



# PETE FLORES

CAPITOL UPDATE

89TH TEXAS LEGISLATURE



## The Senate of The State of Texas

Senator Pete P. Flores

District 24

### Dear Constituents,

Now that the 89th Legislative Session has wrapped up, I've had a chance to look back on all we accomplished and I want to say how honored and thankful I am to serve the people of Senate District 24. Each time I travel through our district, I'm reminded of what makes it so special: the strong communities, hardworking folks, and shared values that bring us together; from our cities, small towns and ranches to our military families, teachers, and local business owners.

This session, I also had the honor of serving as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice. In that role, I worked alongside fellow lawmakers, law enforcement officers, and community leaders to keep our state safe while making sure our criminal justice system is tough, fair, and just. Having spent most of my career in law enforcement, I know firsthand the challenges our peace officers face – and I carry that perspective with me every day.

I'm truly grateful for the trust you've placed in me. Serving as your voice in the Texas Senate is a responsibility I approach with dedication and care. It's a calling grounded in listening, learning, and working hard to represent your values at the Capitol. Whether I'm in Austin or out in the district, I'm always focused on making sure your voice is heard. During the 89th Legislative session, I was certified as present 100% of the time and voted 4,488 times – never missing a vote. When I am present, you are present.

This newsletter offers a glimpse into the work we've accomplished this legislative session. My team and I are committed to being accessible, responsive, and transparent in everything we do.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to serve. It's an honor I don't take for granted.

God Bless you, and God Bless Texas!

Peter P. Flores

Committee on Criminal Justice  
Chair  
Committee on Border Security  
Vice-Chair

CAPITOL OFFICE:  
Room E1.808  
P.O. Box 12068 • Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-0124

Select Committee on Disaster  
Preparedness & Flooding  
Vice-Chair  
Committee on Finance  
Committee on Natural Resources

# INVESTING IN A BETTER TEXAS FOR TOMORROW

## The State Budget – Senate Bill 1 and House Bill 500

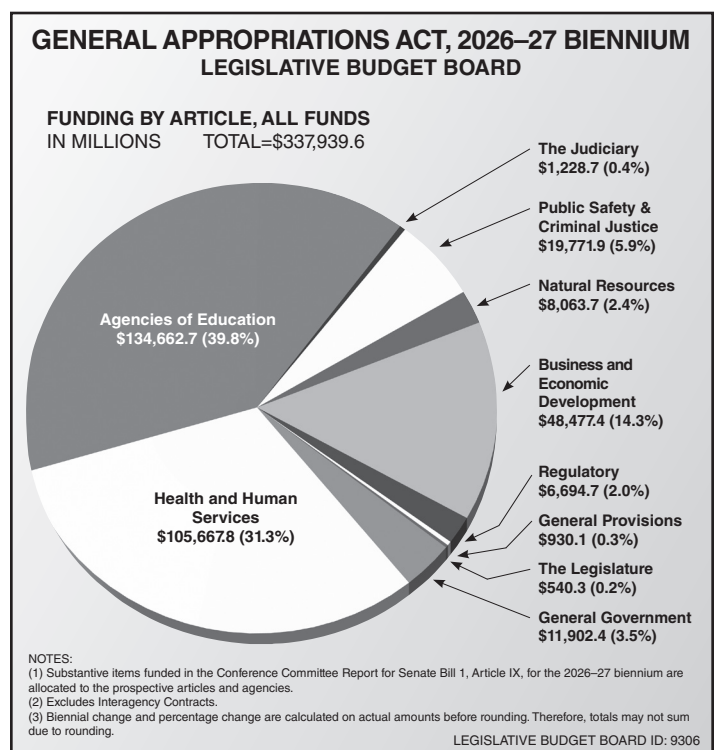
During the most recent legislative session, the Legislature passed a balanced state budget that made significant investments in our state's priorities while maintaining fiscal responsibility. I was proud to once again be appointed to serve on the Senate Finance Committee and work alongside my colleagues to ensure these funds address the most pressing needs of Texans.

