



March 4, 2021



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March is Women's History Month. It's easy to think that "making history" is about being famous. But I think making history is much more personal and achievable than that.

One of the most memorable and meaningful parts of being a teacher for me was working with students in the area of leadership. As I said, it's easy to think that leadership means being famous, having a title, or getting elected to something. But what I wanted my students to understand was that every time we walk in a room, we change it just by being there. And that means that every time we walk in a room, we have the opportunity to lead - to take direction, to change direction. At its heart, leadership is about being an example worth following. And that is how history is made.

This is why I think making history is more personal and achievable than we may consider at first glance. The list of people - and women, in particular - who have made history in my life continues to grow each day I live, as I listen to and learn from those around me who lead by living out an example worth following.

Sometimes their example is so profound and large that they make international headlines, and other times it is so subtle or private that I may be the only one who noticed. Some I watch from a distance, and some are soulmates. But they are still leading, making history. Their very presence makes every room they walk into a better place.

March is Women's History Month. Go make history today!

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## GOVERNOR ABBOTT'S EXECUTIVE ORDERS

This week, Governor Greg Abbott issued an [executive order](#) rescinding most of his earlier executive orders relating to the pandemic, including lifting the mask mandate in Texas. Additionally, he is lifting all COVID-19 related operating limits on businesses and other establishments in all counties not in an area with high hospitalizations. Both of the measures will take effect next Wednesday, March 10, 2021.

Businesses, places of worship, and other establishments may choose to continue to require masks, but doing so will no longer be the result of a state mandate. The Texas Education Agency provided additional [public health guidance](#) to school districts this week as well.

I have long said that policy decisions for how a business should operate, including the requirements of face coverings for employees and customers, is best determined by businesses - not the government. Consumers have the right to choose how and if they choose to participate in the market-place. The executive order this week is a win for free market principles.

## HEARINGS ON ENERGY PROVIDERS IN TEXAS

Last week, my colleagues and I on the [Senate Business and Commerce Committee](#) heard 25 hours of testimony over two days about the winter storm event that left so many Texans without power. We heard from 28 witnesses including the head of ERCOT, the Texas Public Utilities Commission (PUC), the Railroad Commission, and electricity providers who shared information and answered questions about what went wrong with the operation of our electric grid.

The solutions I am seeking include the following:

- Weatherize the Texas power infrastructure;
- Improve communications so consumers know what to expect in power emergencies; and

- Take measures to ensure proactive cooperation and communication between all parties responsible for Texas' power grid.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on legislation to ensure that Texans never again experience the problems we faced last month during the winter storm.

To watch the archives of these hearings, click on the links below:

[February 25, 2021 Senate Business and Commerce Committee Hearing](#)

[February 26, 2021 Senate Business and Commerce Committee Hearing](#)

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

### Filing Priority Legislation

This week, I filed two priority bills legislation that meet two of the Senate's legislative priorities, as designated by Lt. Governor Dan Patrick:

- [SB 9, the Human Life Protection Act](#)

The goal of this bill is to end the practice of abortion in Texas in the event and to the extent that the U.S. Supreme Court reverses its rulings under *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. If overturned, law-making authority would return to the state.

- [SB 26, Freedom to Worship Act](#)

The goal of this bill is to ensure the protection of places of worship from future closures through executive orders.

### Every Mother Matters (EMMA)

Last week, I filed [SB 802](#), the "[Every Mother Matters Act](#)," also known as "EMMA." This bill provides an alternative to abortion for women experiencing unexpected pregnancies by matching them with state and local resources that can provide for specific socioeconomic and family needs. Additionally, EMMA provides a screening for family violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking to provide women who are victims of these crimes with appropriate resources.