



January 28, 2021



The 87th Legislative Session began on January 12, 2021. I believe representative governing is dependent on good participation and great communication, and I appreciate the opportunity to share some of what I'm working on this week as your State Senator. I'm here to listen, learn, and lead for you!



COVID-19 VACCINE AVAILABILITY UPDATE

On January 11, I signed a [letter](#), along with the Collin County legislative delegation and Commissioners Court, requesting additional COVID-19 vaccinations to be allocated to Collin County, based on population, as soon as possible. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) have subsequently increased the allocation of vaccines to Collin County starting this week.

For Collin County, visit the [vaccine wait list](#) to schedule appointments.

For Dallas County, visit their [website](#) for online vaccine registration.

I am committed to ensuring that Collin and Dallas Counties receive a fair allocation of available vaccines and that the vaccine process remains voluntary.

REDISTRICTING HEARING FOR NORTH TEXAS

The **Senate Select Committee on Redistricting**, on which I serve, began committee hearings this week. These hearings have broken historic new ground by taking public testimony virtually.

The committee posts committee hearings in advance and the public may register as witnesses for the meetings. I encourage you to listen in and consider registering to testify if you would like to contribute your input. North Texas is growing and the population growth will impact the existing congressional, senate, house, and state board of education districts. **Click here** to view the Notice of Public Hearing for the Dallas / Fort Worth region, which is scheduled for February 4 to begin at 9 am.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Texas State Budget

Each legislative session, the most important piece of legislation is the state budget, also known as the General Appropriations Act. Texas is unique in that the legislature is constitutionally required to pass a budget which constrains spending to projected revenue (no deficit spending is allowed), and the rate of growth of the state budget cannot exceed the rate of growth of the state economy.

Last week, Senator Jane Nelson filed Senate Bill 1 to begin the appropriations process within the Senate. The Senate Finance Committee is scheduled to begin their committee hearings on February 8.

The state budget this year will be very challenging with less revenue projected, in part, due to business shutdowns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and increased spending on the COVID-19 response at the state level. I am committed to maintaining the school funding promise that we made last session, which included increasing the state share of school finance funding and reducing property taxes.

Driver License Renewal Process

This session, I plan to file legislation that will create efficient and customer-friendly processes at the DPS and work within the state budget process to bring a mega-center in Collin County.

Other Issues

Thank you for your calls and emails communicating the issues that are important to you. I've highlighted just a few of those issues in this newsletter, but I want you to know that my colleagues and I are moving on many fronts regarding other critical matters including legislation impacting taxpayer funding lobbying, girls' sports, religious freedom, human dignity and life, election integrity, and virtual education. I am here to listen, learn, and lead for you in the Texas Senate and your input is the starting point for that process. It is my privilege to serve you.