We dedicated approximately **\$8.5 billion** to strengthen our public schools, enhance school safety, and support early education. This budget also included targeted teacher pay raises, up to **\$4,000** statewide and as much as **\$10,000** in rural areas, to help districts recruit and retain quality educators.

The Legislature also allocated around **\$2.5 billion** for critical water infrastructure and supply projects, ensuring communities across Texas have access to reliable water sources.

In addition, we made a historic investment in public safety and criminal justice, dedicating over **\$20 billion** to these efforts, including over **\$3 billion** for border security. The Department of Criminal Justice received roughly **\$9.8 billion**, allowing for a 10% pay raise for correctional officers and improved resources for our correctional facilities.

These investments reflected our commitment to supporting Texas families, strengthening our communities,



and laying the groundwork for a safer, stronger future.



## PROPERTY TAX RELIEF FOR ALL TEXANS – DELIVERED!

House Bill 9, Senate Bill 4, and Senate Bill 23 came together as a landmark property tax relief package passed by the Legislature this session. With unanimous commitment



*Senator Pete Flores presiding over the Senate*

from my colleagues, we secured a plan that, if approved by voters this November, would deliver **\$10 billion** in relief to hardworking Texans:

**SB 4** raises the general ISD homestead exemption from **\$100,000 to \$140,000**, saving about **\$484 per year** for **5.7 million homeowners**, with full state-funded hold-harmless protections.

**SB 23** expands exemptions for seniors and disabled homeowners by raising the additional relief from **\$10,000 to \$60,000**, totaling a potential **\$200,000 exemption**, delivering around **\$907 annually** to **2.08 million Texans**.

**HB 9** lifts the Business Personal Property exemption to \$125,000, offering small business owners about **\$2,500 in annual savings**.

As your Senator, I was proud to support these reforms because lowering the tax burden strengthens our neighborhoods, helps seniors age in place, and allows small businesses to thrive. The Legislature's passage of these bills marks a historic moment for property tax relief in Texas. Now, we're urging voters at the ballot box this November to make it real for Texans across our state.



## DISABLED VETERAN TAX EXEMPTION REBATE PROGRAM

House Bill 2894, a similar bill to my Senate Bill 247, was one of the most important pieces of legislation for our district this session. I was proud to work alongside my colleagues to ensure this measure became law. For years, few local governments state-wide qualified for state reimbursement of lost revenue from the exemption, leaving many veteran-rich communities, including those in our district, without relief.

With HB 2894, the eligibility criteria for local governments to receive state aid expands. Now, additional municipalities and counties where the exemption accounts for at least **10% of its general fund revenue** will qualify for state assistance. This is a major victory for several SD-24 local governments and the veterans they serve.



*Senator Pete Flores with soldiers stationed at Ft. Hood*





## LIBERTY, SAFETY, AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice and Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Border Security, I am proud to continue a lifelong commitment to keeping Texans safe. I spent my career as a Texas Game Warden, rising through the ranks to serve as Colonel, and that experience taught me the importance of strong, well-supported law enforcement and community-focused public safety. Every day in the Senate, I work to strengthen our criminal justice system, support the men and women who protect our communities, and ensure families across Texas can feel secure in their neighborhoods. Public safety isn't just a job for me, it's a responsibility I take to heart.



## CRIMINAL JUSTICE HIGHLIGHTS

### **SB 20 – Stopping AI Child Pornography:**

SB 20 creates a new criminal offense aimed at stopping the possession or distribution of obscene visual material that appears to depict a child. This law addresses the challenges posed by modern technology, including images generated by computers or AI, to ensure minors are protected from exploitation. It is now a crime to knowingly possess, access with intent to view, or promote any obscene material that appears to depict a child under 18, whether the image is real, animated, or digitally created. This legislation strengthens our ability to safeguard children and hold those who create or share harmful content accountable.



Senator Flores Chairman of Criminal Justice, during a committee hearing in 2025

### **SB 1300 – Organized Retail Theft:**

With SB 1300, I provided law enforcement officials with more tools in the toolbox for combating organized retail theft by increasing penalties and streamlining prosecution.

