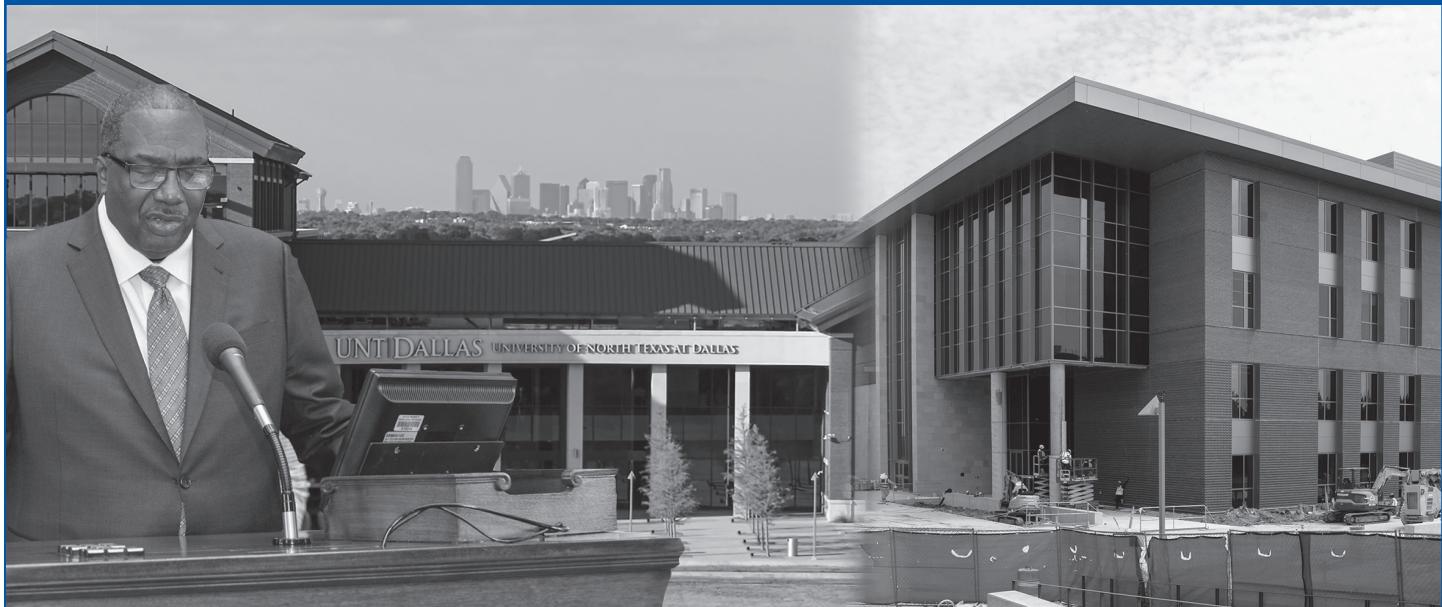


SENATOR ROYCE WEST



The Capitol Report / Fall 2025

Dear Constituents and Friends,

Whether I preferred them or not, it was abundantly clear that several high-profile issues would be addressed during the 89th Session of the Texas Legislature. Definitely not my choice, but the groundwork had been laid during the interim that led to the successful execution of a strategy to pass into law what are called by some, Education Savings Accounts. I call them vouchers. My opposition continues today is it did in 2023, 2021 and back 30 years ago when charter schools were approved by Texas lawmakers as a compromise to a voucher program. But while a record amount of funding was approved for public education, it was too late to avoid them being held hostage due to the fractious debate over vouchers during the 88th Session. I'll go into detail later.

Given the outcome of the 2024 Presidential Election, it was a safe bet that more attention would be paid to immigration. And you can't talk about immigration in America without mentioning the Texas border. I support strong southern borders and protecting the people of Texas. I disagree with some of the tactics by which the mission has been deployed. But due to increased federal resources, state budget writers were able to take a slight step back from the billions poured into border security over the past decade.

