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SENATOR LARRY TAYLOR FILES PRIORITY WINDSTORM BILL
-SB 750 Windstorm School Finance Legislation-

AUSTIN, TEXAS (February 25, 2015)... Today, Senator Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood) filed SB 750, the second of three bills, to ensure coastal residents have Access, Affordability and Availability to windstorm insurance coverage. Representative Greg Bonnen (R-Friendswood) has filed the companion legislation, HB 1875, in the Texas House.

The legislation provides much needed relief to public school districts that pay higher than average premiums for windstorm and hail insurance coverage by authorizing a finance allotment to cover the financial expenditure.

"Public school districts along the coast have struggled to provide adequate wind and hail coverage at an affordable price," Sen. Larry Taylor said. "The Texas school finance system strives to equalize every district, yet the schools in my district are unfairly impacted by this financial burden. Geography should not be a hindrance to educating our students, but instead recognized as a value added characteristic of the great state of Texas."

"Windstorm Insurance is a disproportionately large expense for coastal-area school districts. Unfortunately, our schools are paying hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars in coverage premiums for their campuses," State Representative Greg Bonnen said. "This legislation will allow our schools to focus their resources on providing a quality education for students."

"Dickinson ISD spends over \$1,000,000 in windstorm insurance premiums, and that only covers approximately 60% of our buildings," Dickinson ISD Superintendent Vicki Mims said. "We cannot afford to cover all campuses, so a catastrophic event such as a major hurricane would be devastating to the district. A state allotment as proposed in this bill would allow us to put that \$1,000,000 back into the classrooms and into the education of our students."

"Clear Creek ISD spends \$2.5 million more per year than a similar sized school district located north of the Gulf Coast. Despite the exponential higher cost in insurance, it only provides coverage of \$40 million for our \$1.2 billion of assets," Clear Creek ISD Superintendent Greg Smith said. "If this legislation is passed, it will allow coastal school districts to put more money into instruction such as hiring teachers to reduce classroom sizes, give teacher pay raises to offset health insurance increases, and/or improve instructional resources."

Sen. Larry Taylor represents Senate District 11, comprised of parts of Brazoria, Galveston, and Harris Counties. Before his election to the Texas Senate in 2012, Sen. Taylor served five terms in the Texas House of Representatives.

<http://www.senate.state.tx.us/75r/senate/members/dist11/dist11.htm>

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