

Texas Senate  
Committee on Property Tax

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Sen. Paul Bettencourt, Chair

**For Immediate Release**

Monday, February 11, 2019

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***Senate Committee on Property Tax Takes Huge Step for Property Tax Relief for Taxpayers***

*SB2 passed from committee with a 4-0-1 vote with 2.5% voter approved tax rate limit and automatic election for taxpayers.  
Greatest proposed change in property tax law in 40 years per testimony.*

**Austin** - Chair Bettencourt announces SB2, the 2019 Property Tax Reform and Relief Act passed out of the Senate Property Tax Committee by vote of 4 to 0 with one present not voting. Today's action occurs after a very successful Senate Property Tax hearing, on Wednesday February 6th, where 110 people from all over the state testified on the bill. ([Part 1](#) & [Part 2](#))

**"The testimony was clear as ordinary Texans turned out from across the state to testify for property tax reform and relief. The Committee listened. In fact, our major amendment, allowing Texans to opt-in to vote for a lower 'rollback rate', now known as the 'voter approved rate', was requested by many from rural and smaller towns across Texas that testified. In fact, no private citizen testified against SB2 only those who were elected officials, or taxpayer funded lobbyists spoke against,"** Chairman Bettencourt stated. **"Senator Flores' escrow account went up \$900 per month because of higher taxes, even he worries he cant keep his home because of rising property taxes."**

Today's hearing was conducted by Committee Vice-Chair, Senator Angela Paxton (R-McKinney), who presided over the inclusion of fifteen amendments into the committee substitute of SB2 that was voted out today. Senator Paxton commented on Chairman Bettencourt's comments, **"there are many permutations that could result in significant property tax relief."** She remarked, **"as a former math teacher (and a BS in mathematical sciences from Baylor University,) not only are there many permutations, but many combinations as well."**

The Senate Committee on Property Tax looks forward to our House colleagues on the House Ways and Means Committee and Chairman Dustin Burrows (R-Lubbock) taking up the debate along with the House Public Education Chair, Dan Huberty (R-Kingwood), and Senate Education Chair, Larry Taylor's (R-Friendswood), with the anticipated forthcoming roll out of the School Finance Reform Bill. **"Taxpayers have demanded a louder voice on this issue,"** said Senator Hancock (R-North Richland Hills). **"And as we reign in property tax growth we will see a significant increase in the percentage of state funding for public education, another top priorities for the 86th Legislature."**

Senator Creighton (R-Conroe) carried the amendment for smaller taxing units' citizens to be able to opt into the bill by a one time public vote. He said, **"This bill now allows the people control over their own tax rates in all jurisdictions by giving them an automatic stay at the polls. Today, we strengthened the bill by maintaining property tax reform options for all of Texas."**

Chairman Bettencourt noted that we are 35 days into the session and have 105 days to go. Chairman Bettencourt quipped, **"that this is like the first quarter of the football game"** and Senator Hinojosa (D-Corpus Christi) quipped back, that he was **"looking forward to halftime, so we can make some adjustments to the game plan,"** to great laughter by the audience. Future meetings of the Senate Property Tax Committee can be found at <https://senate.texas.gov/cmte.php?c=586>.

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**Members**

Brandon Creighton  
Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa

Kelly Hancock  
Angela Paxton (Vice-Chair)