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**For Immediate Release**  
May 6, 2015

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**Striving For Fiscal Transparency and Accountability For Taxpayers**  
*Senator Bettencourt Gets A Landslide Vote of 12 – 0 on CSHB 1378 In The Finance Committee*

**Austin** – Senator Paul Bettencourt brought before the Finance Committee CSHB 1378, a bill that is part of Governor Abbott’s local government transparency and debt disclosure initiative. This important legislation provides taxpayers transparency in public finance so voters are well informed about a political subdivision's (i.e. special districts, municipalities, and school districts) current financial state before they make any financial decisions. The language used was Rep. Jim Murphy's after he worked out a compromise with all stakeholders involved, and that was substituted on to Rep. Flynn's bill.

**"This bill is true transparency for all Texas taxpayers," said Senator Bettencourt.**

At present, certain information concerning the debts of political subdivisions is not easily accessible to current or potential taxpayers of political subdivisions. CSHB 1378 (Flynn/Bettencourt) will now require political subdivisions to report debt obligations to the Comptroller, who will make it available online on their website. This gives voters the opportunity to easily access vital information, something taxpayers should have the right to do if they wish.

**"When passed, any Texas taxpayer will be able to go to the Comptroller's office and get the facts about local debt. Taxpayers will finally be able to easily see how much debt they are ultimately responsible for to pay off," replied Senator Bettencourt.**

CSHB 1378 gives taxpayers who pay these debts full transparency of their liabilities so they are better informed and able to make well informed decisions when they go to vote for or against any new debt being proposed.