### **HB 33 – Uvalde Strong Act:**

HB 33 enhances school safety by requiring additional safety training, procedures, and tools for law enforcement responding to active shooter incidents.

### **SB 251 – Bell County Magistrates:**

A collaboration with Rep. Buckley, SB 251 allows Bell County to hire additional magistrates to improve access and efficiency for local courts.

### **SB 2570 – Less-Lethal Force Protections:**

SB 2570 creates a legal justification for peace officers in Texas to use less-lethal force weapons in the course of their official duties.

### **SB 1809 – Gift Card Fraud:**

SB 1809, my first bill this session to make it to the Governor, is focused on protecting Texans from gift card theft and fraud and giving law enforcement the tools they need to stop it. The bill creates clear offenses and penalties for schemes that target consumers, helping prevent financial losses and maintain confidence in everyday transactions.



## BORDER SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS

### **SB 36 – Border Infrastructure & Safety:**

SB 36 primarily focused on establishing and operating a Homeland Security Division within the Department of Public Safety (DPS). This division aims to enhance the state's security and resilience, particularly in border security, critical infrastructure protection, and preparedness.

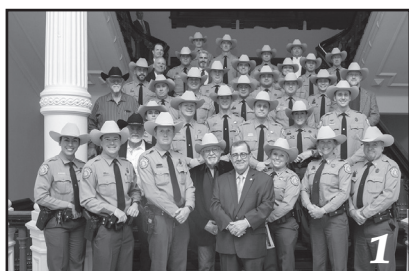
### **SB 2601 – Border Crime Landowner Compensation Improvements:**

With SB 2601, I worked to improve the Border Crime Landowner Compensation program. The bill expands eligibility so landowners and lessees can be compensated for damages caused by border crime and prevents insurance companies from raising premiums due to border crime.



## SERVICE AND DEDICATION – HONORING TEXAS LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

I am deeply grateful for the dedication and sacrifice of the men and women in law enforcement who work tirelessly to protect our communities. Their commitment to upholding the law, safeguarding our families, and responding in moments of crisis reflects the very best of public service. The Senate remains committed to supporting them with the resources, training, and respect they deserve.



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1: Senator Pete Flores with delegation of Texas Game Wardens at Texas Capitol in February 2025 2: Senator Pete Flores with Hondo Police Chief Justin Soza at the Texas Capitol in May 2025 3: Senator Pete Flores with delegation of law enforcement officers at Texas Capitol in 2025

# COMMUNITIES: PUTTING TEXANS FIRST

The best ideas for Texas often come directly from the people I represent in Senate District 24. This session, several bills were brought to me by constituents, local leaders, and community organizations—and I worked to turn their priorities into law. As a member of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, SD-24 had a strong seat at the table when discussing key issues like our water supply and storage. Here's a look at some of the successful legislation that started right here at home.



## WATER SOLUTIONS FOR CENTRAL TEXAS

### **SB 7 & HJR 7 – Water Funding:**

As a joint author, I supported Senate Bill 7, which broadens the Texas Water Fund to include wastewater reuse, reservoir projects, and even out-of-state water rights. The bill also creates oversight standards for water transport infrastructure and ensures rural communities have funding targets. House Joint Resolution 7, if approved by voters, would provide a dedicated \$1 billion annually to the Texas Water Fund, creating long-term stability for water supply and infrastructure projects.

### **SB 1194 – Central Texas Water Alliance:**

I authored SB 1194 to equip the Central Texas water systems to better work together on big projects that would be too costly to tackle alone. By pooling resources and infrastructure, local communities can share costs and make new water projects financially feasible.

### **SB 2885 – Reclaimed Water for Aquifer Storage and Recovery:**

SB 2885, another bill I authored, gives the Commission on Environmental Quality clear authority to use reclaimed water for Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) projects. For cities like Temple, which lack enough reservoir capacity, this opens a critical path for securing long-term water supplies.

### **SB 2159 – ASR Projects on the Edwards Aquifer:**

SB 2159 was a crucial bill brought to me from the district. The change allows Medina County to move forward with ASR projects that transect the Edwards Aquifer, addressing important water storage needs.



## SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS



Senator Pete Flores with delegation from the Texas Farm Bureau in February 2025

### **SB 1035 – Right to Farm Equitable Relief:**

I co-authored SB 1035, giving farmers a way to challenge local requirements that violate the state's right-to-farm law. This ensures agricultural operations can defend their rights fairly and efficiently.

### **SB 243 – Agricultural Worker Housing:**

I authored SB 243 to improve housing for agricultural workers. The bill strengthens complaint and enforcement processes, gives facility operators time to fix issues, and protects workers from retaliation. It creates a fair system so those working in some of Texas' toughest conditions have safe and adequate housing.



## EXPANDING HOUSING OPTIONS

### **SB 785 – New HUD Code Manufactured Housing:**

I authored SB 785 to make sure municipalities cannot ban manufactured housing outright. This gives Texans more affordable housing options while still allowing communities to protect historic landmarks, honor existing deed restrictions, and respect zoning rules.



## RURAL SAFETY AND FIRE PROTECTION

### **SB 868 – Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program:**

I co-authored SB 868 to strengthen support for rural fire departments. The bill removes the \$30 million cap on funding, allowing more resources to flow into the program, and requires 10% of funds go to departments in high-risk wildfire areas. This ensures rural communities are better prepared and protected.



## EDUCATION & FINANCIAL LITERACY

### **HB 27 (SB 625) – Personal Financial Literacy:**

As the Senate companion to HB 27, I authored SB 625 to ensure high school students take a personal financial literacy course instead of economics. Passed uncontested in both chambers, this bill equips students with the financial knowledge they need to pursue higher education, careers, and family goals.



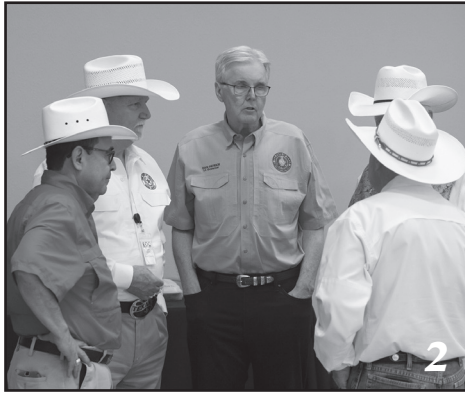
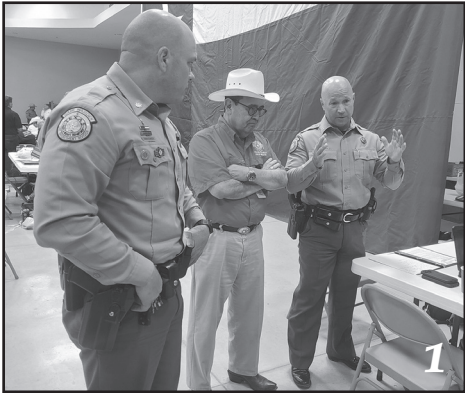
Senator Pete Flores speaks with group of middle school students in July 2024





## CENTRAL TEXAS FLOOD RELIEF

Our hearts go out to the families and loved ones who were tragically affected by this summer's floods. We remember and honor the lives lost, and stand with all Central Texas communities as they continue to heal and rebuild. Their memory strengthens our commitment to ensuring stronger preparedness, support, and safety for everyone in our district. We are eternally grateful for the first responders and Texans who stepped up to serve during these catastrophic events. The best of Texas was shown during the worst of times.



