the entire nation that our policies are working. Since I've been Lt. Governor, I've worked with Senator Judith Zaffirini and the Texas Legislature to balance five state budgets

without raising taxes while protecting essential services for our most vulnerable citizens. We have made government live within its means, passed the largest tax cut in state history and created a predictable regulatory climate—giving investors the confidence to invest and small businesses the predictability to grow and create jobs. Those are just a few of the reasons why so many people are packing up and moving to Texas.

For years, the Texas landscape has bloomed with opportunity, and I will continue to work to make sure it remains that way. Texas is the place where every day, anybody from any background or community can scale heights as improbable as they are breathtaking. We are a state where our challenges are never too big, and our obstacles are never too high. Thanks

to the hard work of Senator Zaffirini and the Texas Legislature, Texas still offers the promise of tomorrow. Working together, we have proven that there is no limit to what we can accomplish when we put Texans first.

Texas Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, R-Houston, is president of the 31-member Texas Senate, a position he has held since January, 2003.

How to Contact Senator Judith Zaffirini

Southern District Office

1407 Washington St.
P.O. Box 627
Laredo, Texas 78042-0627
956/722-2293
Telefax: 956/722-8586
judith.zaffirini@senate.state.tx.us



Capitol Office

P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711
512/463-0121
800/851-1568
Telefax: 512/475-3738
Dial 711 for relay calls

The Texas State Senate is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services.

Senator Judith Zaffirini Advances Needs, Priorities of Large, Diverse SD 21

Approximately 800,000 constituents live in Senate District (SD) 21, a district as large as it is diverse. Senator Judith Zaffirini is an ardent advocate for their priorities, including education, economic development, employment, funding, energy and water resources, tuition rates, health care and the well-being of children.

“My goal always is to balance the needs of SD 21 with those of our great state and to cast each vote in the best interests of our families,” she said. “No issue is too big or too small, and it is a joy to work closely with constituents from every county in the district.”

The 82nd Texas Legislature redrew state legislative districts to reflect significant population shifts revealed by the decennial census.

In the plan that will take effect in 2013, SD 21 grows from 17 to 18 counties and extends more than 360 miles from the Colorado River in Austin to the Upper Rio Grande Valley in Starr County.

The plan removes Dimmit, Frio and Zavala counties, as well as northeast Bexar and most of Atascosa County.

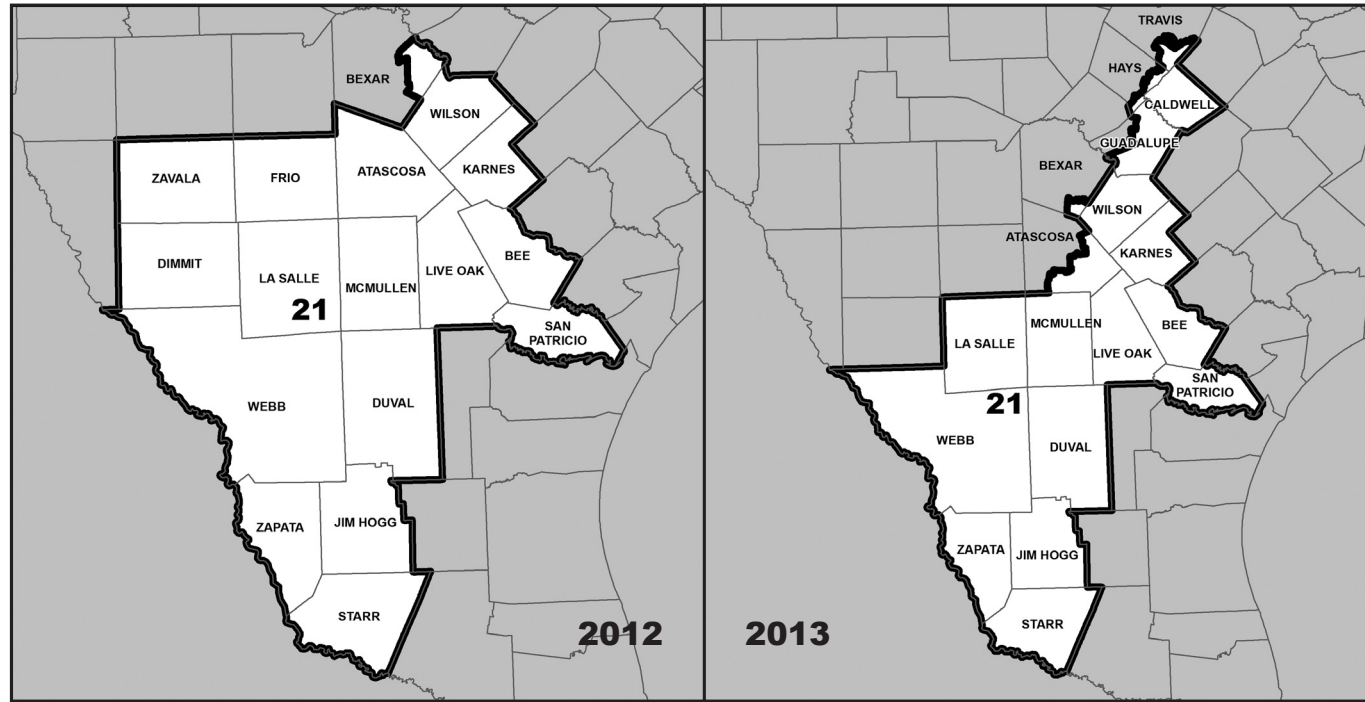
It adds Caldwell County and southeast Travis, east Hays, south Bexar and most of Guadalupe counties. Senator Zaffirini previously represented Guadalupe County from 1987 to 1992 and from 1995 to 2002.

