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LOIS W. KOLKHORST

STATE SENATOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TEXAS PRIVACY ACT FILED BY SENATOR KOLKHORST

Bill Provides Unique Solution to Protect Privacy and Texas Businesses

AUSTIN- In a bid to address the personal privacy concerns of many Texans, Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) today filed Senate Bill 6, known as the Texas Privacy Act. Long called for by Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick, the legislation seeks to put an end to a controversy that began in Washington D.C.

In May of 2016, the Federal Government issued an edict to all Texas schools, requiring them to provide students access to restrooms, showers, and dressing rooms based on "an individual's internal sense of gender." Alarming both parents and the public, the federal proposal to have boys and girls potentially showering and using the same restroom, has been largely ignored by the mainstream media.

A longtime privacy advocate, Kolkhorst said her bill provides clear state guidance to public schools and buildings and requires them to provide an expected level of privacy. While setting standards for public facilities, the legislation protects the right of Texas businesses to decide their own policy. Additionally any private entities who lease a public facility such as a stadium or convention center may also adopt whatever policy they wish for their event.

"This bill is written not to begin a controversy, but to end one," said Kolkhorst. "The Texas Privacy Act is a thoughtful solution to a sensitive issue. It preserves an expected level of privacy for our public schools and buildings. At the same time, it also allows for schools and universities to make personal accommodations for those requesting an alternate setting. Senate Bill 6 also allows Texas businesses to determine their own policy without government interference."

To protect all people equally, Kolkhorst said the bill is unique to Texas in that it also enhances the penalties for a litany of crimes committed in a bathroom against any individual, regardless of their sex or gender identity.

Kolkhorst said she has been studying the issue for months and hopes to provide a practical solution that is in line with public expectations for privacy in public dressing rooms and restrooms.

"This is a significant step for the majority of Texans who are alarmed by misguided efforts to shatter our expectations of security and privacy, especially for our children. Senate Bill 6 may have my name on it, but the responsibility falls on all of us to protect citizens and ensure that their personal and private rights are secured." ###

