

# Lucio Legislative Priorities Featured

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**Austin, TX – Senator Eddie Lucio** (D-Brownsville), was featured in the Brownsville Herald on the first day of the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session in an excerpt of priorities for South Texas. As filing continues, you may find a list of all the bills filed by Senator Lucio on the Texas Legislature Online <https://capitol.texas.gov/>.

## **Disaster relief looms large; Lucio will try again to pass law helping families\***

The 86th Texas Legislature, which starts today, has plenty on its plate, although all it's constitutionally required to do is come up with a budget.

Regardless, the people's elected representatives in Austin will take up somewhere between 5,000 and 6,000 pieces of legislation during the 40-day regular session, according to Sen. Eddie Lucio Jr., D-Brownsville, who offered his perspective on the task ahead. Every legislator and legislative staff member will be working overtime during the session, he said.

As for Lucio's agenda, he said he hopes to get passed a law that would allow families to recover from natural disasters much more quickly. His RAPIDO disaster-recovery model legislation, which would allow the state's Rainy Day fund to help disaster victims immediately, then be reimbursed when federal disaster relief funds eventually come through, passed the Senate 29-2 during the last session but died in the House.

Considering that many survivors of Hurricane Harvey are still trying to put their lives back together more than a year after the storm, Lucio thinks the bill will get better traction this time around.

“ We have spent a lot of time trying to find out what we must do to get Texas families back in their homes as quickly as possible without all the red tape that takes place between here and Washington,” he said.

Lucio said it doesn't matter if it's someone else's bill that ultimately gets passed, just that something gets passed. Another of his priorities for this session is funding for K-12 public schools, an area where Texas does poorly, ranking 36th nationally in spending per student. Lucio said he favors property tax reform so Texans can afford to buy a house, but said other revenue streams have to be found to properly fund public education, which is why he favors gaming in the form of stationary gambling vessels moored along the coast and possibly riverboats.

Lucio said Texas loses tens or hundreds of millions of dollars a year from residents going out of state to gamble to Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Las Vegas. Gaming would keep those residents and that money here, while attracting more tourists to Texas, he said. Lucio said he hopes the possibility of bringing gaming to Texas can at least be considered during the session.

Lucio has also authored bills addressing criminal justice, special-needs children, health care, domestic violence, and children and adoption for this session.

It's a pretty good plateful," he said. "I'm looking forward to a very productive session. ... People have high expectations. We want to have a good session."

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\* Clark, Steve. "Disaster relief looms large; Lucio will try again to pass law helping families." Brownsville Herald. 7 January 2019, [https://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/disaster-relief-looms-large-lucio-will-try-again-to-pass/article\\_98175f34-12d3-11e9-b561-73b655ee3fc6.html](https://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/disaster-relief-looms-large-lucio-will-try-again-to-pass/article_98175f34-12d3-11e9-b561-73b655ee3fc6.html)