“It has been my privilege to represent constituents in the counties leaving our SD 21 family,” she said. “They can rest assured that I will continue to author and support legislation that matters to all of us.”

“My hope is that someday they will be returned to our district,” Senator Zaffirini added. “Simultaneously, I welcome our new counties and the opportunity to serve them. My pledge to them is that I always will do my best on their behalf.”

As Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee, Senator Zaffirini secures funding and passes legislation enhancing programs at community colleges with campuses in Senate District 21, including the Alamo Colleges in Bexar County; Austin Community College in Caldwell, Hays and Travis counties; Coastal Bend College in Atascosa and Bee counties; South Texas College in Starr County; and Laredo Community College in Webb County.

Public universities in SD 21 counties include The University of Texas at Austin, Texas State University, The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), Texas A&M University-San Antonio, The University of Texas-Pan American and Texas A&M International University.



In 2013 SD 21 will include all or part of 57 school districts that vary greatly in size and demographics. Prairie Lea Independent School District (ISD), for example, enrolled 232 students in the 2010-11 school year, while United ISD enrolled more than 41,000.

“Public schools are the foundation of our communities,” Senator Zaffirini said. “Accordingly, we must continue to enhance quality; focus on dropout prevention; promote safe, healthy school environments; and stop bullying.”

She also believes strongly in a justice system that is swift, efficient and fair, including for persons with mental health issues and young adults. She has authored or sponsored and passed more than 20 local bills enhancing the juvenile justice system and judiciary in SD 21, including in Bee, Caldwell, Dimmit, Duval, Guadalupe, Hays, Live Oak, McMullen, Webb, Zapata and Zavala counties.

and more than \$10 million for the Small Business Development Center at UTSA.

“SD 21 plays a significant role in powering our state’s economy, including via oil and gas development in the Eagle Ford Shale, technology and research along IH-35, international trade in the border region and agriculture and alternative energy in the Coastal Bend,” Senator Zaffirini said. “To maintain our region’s economic success, we must not only promote partnerships between business and higher education, but also invest in the physical infrastructure that supports commerce.”

Fire is an ever-present danger to the livelihood of farming and ranching communities in drought-impacted parts of SD 21. Accordingly, in 2011 the senator authored and passed legislation helping volunteer fire departments raise money for equipment and training.