As a homeowner, count me as a producer and recipient of the Legislature's decision to continue the previous Session's objective to reduce property taxes even further from the \$60,000 tax cut made by increasing the exemption in 2023. While many will realize the tax break next tax season, millions of renters and non-homestead property owners continue to be bystanders when it comes to lower tax levies and shudder from higher appraised values.

With gratitude, I supported the \$3 billion investment made to create the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, because we all know the prolonged suffering caused by diseases like Alzheimer's.

I'm now second in seniority in the Texas Senate and make it my goal to have Dallas County District 23 constituents benefit from the wherewithal I've accrued. As a result, a combined \$30 million in state and federal funding will find its way to the Southwestern Medical District Transformation Project that's anchored by the UT Southwestern Medical System. We unlocked another \$10 million in federal funding that will go toward Phase II of the Southern Gateway Project, while construction of Phase I is plowing ahead.

It's a given that my support for all things University of North Texas at Dallas and the UNT Dallas College of Law continues. I was also able to help lay the funding foundation for renovations to the legendary Thurgood Marshall Law School in Houston, whose contributions to legal professionals are immeasurable. But make no mistake, these are serious times for democracy in Texas and in America. Your prudent vote is as urgently important as ever!

Thank you all!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Royce West".

Senator Royce West
District 23

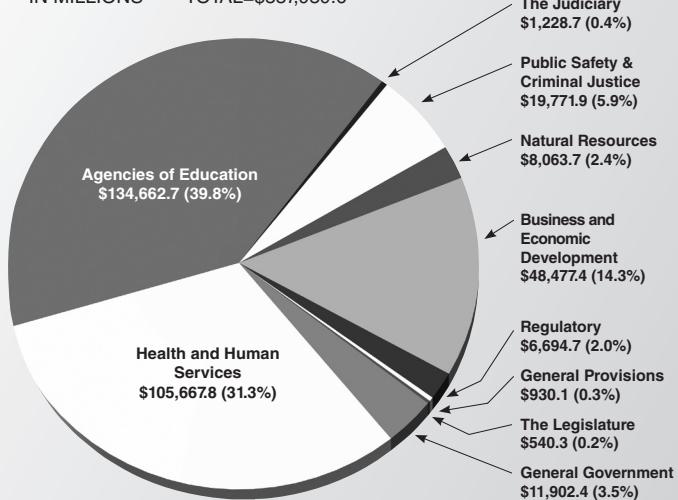


State Senator Royce West & Mrs. Carol West

CAPITOL REPORT

GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2026–27 BIENNIAL LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

FUNDING BY ARTICLE, ALL FUNDS
IN MILLIONS TOTAL=\$337,939.6



NOTES:
(1) Substantive items funded in the Conference Committee Report for Senate Bill 1, Article IX, for the 2026–27 biennium are allocated to the prospective articles and agencies.
(2) Excludes Interagency Contracts.
(3) Biennial change and percentage change are calculated on actual amounts before rounding. Therefore, totals may not sum due to rounding.

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD ID: 9306

The Budget – Reflects state priorities

During the final week of the 140-day Regular Legislative Session, state lawmakers approved an All Funds Budget of \$338.017 billion. It represents an increase 9.5 percent larger than the 2024-25 budget; \$16.7 billion more to help address the needs of a growing state that is expected to add another 1.2 million residents by 2030.

All Funds is defined as the combination of state tax revenue, the sales tax paid on a dollar spent called general revenue (GR), general revenue-dedicated for specific expenditures (GR-D), federal funds and other funding sources. Of the All Funds \$338.017 billion budget, \$149.17 billion comes from GR.

As usual, the majority of the budget is spent in two areas; public education, that includes charter schools and Health & Human Services, which includes Medicaid spending.

One could say an olive branch was offered to voucher opponents for the \$1 billion Texas will spend funding Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), with the passage of **HB2**, which contains a record \$8.5 billion in new GR funding for public education.

HB2 follows the Senate's more prescriptive approach of raising annual pay for experienced teachers in larger districts by \$5,000 and by \$8,000 for teachers in rural districts that struggle to attract educators. The House favored a plan to raise the per-student, Basic Allotment, that has not increased since 2016. In All Funds, Texas will spend \$75.1 billion funding the Foundation School Program, whose job is to provide uniformity in per-student based formula funding for public and charter school districts. It's an increase of \$9.335 billion over FY24-25 public education spending.

