



SENATOR JOSÉ MENÉNDEZ DISTRICT 26

Media Release:

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Senator José Menéndez Issues Statement on 87th Legislative Session

San Antonio, Texas - State Senator José Menéndez issued the following statement on Bill Filing Day at the Texas Capitol.

Senator José Menéndez released the following statement:

“This session will be different, as we are still battling the COVID-19 pandemic. However, our priority remains the same – to represent our constituents. Our legislative package reflects the requests and needs shared with us, by our entire community. We are continuing to seek your input and file bills. We invite you to share with us your concerns at our virtual San Antonio Town Hall on November 14, 2020 at 12:30pm. We have filed the following bills and plan to file more to ensure our constituents are represented.”

Equal Opportunity for All:

We have participated in an election with the highest voter turnout in history. We vow to protect everyone’s basic human rights, including the right to vote. Today we filed:

- SB 92 - Repealing the 2017 show me your papers law
- SB 95 - Allowing all to apply for a mail in ballot
- SB 97 - Banning conversion therapy
- SB 98 - Automatically registering folks to vote when applying for their identification cards
- SB 99 - Allowing all individuals to vote at any poll location in their county
- SB 100 - Expanding the forms of acceptable voting identification including a Native American Tribal document, a credit or debit card, or a public transportation card and more.

In the upcoming weeks, we will be filing bills that will:

- Ban discrimination around our state
- Allow voters to decide the future of the Electoral College
- Create an independent redistricting commission
- Create community police training

Students and Teachers:

Throughout this pandemic, our PK-12 educators, staff, and higher education institutions have heroically continued to teach our students. In response we have filed:

- SB 88 - Requiring school districts to have a special education liaison
- SB 89 - Ensuring that students with disabilities are receiving the services outlined in their individualized education plans
- SB 96 - Allowing school districts to partner with local mental health authorities to provide mental health services on-campus
- SB 101 - Creating a small emergency fund to assist students when they have challenges that may keep them from continuing school
- SB 102 - Ensuring that core credit transfers are accepted by universities and requiring these universities to waive costs for forcing students to retake unaccepted courses.
- SB 103 - Implementing a scholarship program for first generation students
- SB 104 - Increasing the states contribution into the Texas Teacher Retirement System
- SB 105 - Providing retired teachers with a supplemental payment
- SB 106 - Assisting our retired teachers by providing a cost-of-living adjustment

In the upcoming weeks, we will be filing bills that will:

- Appropriate funds to close the digital divide in schools
- Repeal the STAAR test and allocate those funds to assist with COVID-19
- Allow teachers who retired due to COVID-19 to return to their campus post-covid without TRS penalties
- Appropriate funds for students with special needs during the COVID-19 pandemic

Seniors:

We will continue to protect our most vulnerable, our seniors. We are supporting measures to protect our elderly from abuse and fraud. Today we have filed:

- SB 94 - Will remove barriers for relatives and kinship families who have obtained legal custody of a child and allow them to receive foster care payments

In the upcoming weeks, we will be filing bills that will:

- Fund a designated special prosecutor in the District Attorney's Office to aggressive prosecute fraud cases against the Elderly.
- Close the loophole that allows for abusers to claim elderly fraud was a loan.

Veterans:

Our veterans, whom were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, deserve to be protected by the State of Texas. We will support measures to ensure that the Texas Veterans Commission remains funded and that veterans services are protected and enhanced in the state. Today we have filed:

- SB 90 - Expanding the medical cannabis program and provides protections for those whom use medical cannabis, especially our veterans with PTSD.
- SB 91 - Enforcing coverage of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in health insurance, similar to other mental illnesses

In the upcoming weeks, we will be filing more bills including:

- A bill to honor PFC. Vanessa Guillen and creating an independent ombudsman where members can report rape, sexual assault, and wrongful conduct without retaliation.