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CONTACT: Matt Welch (512) 417-8084 cell; matt@horizonpublicaffairs.com

## Governor Abbott Applauds Sen. Larry Taylor, Rep. Simmons' Intention to Author School Choice for Special Needs Students Legislation

AUSTIN, TEXAS (June 30, 2017) . . . In the upcoming special legislative session, Sen. Larry Taylor and Rep. Ron Simmons will author legislation seeking to provide school choice for special needs students. This issue was one of the 20 items Governor Abbott previously announced will be added to the special session agenda.

Governor Abbott thanked Sen. Larry Taylor and Rep. Simmons for their efforts to provide better opportunities for students with special needs. "As elected officials, we have a responsibility to give our children every opportunity to succeed in the classroom," said Governor Abbott. "One size does not fit all when it comes to education, and parents of special needs children should have the option to choose the school that's best for their child's needs. I am grateful to Sen. Taylor and Rep. Simmons for their commitment to better serving our children."

"I believe no one understands a student's educational needs better than their parents," said Sen. Larry Taylor. "By creating a School Choice program for students with special needs we are giving moms and dads and caregivers an opportunity to meet their child's unique needs regardless of their zip code. The limited student population eligible to take advantage of a School Choice program represents 0.1 percent or 6,000 of 5.8 million Texas' students overall."

Taylor added, "The vast majority of parents of students with special needs are incredibly pleased with their current public school. However, we have heard testimony from many families that have been forced to fight their school for the services their child needs and, in some cases, these protracted battles have lasted six to eight years. This legislation will give those parents an option as well as other parents who may have access to a school that specializes in their child's special needs."

Senator Larry Taylor is a lifelong Texan and Baylor University graduate raised in Friendswood. He and his wife Kerri have three adult children and two grandchildren. Senator Taylor owns Truman Taylor Insurance Agency in Friendswood, an independent agency started by his father 55 years ago. Prior to his election to the Texas Senate in 2012, he served five terms in the Texas House of Representatives. Senator Taylor represents Senate District 11, comprised of portions of Brazoria, Galveston, and Harris Counties.

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