1: Senator Pete Flores with Texas Game Warden Col. Ron A. VanderRoest (R) and Lt. Col Ben Baker (L) at the Emergency Operations Center in Kerrville, Texas in July 2025 2: Senator Pete Flores with Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and others at the Emergency Operations Center in Kerrville, Texas in July 2025 3: Senator and Vice-Chair Pete Flores during a July 2025 hearing of the Joint Select Committee on Disaster Preparedness & Flooding

During the special sessions, the Legislature has focused on supporting communities affected by this summer's floods and giving local governments additional tools to prepare for and respond to future flooding. Governor Abbott expanded the call for the second special session to include relief funding for the Hill Country floods, flood warning systems, emergency communications, disaster preparedness and recovery, and youth camp safety. I've had the privilege of serving as Vice-Chair of the Select Committee on Disaster Preparedness and Flooding, working to address these critical issues and help our communities recover and stay resilient. In the second special session, the Senate has passed:

- SB 1** and **SB 2** to bolster campground and specifically youth camp safety requirements to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters.
- SB 3** provides grant funding for local governments to purchase and install outdoor warning sirens in flash flood-prone areas.
- SB 5** establishes a framework for funding the ongoing recovery from the July floods. These funds will address the gaps in funds from the FEMA reimbursement, as well as provide funding for the purchase of disaster alert systems, measurement and modeling techniques, and swift water training facilities.

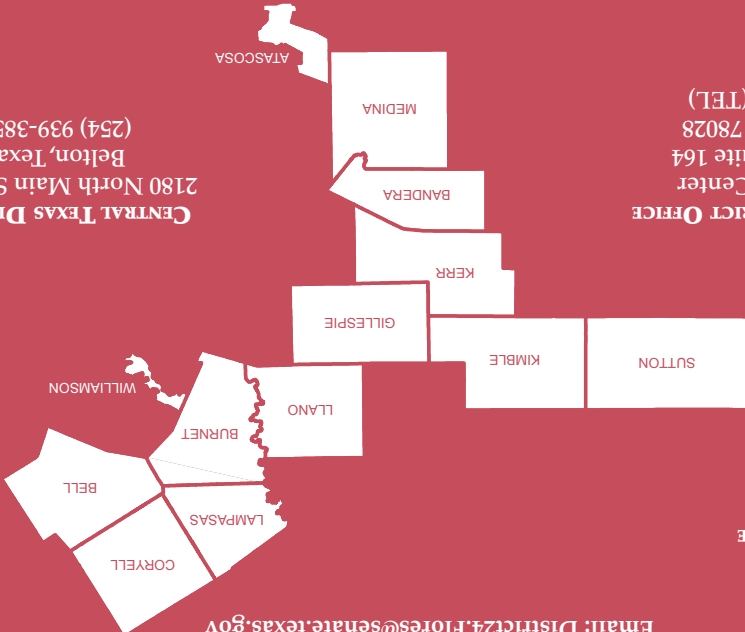


## A SNAPSHOT OF THIS SESSION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- SB 250** allows Texas municipalities to annex land adjacent to contiguous or connecting railroad rights-of-way, but only when property owners voluntarily agree.
- SB 384** allows Texans to make a voluntary donation to the Operation Game Thief fund when applying for a hunting or fishing license.
- SB 608** enhances transparency and accountability for handling sexual assault evidence collection kits.
- SB 856** expands eligibility for the Skills Development Fund to include the Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station and the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.
- SB 860** abolishes the inactive Criminal Justice Legislative Oversight Committee and transfers its reporting duties to existing Legislative Committees.
- SB 1227** eliminates the \$3 specialty license plate fee for Pearl Harbor survivors and Purple Heart recipients.
- SB 1379** increases criminal penalties for forgery offenses, especially those involving deeds, mortgages, or financial documents, and raises penalties further if the crime targets elderly victims.
- SB 1451** increases the criminal penalty for stealing or receiving a stolen check or similar sight order, upgrading the offense from a misdemeanor to a state jail felony.
- SB 2569** reduces administrative burdens while maintaining transparency about law enforcement drone operations.
- HB 1261** updates procedures for handling abandoned or unclaimed property seized by peace officers.
- HB 1318** modifies how municipalities receive a certificate of public convenience and necessity (CCN) to provide water or sewer services in newly incorporated or annexed areas.
- HB 1828** creates a legislative leave pool for Texas Department of Criminal Justice correctional officers.
- HB 1866** ensures federally commissioned National Park Service officers may exercise state law enforcement powers when working in national parks and recreation areas.
- HB 1875** directs the General Land Office to study the challenges veterans face in accessing burial plots in state veterans cemeteries.
- HB 3248** authorizes defense base development authorities to employ and commission peace officers.
- HB 4996** increases the criminal penalty for refusing to release a fraudulent lien or claim.
- HB 5033** allows Texas to eliminate its vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program if federal requirements change.
- HB 5674** creates the River Ranch Municipal Utility District.