The budget appropriates \$6.4 billion in All Funds for Texas' Teacher Retirement System, mostly from \$6.3 billion in GR.

The All Funds appropriation for Texas' public colleges and universities will total \$34.365 billion, an increase over the previous budget by \$1.855 billion. Texas has 37 public four-year universities and 50 community college districts, some with multiple campuses.

Nearly one-third (31.3%) of the state's budget, \$105.73 billion All Funds, will be spent on Health & Human Services agencies. By far, the largest portion, \$82.6 billion All Funds, is spent on Medicaid, which provides health care for the uninsured, the disabled and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Texas could save billions if the Affordable Care Act were adopted, but remains one of only 10 states to reject Medicaid expansion under Obamacare, but leads the nation in its number of uninsured adults and children.

Separate from Medicaid and CHIP spending, the budget also appropriates \$6.5 billion All Funds for behavioral health services, the majority, \$5.5 billion, in GR and GR-D. These funds provide inpatient and outpatient care across 30 agencies at

state and community hospitals and through local mental health authorities (LMHAs) and local behavioral health authorities for adults, children and veterans.

No discussion of budget priorities can be complete without mention of property tax relief. Funding for property tax relief, including those eligible for homestead exemptions will total \$51 billion.

An additional \$10 billion in GR was placed in the budget to maintain tax cuts approved by the Legislature in 2019. Tax compression, paying down property taxes levied by local jurisdictions, will cost the budget \$2.6 billion in GR. It will cost the state \$3.5 billion to pay for the homestead exemption's increase from \$40,000 to \$100,000 approved in 2023. The new budget will raise that exemption to \$140,000 (**SB4**).

The homestead exemptions for those 65 and over and for the disabled will increase to \$200,000 (**SB23**). Some increases in the homestead exemption are contingent on passage of amendments to the Texas Constitution on November 4, 2025.

With the passage of **SB7** and House Joint Resolution 7, (**HJR7**) Texas will make the first two \$1 billion annual installments as part of a 20-year, \$20 billion investment in the state's water supply and related infrastructure needs. If **HJR7** is approved on November 4, the first payment is scheduled for 2027.

The FY26-27 budget will fund border security efforts at \$3.351 billion, about half the \$6.57 billion appropriated in the FY24-25 budget. The decrease can largely be attributed to the amount of federal funding targeting the border. None of these dollars will be spent on Texas' portion of the border wall. Including the 2026-27 budget, about \$15 billion has been appropriated to support Operation Lone Star, which was launched by Governor Greg Abbott in 2021.

According to the Comptroller, our savings account, the Texas' Economic Stabilization Fund (Rainy Day Fund) should sit at \$28.5 billion at the end of the 2026-27 biennium. Too bad we couldn't find \$60 million to feed kids during the Summer.

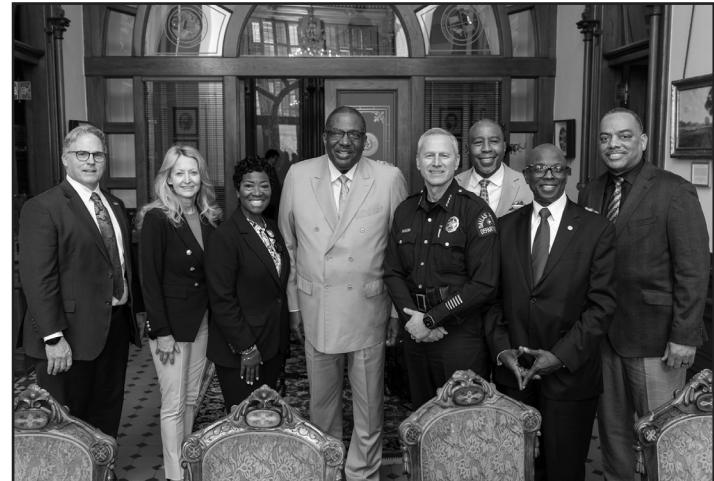
Education

While **SB2**, the bill that made available \$1 billion in public funds for eligible children to attend private school absorbed a huge amount of legislative oxygen, other legislation will impact public education for better or for worse. Some wades into murky, ideological waters. But here's a few more details on **SB2**.