A member of the Senate Economic Development and Finance Committees, Senator Zaffirini has worked to secure millions of dollars for programs that create jobs and assist small businesses. Her efforts to help regional economies include securing \$5 million for a wind turbine blade testing facility at Naval Station Ingleside

“Volunteer fire departments often are rural communities’ first and only line of defense against damaging wildfires like those our state experienced in 2011,” Senator Zaffirini said.

Thousands of veterans live in the district, and the senator is a champion for their interests. She has sponsored and passed legislation helping veterans earn diplomas and receive critical health care, and in 2011 she authored and passed Senate Bill (SB) 58, which designated parts of State Highways 359, 16 and 285 as the Veterans of the Korean War Memorial Highway.

“More than 289,000 Texans served in the Korean War, and 1,723 of them were either killed or missing in action,” Senator Zaffirini said. “Many of them were from SD 21, and naming an important route in their honor is a fitting tribute to their patriotism and sacrifice.”

The senator encourages constituents to use the information in the box on page 2 to contact her to voice their perspectives regarding local and state issues and to suggest ideas for legislation. Her staff members at her District Office in Laredo and her Capitol Office in Austin also are eager to assist SD 21 residents with a variety of issues, including addressing problems with state agencies.



DOMINGO GONZALES III of Poteet is recognized for his accomplishments by Senator Judith Zaffirini at the Atascosa County Conservation Awards ceremony.



VIETNAM WAR VETERAN Placido Salazar Sr. and Live Oak Mayor Mary Dennis discuss issues of importance to Bexar County with Senator Judith Zaffirini.



ACROSS SENATE DISTRICT 21, Senator Judith Zaffirini listens to the concerns of local leaders, constituents and advocates. They include in photograph 1. Zavala County Commissioner Raul Gomez; in 2. Lockhart Mayor Pro Tem Angie Gonzales-Sanchez and San Marcos City Council Member Kim Porterfield; in 3. Sharon Menn of Karnes County; in 4. Carlos Vela of Jim Hogg County; in 5. Duval County Justice of the Peace José Benito Canales; and in 6. Tejano historian Dan Arellano and Travis County Constable Maria Canchola at the dedication of the Tejano Monument at the Texas Capitol.

Eagle Ford Shale Brings Challenges, Opportunities

In 2008 Petrohawk Energy Corporation drilled a well in La Salle County and demonstrated for the first time that the Eagle Ford Shale could yield significant amounts of natural gas if developed properly. Since that discovery, hundreds of Eagle Ford wells have been drilled to yield commercial quantities of oil and natural gas through a process called hydraulic fracturing or hydrofracking, commonly known as “fracking.”

The rapid development of the Eagle Ford Shale has created many opportunities and challenges for communities in South Texas, including many in Senate District (SD) 21, where the majority of rigs and production are located. In 2012 shale activity occurred in 11 of the district’s 17 counties. What’s more, SD 21 includes the top four highest-producing counties, namely, Karnes, La Salle, Webb and McMullen.

The booming oil and gas industry, fueled by the massive development in the shale, is an important contributor to state revenue. What’s more, the multiplier effect from this activity impacts local economies by enhancing sales in housing, supplies, food and entertainment. A study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas found that from the first quarter of 2010 to the third quarter of 2011, retail sales in the region grew 15.4 percent annually, resulting in a 9.3 percent annual increase in state sales tax revenue.

The resulting surge in economic development in the region has increased

property values, created job opportunities and transformed rural towns into bustling communities. It is estimated that the population of Cotulla, which is at the center of shale activity, has more than doubled in just a few years. In 2011 the Eagle Ford Shale play had an estimated \$25 billion impact on the regional economy.

This incredible economic boon, however, also raises important issues that must be addressed and resolved. The tremendous influx of people and equipment into the area already has created enormous pressure on existing infrastructure, including roadways and housing, and caused concern among residents worried about the impact the new activity will have on water quality and their way of life.

Development in the Eagle Ford Shale affects nearly every area of public policy, including public safety, health and human services and public and higher education. For example, booming counties “will need additional funding to expand and develop more schools and maintain student-teacher ratios and classroom capacity,” according to a 2012 study by the Center for Urban and Regional Planning at The University of Texas at San Antonio.

“The energy industry is vitally important to this state, and Eagle Ford Shale activity is expected to last for from 20 to 40 years,” Senator Zaffirini said. “Accordingly, we must not only implement policies to address immediate needs, but also plan sustainable,

long-term solutions that will protect our natural resources and build a lasting positive impact for future generations.”

Industry truck traffic has taken a heavy toll on county roads, farm-to-market roads and other streets and highways not designed for 24-hour 18-wheeler traffic. It is estimated that the truck traffic required to bring one well into production is equivalent to 8 million cars. The resulting damage not only is inconvenient for drivers and costly to repair, but also raises serious concerns about highway safety.

At the urging of Senator Zaffirini and others, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) directed \$23 million toward rebuilding roads affected by the Eagle Ford development. What’s more, it convened a task force of state and local government, law enforcement, transportation officials and industry leaders to identify ways to fund new construction and maintenance of roads in the region. More collaborative efforts like this will be required to craft enduring solutions to problems associated with the shale’s development.

“As the senator who represents the vast majority of the Eagle Ford Shale, I believe it is my duty to work closely with all stakeholders and bring everyone to the table to seek solutions to the challenges spurred by development in the region,” Senator Zaffirini said. “The 83rd Legislative Session will be a critical period to address these issues, and we must ensure that all voices are heard.”



SENATOR JUDITH ZAFFIRINI, a champion for education, is shown in photograph 1. with Starr County Judge Eloy Vera and The University of Texas-Pan American President Robert Nelsen at the dedication of UTPA Starr County; in photograph 2. with Zapata’s award-winning Mariachi Halcón, which was featured in a 2012 PBS documentary; and in photograph 3. with Dilley ISD leaders Domingo Davalos and Nobert Rodriguez.

Senator Zaffirini Makes Higher Education a Top Issue

As Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee (SHEC), Senator Judith Zaffirini works incessantly to prepare for the 83rd Legislative Session that convenes on Jan. 8, 2013.

Lt. Governor David Dewhurst assigned eight higher education interim charges that require the SHEC to examine a range of issues, including financial aid; developmental education; and technology, including online instruction.

Because of lower appropriations and increased enrollment, the cost of public higher education in Texas has increased.

Senator Zaffirini works to counter rising tuition by supporting increased funding for colleges and universities and by passing legislation to lower their cost to students while enhancing efficiency.

The B-on-Time Loan Program created by her legislation, for example, provides a no-interest loan that will be forgiven if a student completes a four-year degree in four years (or a five-year degree in five) and with at least a B average. Modifying this program to benefit additional students is one of the senator’s priorities for the 83rd session.

“Higher education not only is an economic driver, but also promotes increased civic engagement, greater health outcomes and a love of life-long learning,” Senator Zaffirini said. “We must implement policies that will increase access to higher education, enhance success, shorten time-to-degree, improve graduation rates and increase the number of graduates.”

Senator Zaffirini and Rep. Dan Branch, R-Dallas, co-chair the Joint Oversight Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence and Transparency (HEGET).

This committee was formed by Lt. Governor Dewhurst and House Speaker Joe Straus to examine university governance structure and allow all stakeholders to consider and implement policies that will improve Texas colleges and universities.

The recommendations made by the committee will help ensure that boards of regents conduct business transparently and are held accountable by students,

parents and faculty, and that excellence and quality are not undermined.

Experts who testified at HEGET hearings suggested policy changes that will be considered by the Texas Legislature, including requiring regents to receive training before assuming their duties. This should prepare them to understand their roles better, to make better decisions and to avoid conflicts of interest.

“Our public institutions of higher education are some of Texas’ greatest assets, and we must guarantee their continued success,” said Senator Zaffirini. “Above all, we must continuously strive for excellence.”

Economy Rises, But So Does Need

Texas’ economy rebounded in 2011, and from September, 2011, through June, 2012, state sales tax revenues increased by 12.2 percent. Despite this development, a growing population, increased demand and measures used to balance the budget during the 2011 Legislative Session means Texas’ positive economic growth likely will be offset by pressing needs in the 2014-15 budget cycle.

