



Senator Joan Huffman

Senate District 17

Senator Joan Huffman Files Senate Base Budget

AUSTIN — Today, Senator Joan Huffman, R-Houston, filed Senate Bill 1, the Senate's base budget for the 2024-2025 biennium. The general appropriations bill is a culmination of months of due diligence and input from state agencies and stakeholders. It establishes property tax relief, public safety, mental health, education, and many other critical needs as priorities for the upcoming two-year budget.

"The state's commitment to fiscal responsibility has paid major dividends and the Texas economy is booming," said Huffman. "We have an obligation to the people of Texas to continue our state's incredible trajectory by making investments that will keep Texas as the best place to live, work, and raise a family. The base budget is a starting point, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to develop a conservative and sustainable budget that addresses our needs and strengthens our economy."

In response to the filing of SB 1, Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick stated that "the Senate's budget for Texas is a conservative budget that addresses challenges facing our state and does not exceed population growth times inflation. I want to thank Chair Huffman for her long hours of hard work during the interim to make sure we are in the best position possible to enter the legislative session."

As filed, SB 1 appropriates \$288.7 billion in All Funds and \$130.1 billion in General Revenue. Highlights of SB 1 include:

- \$15.0 billion reserved for property tax relief over future years contingent on the passage of legislation, including \$3 billion to raise the residential homestead exemption to \$70,000;
- \$1.8 billion for an across-the-board state employee pay raise to address a state workforce crisis, the highest across-the-board salary increase in over 40 years;
- Funding for the full Foundation School Program entitlement, including enrollment growth;
- \$4.6 billion to continue current support for Operation Lone Star, the state-sponsored effort to secure our southern border;
- \$5.8 billion, an increase of \$753 million, for payroll growth and continued reforms to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) passed in 2019;
- \$960.2 million, an increase of \$46.3 million, for statutorily required contributions to TRS-Care;
- \$855 million to eliminate all unfunded liability for both the Law Enforcement & Custodial Officer Retirement Fund and the Judicial Retirement Fund;
- \$350 million for a new fund to bolster law enforcement and criminal justice efforts in rural Texas communities;
- Significant investments to address training and security needs at the Department of Criminal Justice with an additional \$35 million for a correctional officer training facility and \$23.9 million to provide body-worn cameras for all maximum-security units;
- \$200 million to construct two new secure state juvenile facilities with mental health capacity;
- \$9.24 billion to fund enrollment at higher education institutions through the formulas;
- \$2.5 billion set aside for a higher education endowment fund, contingent on the passage of legislation;

- \$232.4 million, an increase of \$33.3 million, to maintain the state's 1.1 to 1 ratio of graduate medical education slots in relation to the number of medical school graduates;
- \$650 million to reform community college funding formulas to prioritize student outcomes, pending legislation;
- Funding to cover projected Medicaid caseloads;
- \$9 billion in total funding for mental health services across 26 state agencies, including additional funding for continued transformation of the state's mental health system:
 - \$236.3 million to address workforce challenges at state facilities, including State Hospitals;
 - \$331.4 million for additional community inpatient beds;
 - \$22 million to expand step-down transition and housing for individuals exiting a State Hospital;
 - \$55.5 million to expand child and adult mental health crisis services, including youth mobile crisis outreach teams and youth crisis respite units;
 - \$60 million to expand community mental health grant programs across Texas such as mental health jail diversion programs and child and family community mental health programs;
 - Over \$30 million to expand multisystemic therapy for at-risk youth and their families;
 - \$156.2 million to expand children's mental health services through the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium; and
 - \$24.8 million to expand the current loan repayment program for mental health professionals;
- \$1 billion to increase support for nursing facilities that provide care for Texas' most vulnerable citizens and have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- \$140.1 million increase for women's health programs, including additional prenatal and postpartum care, and expansion of screening, referral, and treatment of maternal mental health;
- \$128.1 million increase for Community-based Foster Care, including funding to expand into four new geographic areas;
- \$100 million to enhance foster care provider rates to expand capacity and improve care for our most vulnerable children;
- \$32 million to increase support for nursing education and repayment programs;
- \$35.6 billion to address the state's transportation needs, including \$30.5 billion dedicated for highway planning, design, construction, and maintenance; \$150 million for port capital improvement projects; and \$400 million to capitalize the Ship Channel Improvement Revolving Fund;
- Up to \$500 million in new funding for Gulf Coast Protection District projects contingent upon commitment by federal partners; and
- \$400 million to complete the restoration, development, and maintenance of the Alamo Complex.

(Senator Joan Huffman represents District 17, which is comprised of Colorado, Jackson, Matagorda, and Wharton County and portions of Brazoria, Ft. Bend, Harris, and Waller County. Huffman currently serves as Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance, Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Redistricting, Chair of the Senate Committee on Jurisprudence, Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice, and as a senior member of the Senate Committee on Administration, and the Legislative Budget Board.)

###