The bill makes any school-age child eligible to receive \$10,000 per year to attend an accredited private school, which is more than the \$6,160 per student, Basic Allotment paid to traditional public schools. "Eligible" is defined as a student who is a citizen, a national, or is lawfully admitted in the country, or who is a child of an active-duty member of the military. Children with disabilities can receive \$11,500 for private school. Home school children may receive up to \$2,000 annually for educational programming.

HB2, the bill that provides \$8.5 billion in new funding for public and charter schools, includes \$2 billion for special education students, full-day PreK, early learning interventions and Career & Technology education. A total of \$4.2 billion will fund pay increases for teachers and staff and \$430 million will go to bolster school safety.

Although \$1.3 billion from **HB2** will go to public schools to offset rising costs, it will be too late to save more than 120



City of Dallas and UNT-Dallas officials on Capitol business.

CAPITOL REPORT

campuses statewide, including dozens -- in Dallas, Ft. Worth, Garland, Richardson, Plano, Lewisville, Coppell -- that will close because funding was withheld during the 2023 Session's heated voucher debate.

SB568 modifies funding formula for special education. Public education advocates have urged the legislature to address special education funding and services. Based on recommendations made in the Texas Special Education Funding Commission's 2022 report, **SB568** shifts funding from a location-based model to an intensity of services model. This greatly improves funding for special education students because it considers their educational needs, rather than how time was spent during the school day.

HB121 follows-up on school safety efforts approved in 2023 by accessing \$430 million in funding approved in **HB2**. The bill allows the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to commission licensed peace officers to satisfy requirements that mandate armed security officers on all public and charter school campuses. **HB121** funds upgrades to school interior doors and windows and says parents must receive information on safe firearm storage.

HB6 addresses classroom discipline measures by revising laws on in-school and out-of-school suspensions. The bill limits out-of-school suspensions to three days. In-school suspensions can be indefinite, pending review after 10 days. The bill limits placing a child who is in third grade or below, in out-of-school suspension, unless the behavior places others in danger. **HB6** prohibits a principal from returning a student to class without the teacher's consent and orders a conference with school officials and the student's parent and requires schools to designate a campus behavior coordinator.

SB10 requires a copy of the Ten Commandments to be displayed in all public school classrooms. The bill does not require schools to purchase copies of the Ten Commandments. Similar laws have been blocked recently by courts in Arkansas and Louisiana.

SB12 bans DEI practices in public schools by establishing a "Parents Bill of Rights." **SB12** specifically bans practices identified as influencing hiring or employment, promoting differential treatment or providing special benefits or developing policies, procedures, activities or programs created on the basis of race, sex, color or ethnicity, gender identity or sexual orientation, or from assigning duties based on diversity, equity and inclusion, unless they are necessary to comply with state or federal law.

HB27 requires a high school student to complete a one-half credit/one semester course in personal financial literacy to graduate. **HB27** went into effect for the 2025-26 school year.

The National Education Association, 83 percent of teachers and 1,500 studies agree that cellphones should be banned from classrooms because phones distract students from learning. **HB1481** will allow school districts to create their own policies to determine how schools will prohibit the use of cellphones and other personal communications devices on campuses during the school day. **HB1481** allows school districts to decide how personal devices can be stored or made available during emergencies.

HB4 would have replaced the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) but failed to pass the during the Regular Session when House and Senate versions could not be reconciled. **HB4** would have eliminated the end-of-year test in favor of three shorter "through year" tests given at different times within the school year. While replacing STAAR had bipartisan support in both chambers, disagreement arose over the role Texas Education Agency (TEA) would have in creating a new test. The House favored a test based more on national norms. The Senate would give TEA more authority to devise test criterion. How **HB4** would address A-F accountability measures was also questioned. Replacing STAAR carried over into Special Session.

