



# Public Statement

## Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.

### SEN. LUCIO STATEMENT ON GOV. ABBOTT VETOES

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**Contact:** Ruben O’Bell, Chief of Staff  
(512) 463-0127

**BROWNSVILLE, TX** – Today, Senator Eddie Lucio Jr. (D-Brownsville) issued the following statement regarding the recent vetoes of Sen. Lucio's priority legislation and a portion of the state budget:

“I was disappointed to learn of Governor Abbott's vetoes of two of my bills, Senate Bill 474 and House Bill 686. Both of these bills were the products of negotiations between many different stakeholders, and were finally passed with large majorities in both chambers.

"Senate Bill 474 would have set important guidelines to ensure the humane treatment of dogs. I have worked for several sessions to try to pass this critical legislation, and in doing so worked with countless interested stakeholders to ensure the bill would be acceptable and implemented in a reasonable way. Unfortunately, Governor Abbott did not reach out to me prior to his veto of this legislation, and so I was not able to address any concerns he may have had prior to that action.

"Similarly, House Bill 686 – the Second Look bill – represented the tireless work of hundreds of advocates to give another chance to youthful offenders who have turned their lives around while in prison. This important bill would give hope to hundreds of convicts who have recognized the wrongs they committed and turned away from their past in favor of a responsible future. The bill's author, Representative Joe Moody, brought this common-sense criminal justice reform to a strong bipartisan passage in the House, and the bill received nearly unanimous support in the Senate. Even with this support, Governor Abbott again did not indicate beforehand that he would veto the bill.

"Furthermore, I am concerned with the Governor's decision to veto funding for the legislative branch of our state government. I believe this action to be misguided, as it will have the effect of depriving thousands of legislative staffers, of both parties as well as non-partisan support staff, of their livelihoods for reasons outside of their control. More importantly, I worry about the implications of defunding and silencing the branch of government that most closely represents the people of Texas. Whether one agrees with the actions of the Legislature or not, the deliberations that take place in the Capitol are the heart of our state's democratic process, and any action that undermines that process is troubling.

"I stand ready to work with Governor Abbott and his staff to address the issues brought up in his veto messages and, to the extent possible, to further refine this legislation so that it meets with the Governor's approval while still maintaining the bills' original purposes."

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*Sen. Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D – Harlingen) represents Cameron, Hidalgo, Kenedy, Kleberg, and Willacy Counties. He is the Vice-Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance; Vice-Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education; and a member of the Senate Committee on State Affairs, Committee on Natural Resources & Economic Development, Special Committee on Redistricting, and Select Committee Texas Ports. He is also a member of the Sunset Advisory Commission and the DSHS COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Advisory Panel, and has been an ex-officio member of the DSHS Task Force of Border Public Health Officials since 2017. Elected to the Texas Senate in 1990, Lucio is third in seniority in the Senate.*