



February 4, 2021



The 87th Legislative Session began on January 12, 2021. I believe representative government 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

Collin County announced that it will open two more COVID-19 Vaccination Centers to help administer the additional 42,900 vaccines the Texas Department of State Health Services announced it will send to the County this week. Collin County has begun working from its vaccine wait list.

For Collin County, [click here](#) to schedule an appointment and join the vaccine wait list.

For Dallas County, [click here](#) 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.

STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS

Governor Abbott announced in the State of the State address this week five emergency legislative items. Under the Texas Constitution, the Governor may deem certain issues as expedient for the legislature to take these items up for immediate consideration within the first sixty days of the legislative session. This week, the Governor announced the following items are emergency items for the 87th Legislature:

1. Expansion of broadband access
2. Measures to prevent cities from taking action to defund local police departments
3. Reform of the state bail system under the Damon Allen Act
4. Election integrity
5. Civil liability protection for businesses, health care providers, and individuals who operated safely during the COVID-19 pandemic

I look forward to working with the Governor and supporting these important pieces of legislation when they are filed in the Senate.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

[Senate Special Committee on Redistricting Hosts Hearing for North Texas](#)

On Thursday, February 4, the Special Committee on Redistricting, on which I serve, hosted a [hearing](#) focusing on the Dallas / Fort Worth region to solicit input on the 2021 legislative redistricting process.

If you missed the hearings this week, there are additional opportunities to testify at [hearings scheduled](#) later in February or you may submit your testimony electronically to the Committee at <https://senate.texas.gov/redistrictingcomment/>. To participate in a committee hearing, click on the link to the hearing and click on the unique witness registration link at least 24 hours prior to the start time of the hearing.

You may also watch the [livestream of the hearings](#).

Every ten years, the United States conducts a census which results in Congressional seats across the nation being re-apportioned based on total state population. The results of the U.S. Census will impact federal education, transportation and healthcare funding in addition to the number of congressional

seats Texas will have for the next decade. The census numbers are also used to redraw the 31 State Senate, 150 House and 15 Board of Education districts to reflect the current population of Texas. I am committed to a fair, legal and transparent redistricting process that properly represents Texans for the next ten years.

Business and Commerce Committee

I've been reappointed by the Lieutenant Governor to serve on the Business and Commerce Committee for the 87th Session. This committee hears a wide variety of legislation ranging from insurance, telecommunications, public utilities, occupational licensing, cybersecurity and information technology, and regulations on businesses. As highlighted by the Governor in his emergency items, one of the very important issues that the Committee will work on this session is expanding broadband access. This is not only an issue for rural Texas; I have heard from many constituents about broadband access limitations within the suburban Metroplex area of Senate District 8. Broadband issues have definitely been exacerbated by increased telecommuting and online schools over the last year. I look forward to working with my colleagues to increase broadband access for all Texans.