Higher Education

HB37 will greatly increase the authority of the governing body of a Texas public higher education institution by requiring the board to review degree plans offered by a college or university every five years to ensure that the degrees offered properly prepare students for the workforce, professional and civic life and do not advocate the superiority of any race, sex,

ethnicity or religious belief.

HB37 requires the president or CEO of an institution to review minor and certificate programs with low enrollments, using industry data, to confirm workforce demand to determine if the program should be consolidated or eliminated.

I co-sponsored **HB126** that will align Texas with a NCAA lawsuit settlement that will now allow colleges and universities to provide direct compensation to student-athletes. Existing regulations required compensation to come only from entities that are not a part of the institution, such as alumni, boosters or business entities. **HB126** also prohibits an entity from entering a name, image or likeness agreement (NIL) with a student-athlete younger than 17 years-old, unless they are enrolled at the institution.

SB1241 will amend current law to allow the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to determine whether tests other than the SAT and ACT can be used for college admissions testing in Texas. The bill requires the THECB to review other admissions tests and determine the requisite scores needed for each exam to satisfy established college admissions criterion.



Senator West with Capitol interns and staff who were part of Team West.

My **SB3039**, continues efforts that began with the passage of **SB25**, a bill I authored in 2019 to ensure that credit hours earned in community colleges are accepted by four-year institutions. **SB3039** requires colleges and universities to submit a report to the THECB and Legislature that lists courses taken by a transfer student that were not accepted for credit at the receiving institution. The report must also include the reason why course credits were not accepted.

Institutions will be required to post information on their websites regarding degree and certificate programs where credits were not accepted and to also list courses where credits were not accepted.

I supported **SB2314**, which strengthens the My Texas Future platform created by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This tool uses a student's academic information like GPA, class rank and test scores to generate a personalized list of colleges where they qualify for direct admission. Under **SB2314**, graduating seniors can now opt-in to the direct admissions program, making it easier to apply to college, explore majors, and access financial aid opportunities.

More Mental Health Resources

In 2015, the Legislature approved the Mental Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (MHPLRP), in hope of attracting more mental health practitioners. Following the tragic Uvalde school shooting, lawmakers increased program funding, but found that much of it went unspent, despite growing mental health assistance needs. My bill, **SB646**, revises the MHPLRP by expanding the list of professionals who would be eligible for the program, increasing the amount of loan repayment assistance and incentivizing professionals who work in rural areas and possess needed, foreign language skills.

I was also able to gain legislative support for **SB1401** that reduces by up to two years, the amount of time it takes to earn a Masters' degree and become a mental health practitioner.

CAPITOL REPORT

SB1401 instructs the THECB to work with community colleges and four-year universities to create pathways that will allow a student to earn a Masters' degree in six years.

In 2021, I co-authored and continue to support legislation that formed the Texas Law Enforcement Peer Network (TLEPN) that was created to address the high number of suicides committed by law enforcement officers. The statewide program is housed at the University of North Texas at Dallas.

Momentum grew for a similar program to assist firefighters and EMS workers who suffer similar work-related experiences caused by repeated witness to traumatic events. I served as Senate sponsor for **HB35**, that will create a professionally-trained, peer network for firefighters and EMS based on the successful TLEPN model, that provides free, peer-based, counseling. The Fire and EMS peer network will be managed by the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM).

Health & Human Services

Few argue and some are proud that Texas has among the most, restrictive abortion laws in America. When *Roe vs. Wade* was overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2022, Texas moved quickly to pass a near-complete ban on abortion with the approval of **HB8**, the "Fetal Heartbeat Act." Another bill, the so-called "Trigger Law," **HB1280**, allowed the ban to go into effect immediately after *Roe* was overturned.

HB1280 created felony offenses for doctors to attempt or perform an abortion. **HB8** allows unrelated parties to sue doctors or other persons who "aided or abetted" an abortion.