Legislators will have to account for deferred obligations, including an estimated \$5 billion for Medicaid and \$2.3 billion to school districts.

Balancing the 2014-15 state budget also will be difficult because other measures used in 2011 will not be available, including tax collection speed-ups.

As the fastest growing state in the nation, Texas must address the critical needs of a growing population. As this population becomes older, more diverse and more concentrated in urban areas, the demands on health care, education and roadways may overwhelm traditional sources and levels of revenue.

“Lean state budgets are important, but so is the ability to provide vital state services,” said Senator Judith Zaffirini, a member of the Senate Finance Committee. “Not investing adequately in education to teach our next generation of workers and entrepreneurs, not developing infrastructure that serves as a foundation of commerce and economic activity and not addressing the health needs of a growing and aging population, will jeopardize our state’s economic strength.”



THE EAGLE FORD SHALE brings growth and challenges to Senate District 21. Senator Judith Zaffirini is shown in photograph 1. discussing housing issues with Cotulla Mayor José Javier Garcia and McMullen County Judge Jim Teal; and in 2. taking notes at a meeting with landowners from Wilson and Guadalupe counties about a proposed disposal well near La Vernia. They are (L-R) Mark Johnson, Dennis Olson, Kenneth Mills, Shirley Huebinger, Herman “Bubba” Buckley Jr., Harold Schott, Jimmy Stevens and Alice and Judge W.C. “Bud” Kirkendall.



Senator Judith Zaffirini: A Texas Service Pioneer

A Texas Service Pioneer is the fitting moniker bestowed on Senator Judith Zaffirini in the 2011-12 edition of the college textbook, *Texas Politics Today*.

“Zaffirini’s tenure in the Texas State Senate has truly been remarkable,” writes textbook author and University of Houston-Downtown scholar David Branham Sr. “She has set a standard of excellence in service and dedication

that will probably never be matched by anyone. She has changed the way politics are conducted in the institution by taking integrity to a new level.”

Senator Zaffirini has received more than 670 awards and honors for her legislative, public service and professional work, including more than 170 in communication. Because of her commitment to excellence in all arenas, the Beaumont Foundation, a non-profit institution dedicated to enriching the lives of low-income children and families, honored her and her husband, Carlos Sr., by endowing a scholarship in their name at Texas A&M International University. What’s more, their son, Carlos Jr., endowed a scholarship



LEADING BY EXAMPLE, Senator Judith Zaffirini prioritizes faith, family and a commitment to public service. Her husband, Carlos Sr., and their son, Carlos Jr., are the inspiration for her service on behalf of Texas families.

in her name at The University of Texas at Austin (UT).

The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents also recognized Senator Zaffirini’s unyielding commitment to improving higher education at A&M and throughout the state when they voted unanimously in 2012 to name the Senator Judith Zaffirini Student Success Center at Texas A&M International.

The same year, *The Daily Texan*, the UT student newspaper, named her its *Lonehorn of the Year*, a distinction awarded to the person “who had the most positive impact on the UT community throughout the 2011-12 academic year.

What’s more, the Christian Life Commission lauded Senator Zaffirini

with its Horizon Award for her dedication to enhancing higher education.

“I share these awards with all who collaborated, including students, faculty, advocates, volunteers and colleagues,” Senator Zaffirini said. “They are especially meaningful because they reflect our success in improving higher education in Texas.”

The first Hispanic woman elected to the

Texas Senate, Senator Zaffirini holds B.S., M.A. and PhD degrees from UT, each with a 3.9 grade-point average. Featured in more than 20 books and referenced in 16, she tells her story in her publication for students at Senator Judith Zaffirini Elementary School in Laredo, *If Judy Pappas Can Do It, Anybody Can*.

Her unparalleled work ethic is reflected in her 100 percent perfect voting record since 1987. Senator Zaffirini has cast 47,584 consecutive votes in the Senate and passed 725 bills.

A lector at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, she and Carlos Sr. marked their 47th wedding anniversary in 2012. Carlos Jr. is an attorney and businessman.