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DONNA CAMPBELL, MD
DISTRICT 25

District 25 Counties:
Bexar (part)
Comal
Guadalupe
Hays
Kendall
Travis (part)

For Immediate Release:
Tuesday, November 15, 2016

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**Senator Campbell's CLEAR Initiative Increases Transparency,
Gives Taxpayers Tools to Hold Local Governments Accountable**

AUSTIN – Senator Donna Campbell introduced the CLEAR Initiative in the Texas Senate – a bill package to increase government transparency at the local level through Concise Language on ballot propositions, Easy-to-understand budget adoption, Accountability of MPO decisions, and creating an online Resource that provides taxpayers with clear information about every political subdivision and tax rate that affects them.

“The best government is the government that is most accountable to the people,” Senator Campbell said. “The CLEAR Initiative empowers Texas citizens by increasing transparency and encouraging disclosure at the local level. These reforms will ensure Texans have more resources to hold their elected officials accountable and fully participate in the decision making process.”

The CLEAR Initiative includes:

Senate Bill 198: Requires members of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in Texas to be elected officials in order to vote on transportation projects. An MPO can still consist of unelected members, but would be restricted from voting since their decisions are not accountable to the people.

Senate Bill 199: Directs school districts to include an easy-to-understand cover page when adopting their budget that lays out the percent of increase or decrease in the adopted budget, the increase or decrease in revenue from property taxes, the effective tax rate and rollback rate, debt obligations, and the record vote of each trustee.

Senate Bill 200: Creates a database warehouse, overseen by the Comptroller's office, where taxpayers can search online to find the political boundaries, tax rates, and debt obligations of every political subdivision and taxing entity that affects them.

Senate Bill 201: Requires clear and concise language to appear on the ballot of bond propositions, including the purpose for which the debt is to be authorized, the principal amount of the debt, that taxes sufficient to pay the annual principal of and interest on the debt obligations may be imposed; and the aggregate amount of the outstanding principal of the debt obligations.

“Texas is a very fiscally responsible state, but unfortunately our local debt is among the highest in the nation. This local debt is reaching an unsustainable point that threatens the future prosperity of Texans,” Senator Campbell stated. “It is wrong to ask taxpayers to vote on more local debt when cities and counties are not providing complete information about the purpose of the obligations or how it will affect each citizens' pocketbooks.”

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Senator Donna Campbell represents Senate District 25, which includes all or parts of Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, Hays, Kendall, and Travis Counties.