Complaints rang loud and clear regarding the dangers Texas' laws place on women; some from women who recounted near-death experiences after being denied medical treatment by reticent doctors. The complaints led to the passage of **SB31** by the 89th Legislature. The bill creates an exception to existing state law to allow physicians, using "reasonable medical judgement," to per-



Senator West counting votes with Secretary of Senate Patsy Spaw.

form an abortion if a pregnancy places the expectant mother at risk of death or "serious impairment of a major bodily function."

SB31 does not require the risk of death or injury to be imminent and allows doctors to terminate a problem pregnancy without delay if waiting would place the mother at greater risk. Some believe the bill does not go far enough to protect persons who may be accused of aiding or abetting an abortion, even when urgent medical care is needed.

However, after **SB2880** failed during the Regular Session, a similar bill was filed during Special Session that would create civil and criminal penalties for prescribing, providing, shipping or delivering medications like misoprostol and mifepristone that can be used for medication abortions. These bills would hold medication manufacturers and distributors liable and penalize those who pay or reimburse abortion costs, but does not create penalties for women seeking an abortion.

More than 20 years ago, I passed a bill that brought kinship care to Texas. Kinship care allows relatives to receive state payments to help support children in their legal custody as an alternative to them entering foster care. I have continued to refine kinship care. When my **SB224** did not move, I sponsored companion bill **HB5394** that prevents local child placement entities from passing rules that overlay or interfere with state

regulations regarding kinship care.

Another bill I authored for similar reasons, **SB599**, prohibits cities or counties from imposing rules or ordinances that restrict or go beyond state law or Health and Human Services Commission standards regarding licensed child care facilities.

Children cannot not or should not be responsible for supporting themselves. So it is important to act on their behalf when they are living in challenging conditions. Under existing state law, if a child is removed, or by consent, is no longer living in the home of a custodial parent who is receiving child support, those payments continue to be received by the custodial parent, *even though they are no longer taking care of the child*. **SB1923** will allow support payments to follow the child to the home of relatives where the child lives on a temporary basis, until the matter is modified by the courts.

SB227 will help seniors who were no longer able to renew their drivers license or state ID due to federal REAL ID requirements. One of the key requirements for a person to renew their drivers license is the presentation of their birth certificate. This is not a problem for most, because hospitals are required to report births to state authorities. It is a problem for seniors who were not born in hospitals and never obtained a birth certificate.

SB227 codifies a change in agency rules that previously caused an application to be denied because it contained contradictory information. It also requires the state registrar to consider a 'preponderance of evidence' when reviewing an application. The bill is named "**The Charles Edward Barton Act**," in honor of the father of my longtime Chief of Staff, who passed before he could obtain his birth certificate.

State Affairs

A new industry exploded onto the Texas marketplace when the law changed in 2019 to legalize products containing hemp and low-levels of THC, marijuana's 'active' ingredient. These products drew the ire of Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, who said many were not regulated and could be accessed by minors. **SB3** banned consumable hemp and THC products. It was approved by the Legislature, but vetoed by Governor Abbott, who listened to vocal veterans, medical users and business owners. House-authored legislation supported regulation. Recreational marijuana remains illegal in Texas. The issue may be decided in a Special Session.

Two multi-million dollar scratch-off jackpots, both accomplished by means outside Texas Lottery laws, lit a fire under legislators that was too hot for the Texas Lottery Commission as it existed, to survive. Statutes say lottery scratch-off tickets must be bought in person and prohibits the use of couriers. A \$95 million win where 25 million \$1 tickets were purchased electronically violated both regulations. State officials have withheld payoff of a \$83.5 million jackpot.

SB3070 abolishes the Texas Lottery Commission and places the Texas Lottery under the oversight of the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations. **SB28** bans the use of courier services that take online or app-based orders to buy lottery tickets.

SB8 instructs the sheriff of a county of 100,000 or more residents to apply for federal ICE287(G) programs that requires departments to confirm the immigration status of persons in their custody, report them to Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and detain them for 48 hours. Grants will be made available for sheriffs' departments in counties with populations of less than 100,000.

SB835, also known as Trey's Law, says that a nondisclosure (NDA) or confidentiality agreement is invalid and unenforceable in preventing the disclosure of information on an incident involving sexual abuse or sexual assault.

