



SENATOR CHARLES SCHWERTNER, MD

SENATE DISTRICT 5

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Schwertner Fights to Protect Private Landowner Rights

A longtime advocate for the rights of private property owners, Schwertner introduces legislation to guard landowners from unfair taxation and eminent domain abuse.

AUSTIN, TX -- Today, Senator Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) introduced a slate of legislation meant to support the rights of private landowners and strengthen protections against unfair taxation and the abuse of eminent domain.

"Defending the rights of private property owners is as much a part of Texas' heritage as the quarter horse or the Colt .45," said Schwertner. "Like a lot of hard-working families in Senate District 5, the Schwertners have been farming and ranching in Texas for over six generations. That's why I'm proud to offer this legislation and proud to continue the long tradition of protecting Texas landowners from unfair taxation and eminent domain abuse."

SB 626 (Two Clear Offers) -- requires a condemning authority to specify which parcel of a landowner's property is needed for a desired project and which is not subject to condemnation, requiring separate compensation offers for each. Joint authors of SB 626 include Senators Birdwell, Burton, Creighton, Hall, Huffines, Huffman, Kolkhorst, Nichols, Seliger, and Zaffirini.

SB 627 (Informed Survey Notice) -- provides landowners with increased disclosure of existing survey-related rights, including the right to negotiate survey terms and recover damages caused by survey, as well as the landowner's right to refuse access to their property without a court order. Joint authors of SB 627 include Senators Birdwell, Burton, Creighton, Hall, Huffines, Kolkhorst, Nichols, Seliger, and Zaffirini.

SB 628 (Actual Progress Reform) -- strengthens existing "Landowner's Bill of Rights" protections which allow landowners the right to repurchase property seized through eminent domain unless the condemning entity can demonstrate "actual progress" on the project within a defined period of time. SB 628 is a refiled version of a 2015 bill (SB 479 84R) that received unanimous support in the Senate Committee on State Affairs and passed the Texas Senate 29-1. Joint authors of SB 628 include Senators Birdwell, Burton, Campbell, Creighton, Hall, Huffines, Kolkhorst, Nichols, and Zaffirini.

SB 629 (Ending Land-Use Tax Penalty) -- eliminates the 7% interest penalty assessed on taxes owed by farmers and ranchers when they convert their property from an agricultural or open-space designation to another use. Joint authors of SB 629 include Senators Buckingham, Burton, Campbell, Creighton, Hall, Hinojosa, Hughes, Rodriguez, and Seliger.

A medical doctor by training, Dr. Schwertner serves as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. Schwertner is currently serving his third term as the senator for Senate District 5, a ten-county region of central and east Texas.

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