

# The Austin Report

February 14, 2025

E-Newsletter

The 89th Legislative Session has been chugging along at a fast pace because many of the measures being discussed and passed in the Senate were declared “emergency” items by Governor Abbott.

Abbott declared seven “emergency” items which allow for immediate legislative action on these issues. Passage of bills in the first 60 days of a regular session are prohibited by the state constitution unless tagged as an emergency by the governor.

The seven “emergency” items are Property Tax Relief, Water Infrastructure Investment, Teacher Pay Raise, Expansion of Career Training, School Choice, Bail Reform, and Creation of a Texas Cyber Command.

Following Governor Abbott’s declaration of school choice as an emergency issue, the Senate passed a plan creating Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) aka Vouchers whereby parents could direct state funds to be used to pay for private school education and non-public education services.

SB 2, aka Texas Education Freedom Act would use \$1 billion in state revenue to allow for 100,000 ESAs administered by the Texas Comptroller.

Property Tax Relief was at the forefront of the action of the Senate Committee on Local Government this week when we unanimously approved measures that would further increase



the homestead exemption, the amount of property value a homeowner can write off before assessment.

SJR 2, and its enabling legislation SB 4, would offer real savings to Texas homeowners by proposing to raise the homestead exemption up to \$140,000, which estimates predict will save the average Texas homeowner about \$363 in property taxes every year.

Bail Reform was discussed and debated at length during this week’s Senate Criminal Justice Committee when they unanimously passed a package of bills aimed at reforming the state’s bail bond system, specifically giving judges more latitude to deny bail to offenders they think pose a threat to the public.

The property tax and bail reform bills are on their way to the full Senate for votes.

I will be your voice and vote on these bills and others during session. Stay tuned for updates.



As these critical issues continue to shape the future of our state, I want to ensure your voice is heard. To that end, I invite you to join me for an upcoming town hall meeting where we'll discuss these legislative priorities, answer your questions, and hear your thoughts on the matters that affect you and your family.

Your input is invaluable, and I look forward to connecting with you in person.

The upcoming town hall meeting will give us a chance to discuss these pressing legislative issues in greater detail and hear your thoughts firsthand.

It's also a great opportunity to share insights

about the committees I've been appointed to this session—committees where much of the work behind these bills takes place.

This session, I'm honored to serve on the following committees:

- Transportation- Vice Chair
- Education K-16
- Finance
- Local Government

Serving on these committees allows me to advocate for our community's interests and contribute to the development of policies that impact Texans across the state. I'm committed to keeping you informed about the work being done and how it affects you.

# SENATE DISTRICT 23 TOWN HALL MEETING

WITH STATE SENATOR

## ROYCE WEST

TOPICS: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE &  
COMMUNITY CONCERNS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2025  
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

WHITE ROCK YMCA  
7112 GASTON AVENUE,  
DALLAS, TX 75214

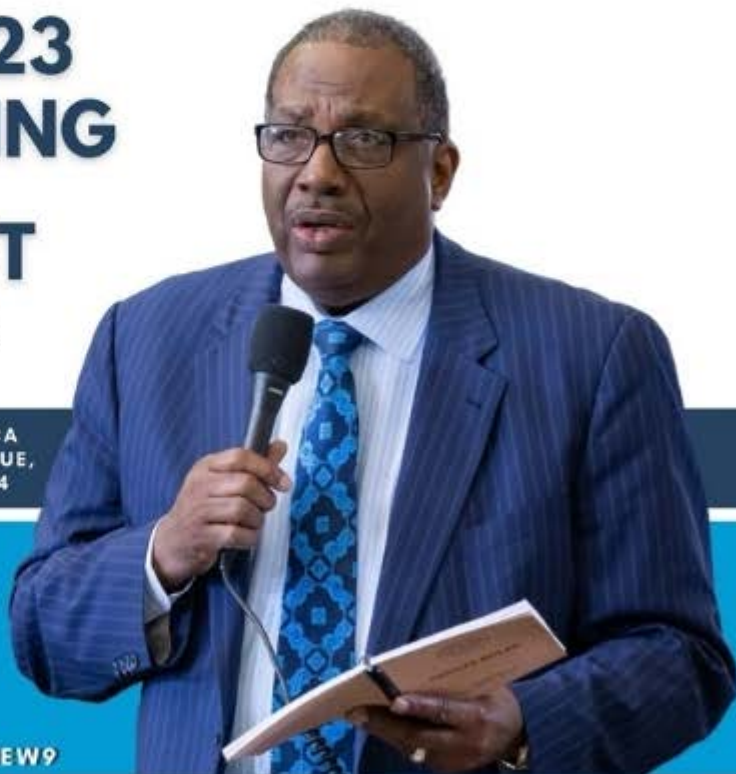
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SCAN:



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