Business & Commerce

Dating back 20 years to when John Cornyn was Texas' Attorney General, I've been committed to protecting homeowners from deed and title fraud. This Session, we were able to guide three bills to passage. Deed and title theft occur when a third party creates fraudulent documents that appear real, which assert that a property has been transferred or sold to a new owner.

CAPITOL REPORT

SB647 changes the recording requirements for real property transactions that are filed without title or escrow company documents. The bill requires a county clerk to take certain actions if they believe in good faith, that the documents presented to the clerk are fraudulent; such as when the person appearing before the clerk is without other supporting documents.

SB693 applies to notary publics, creating a Class A misdemeanor offense for notarizing a document for a person who is not physically present. However if real property is involved, the offense is a state jail felony. **SB693** requires a notary public to complete continuing education courses.

SB734 places do-it-yourself ('DIY') provisions in statute for persons who have been victimized by deed or title fraud, by creating forms that can be presented in court by the victim to clear their property title without the expense of hiring an attorney.

A fourth bill, **SB648** was approved by the Legislature, but vetoed by the governor, who agreed to include it in a Special Session. The revised bill, **SB16**, amends procedures related to filing an affidavit of heirship to require more verification regarding the validity and identity of persons claiming an interest in a property and adds criminal penalties for fraud.

We know that criminals move faster than laws made to stop them. And with the rapid and pervasive growth of artificial intelligence, we must move more quickly to respond. **SB441** expands civil liability laws, imposes and enhances criminal penalties on persons, websites and others involved in creating or distributing artificial, intimate, visual AI-generated likenesses without a subject's consent.

HB20 creates a new felony offense for the possession, production or promotion of obscene materials that appear to depict an actual child, whether the image is a cartoon, animation or an AI-generated image and enhances punishment to a second degree felony for repeat offenses.

It is one thing to offer an incentive for bundling homeowner and auto coverage. It's another thing - and wrong - for an insurer to force auto insurance on a customer conditional on buying or renewing homeowner coverage. We were able to garner support for **SB213**, that makes it illegal for an insurer to force property insurance or automobile insurance on a customer as a condition to offer coverage of either product.

One person can in fact, make a difference. And a mother's love and determination are powerful motivators! Such is the case that led to the passage of my **SB650**, that will codify the requirement for grocery and convenience stores to swipe the drivers license or state photo ID of a person who purchases an alcoholic beverage. The impetus of this bill was the death of an 18-year student, who on his

Sessions caused participating cities to choose sides. A faction led by Plano, Highland Park, University Park, Richardson and Mesquite supported **SB1557/HB3187** that would require DART to return 25 percent of its revenue to member cities.

Dallas, Addison, Garland, Farmers Branch and Carrollton supported DART's opposition to the legislation that the agency says would cause drastic service cuts and delay scheduled fleet replacement and planned capital projects. Neither **SB1557** or **HB3187** passed from their respective chambers. When a similar bill, **SB3075** did not have the votes needed to move, it too died. Chances are this fight is not over and may resurface in 2027.

Some of us in the Dallas County are already familiar with city ordinances that call for vehicles to be towed if the driver does not have liability insurance or valid registration. The passage of **SB857** extends that authority to law enforcement agencies statewide.

SB546 promotes school bus safety by requiring all school buses, regardless of their age, to be equipped with seatbelts for all passengers. The bill allows districts to install 2-point seatbelts if districts cannot afford to purchase buses with 3-point seatbelts. In addition, **SB546** requires districts to report to TEA, the number of buses without seatbelts it operates and the estimated costs for the district to come into compliance by the end of the current school year.

When the House bill stalled, I was able to move the companion Senate bill, **SB2790** that names a stretch of US Hwy 67 from I-20 to US Hwy 287 in Ellis County in honor of my mentor, confidant and State Senate District 23 predecessor, the Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson.

Criminal Justice

SB36 creates a new agency, the Homeland Security Division under the oversight of the Texas Department of Public Safety. The new division merges DPS's current Office of Homeland Security under the same roof with its Intelligence and Counterterrorism Division, with the goal of improving coordination, aligning resources and streamlining command. DPS's appropriation for FY26-27 totals \$3.791 billion for agency operations and \$1.195 billion more for border security efforts.

