



July 2010

A Message from Senator Jackson

Dear Friends,

Thank you for subscribing to my monthly *Capitol Update* electronic newsletter. In this month's *Capitol Update*, you'll find information about the 2010 sales tax holiday in August and an announcement about my new committee chairmanship. I'm honored to be the new chairman of the Senate Economic Development Committee and I appreciate Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst trusting me with the job. Finally, I've included a link to a website dedicated to bringing a retired space shuttle to Texas. I encourage you to visit the site and do your part to bring a shuttle home.

As always, if you have questions or concerns about legislative issues in Texas, I encourage you to contact me either by emailing mike.jackson@senate.state.tx.us or by calling my Capitol office at 512) 463-0111. I rely on input from you to best represent Senate District 11.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mike Jackson'.

Mike Jackson
State Senator
District 11

2010 Sales Tax Holiday

Mark your calendars for the 2010 Texas Sales Tax Holiday weekend, August 20 - 22. This year shoppers in Texas can once again skip the sales tax on most clothing items and shoes under \$100, for both children and adults.

Backpacks priced under \$100 that will be used by elementary and secondary students are also tax exempt. The exemption during the sales tax holiday includes backpacks with wheels, provided they can also be worn on the back like a traditional backpack, and messenger bags. The

exemption does not include items that are reasonably defined as luggage, briefcases, athletic/duffle/gym bags, computer bags, purses, or framed backpacks. Ten or fewer backpacks can be purchased tax-free at one time without providing an exemption certificate to the seller.

For the first time, Texas families can also benefit from a tax break on most school supplies under \$100 as long as they're to be used by elementary or secondary school students. The 81st Texas Legislature passed HB 1801 last year, expanding the list of items qualifying for exemption from Texas state and local sales and use taxes during the annual sales tax holiday weekend.

The following is an all-inclusive list from the Texas Comptroller's website of qualifying school supplies (if priced less than \$100):

- Binders
- Book bags
- Calculators
- Cellophane tape
- Blackboard chalk
- Compasses
- Composition books
- Crayons
- Erasers
- Folders; expandable, pocket, plastic, and manila
- Glue, paste and paste sticks
- Highlighters
- Index cards
- Index card boxes
- Legal pads
- Lunch boxes
- Markers
- Notebooks
- Paper; loose leaf ruled notebook paper, copy paper, graph paper, tracing paper, manila paper, colored paper, poster board, and construction paper
- Pencil boxes and other school supply boxes
- Pencil sharpeners
- Pencils
- Pens
- Protractors
- Rulers
- Scissors
- Writing tablets

Please click [here](#) to see a complete list of items sold during the tax-free weekend along with clarification on whether or not they're taxed.

New Chairmanship

Earlier this month Lt. