



Pete's Periódico

State of our State: Booming

by Sen. Pete Flores, Senate District 19

February 11, 2019

On Tuesday, February 6, Governor Greg Abbott spoke to a joint session of the Texas House and Texas Senate to give the "State of the State." This speech, which resembles the State of the Union, is given every biennial towards the beginning of the legislative session. The address can be summed up in a few words: the state of our state is booming!

Every day, about 1,000 people move to Texas. Our state leads the nation in job creation and has the fastest growing economy in the United States. In large part due to the oil and gas reserves in the Permian Basin and Eagle Ford in Senate District 19, America will be energy independent by next year. We have among the best ranked public schools in the U.S. and are home to nine tier one universities. Texas is soaring, but there is always room for improvement—that is what the Legislative Session is for.

In his address, Governor Abbott identified five emergency items: school finance reform and teacher pay raises, property tax relief, school safety, disaster response, and mental health programs. Under the Texas Constitution, the legislature is prohibited from passing bills in the first 60 days—unless it receives a supermajority vote or declared an emergency item by the governor. We can begin voting on bills pertaining to the emergency items almost immediately, allowing the Legislature to get more done in our 140 days.

The day after the Governor spoke, Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice Nathan Hecht gave a "State of the Judiciary" address. Among many issues, the Chief Justice discussed changes to the judicial election system and bail reform. I look forward to exploring these issues and more during this legislative session as they pertain to my membership of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice.

I'm thankful for the hundreds of constituents who have visited the Capitol office during these first weeks of the Legislature. Multiple counties from Senate District 19 have had their legislative day at the Capitol: Brewster, Dimmit, Frio, Maverick, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Zavala. These visits are my favorite part of being a Senator. I treasure my time with the city and county officials, business owners, and private citizens that make time in their schedules to drive up to Austin to visit and share what is important to them.

Otherwise, most of my time has been spent in the Senate Finance Committee room. We hit nine hours for a recent committee hearing on Article II of the state budget (Health and Human Services) but very thankful for this time to hear from any Texans wishing to testify on how we are spending their tax dollars.

Looking ahead, there are some important dates I would like for you to be aware of. There are three more Senate District 19 county Legislative Days this month: Pecos County on February 26, Reeves County on February 27, and Crockett County on February 28. The filing deadline for legislation is March 8; if you have ideas on how the Legislature can better serve this state, let us know.

As always, call my Capitol office at (512) 463-0119 or send us an email at District19.Flores@senate.texas.gov and convey any and all opinions. We are here to work for you. Onward—Adelante!

Sen. Pete Flores is a Republican Texas Senator representing Senate District 19.

To contact Sen. Flores, call his Capitol office at (512) 463-0119 or send an email to District19.Flores@senate.texas.gov. Sen. Flores welcomes all constituents to visit his office at the Texas Capitol, room E1.608. Sen. Flores has an office in San Antonio and will soon have district offices open in Del Rio and Ft. Stockton. For constituent concerns in San Antonio, contact Monica Rojas at Monica.Rojas@senate.texas.gov; for Del Rio, contact Zachary Cadena at Zachary.Cadena@senate.texas.gov. For daily updates, follow him on Facebook: SenatorPeteFlores and on Twitter: @PeteFlores_TX.