# Contact Senator Pete Flores

Email: [District24.Flores@senate.texas.gov](mailto:District24.Flores@senate.texas.gov)



### HIGHLAND LAKES DISTRICT OFFICE

500 W. Young  
Suite D  
Llano, Texas 78643  
(325) 247-1080 (TEL)

### HILL COUNTRY DISTRICT OFFICE

Schreiner One Center  
819 Water St., Suite 164  
Kerrville, Texas 78028  
(830) 896-9816 (TEL)

### CENTRAL TEXAS DISTRICT OFFICE

2180 North Main Street, H1 & H  
Belton, Texas 76513  
(254) 939-3854 (TEL)

### CAPITOL OFFICE

P.O. Box 12068  
Austin, TX 78711  
(512) 463-0124



## Pete Flores

State Senator · District 24

P.O. Box 12068 Austin, Texas 78711

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## Useful State Government Toll-free Numbers

### SENATE DISTRICT 24 COUNTRY CLERKS:

Atascosa: .....(830) 767-2511  
Bandera: .....(830) 796-3332  
Bell: .....(254) 933-5160  
Burnet: .....(512) 756-5406  
Coryell: .....(254) 865-5911 x2278  
Gillespie: .....(830) 997-6515  
Kerr: .....(830) 792-2255  
Kimble: .....(325) 446-3353  
Lampasas: .....(512) 556-8271  
Llano: .....(325) 247-4455  
Medina: .....(830) 741-6070  
Sutton: .....(325) 387-3815  
Williamson: .....(512) 943-1515

### STATE GOVERNMENT NUMBERS:

Information and Referral Hotline .....211  
Secretary of State  
Voter Information .....(800) 252-VOTE (8683)  
Office of the Attorney General  
Child Support Division .....(800) 252-8014  
Consumer Protection .....(800) 621-0508

Public Information/Open Records .....(877) 673-6839  
Texas Workforce Commission Unemployment and  
Mortgage & Foreclosure Assistance \ Texas  
Department of Housing and  
Community Affairs .....(800) 792-1119  
Tx. Dept. of Savings and  
Mortgage Lending.....(877) 276-5550  
Office of Consumer Credit  
Commissioner.....(800) 5381579  
Texas Department of Insurance  
Workers' Compensation Hotline .....(888) 489-2667  
Office of Injured Employee Counsel ... (866) 393-6432  
Consumer Helpline/File a Complaint .....(800) 252-3439  
Department of Family and Protective Services  
Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline .....(800) 252-5400  
Foster Care and Adoption Information .....(800) 233-3405  
Texas Youth & Runaway Hotline .....(800) 989-6884  
Department of Public Safety  
Concealed Handgun Licenses .....(800) 224-5744  
Driver's Licenses .....(512) 424-2600  
Surcharges, Driver Responsibility Program .....

.....(512) 424-2600  
Texas Veterans Commission  
Veterans Hotline .....(800) 252-8387  
Dept. of Aging & Disability Services  
Office of Consumer Rights and Services.....(800) 458-9858  
Dept. of Assistive & Rehabilitative Services  
Services Information Hotline .....(800) 628-5115  
Dept. of State Health Services  
Complaint Hotline .....(888) 973-0022  
Teacher Retirement System  
Information and Referral Hotline .....(888) 963-7111  
Telephone Counseling Center .....(800) 223-8778  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
Public Assistance Hotline .....(800) 687-4040  
Environmental Complaints .....(888) 777-3186  
Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid .....(956) 447-4837  
State Bar of Texas  
Complaints against your lawyer .....(800) 932-1900  
Texas Dept. of Motor Vehicles Information Hotline ....  
.....(888) 368-4689  
Complaints Against Vehicle Dealers.....(800) 687-7846