The passage of **SB9** continues the work begun with approval of **SB6** in 2021 that focuses on bail reform. **SB6** created a Public Safety Report system that requires all known criminal history information on a person to be collected and made available to magistrates when considering bail.

SB9 denies bail in some jurisdictions to a person charged with a new felony while already on bond, parole or probation, or who has been convicted of two or more felonies that required imprisonment.

SB9 also denies release on a personal recognizance bond (PR bond) to a person charged with a violent offense, or who is already released on bail or probation, or with unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon, trafficking, stalking or manufacturing or delivery of controlled substances.

Denial of bond under **SB9** requires passage of a Constitutional Amendment, **SJR5**, during the November 4, 2025 Constitutional Election.

HB33, "The Uvalde Strong Act" is the second major school security legislation passed in the aftermath of the fatal, 2022 school shooting at Robb Elementary. The bill creates a comprehensive, multi-agency, emergency response plan for active shooter incidents on public and charter school campuses or at public community colleges.

HB33 coordinates planning and training led by the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center (ALERRT) headquartered at Texas State University in San Marcos. **HB33** requires a security review of all public and charter school campuses to determine if security requirements are being met and to identify security weaknesses. The bill also requires emergency response training for all Texas law enforcement officers and EMS workers.

I authored **SB1080** that assists persons who have been imprisoned to move past their mistakes upon release. **SB1080** improves on existing law to allow a person while incarcerated, to qualify for an occupational license which would become effective immediately, when they are released. The bill also gives TDLR the discretion to determine whether or not to revoke an occupational license following a felony conviction, based on if the conviction is directly related to duties of their license.



Senator West speaks with UNT-Dallas students and President Dr. Warren Von Eschenbach.

prom night, made multiple alcohol purchases from a convenience store using a fake ID. He died later that night, after crashing the car he was driving. **SB650** takes effect January 1, 2027.

Minors also need to be kept away from tobacco products. **SB1313** will make it illegal for retailers who sell cigarettes, e-cigarettes and other tobacco products, to design displays, use lighting or outdoor signage to attract youth by using cartoon-like images or that resemble arcades or other attractions or products that target children, to market tobacco products.

Transportation

For those of us who live within Dallas Area Rapid Transit's 13-city service area, a nasty fight that has spanned two Legislative

THE CAPITOL REPORT



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"Please let me know what you think about the important issues facing our state by going to the following web addresses and filling out my on-line questionnaires. Your input counts.

<http://www.west.senate.texas.gov/survey0001.htm>
<http://www.west.senate.texas.gov/survey0002.htm>"

THE TEXAS SENATE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER AND DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, RELIGION, AGE OR DISABILITY IN EMPLOYMENT OR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES.

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Senator Royce West



University of North Texas at Dallas – Growing Excellence!

With a new STEM building scheduled to open in Spring 2026, agreements for a new regional law enforcement training academy in place, the January 2025 debut of the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning and with growth in graduate studies, Behavioral Health and Human Services and dual credit programs for early college high school students, the future continues to be full of promise for the University of North Texas of Dallas. UNT Dallas offers 42 degree programs at the Bachelors and Masters level, as well as a professional degree, while offering the lowest tuition in the region for a 4-year university.

For the 2026-27 biennium UNT-Dallas received \$101.02 million, an increase of \$6.84 million over the 2024-25 budget.

UNT Dallas currently houses and manages the Dr.

Emmett J. Conrad Leadership Program, a summer internship program for college students that I founded during my first year as State Senator for District 23. Since its' inception over 32 years ago, more than 3,000 interns have secured paid, professional internships. Many program alums have been hired by their intern sponsors and others serve as sponsors and mentors.

If you are a student or know a student who is enrolled in 4-year college or university, enrollment for the Summer 2026 Class is now open. Learn more by visiting the website at untDallas.edu/conrad or email the team at conrad.leadership@untDallas.edu.

UNT Dallas™
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS AT DALLAS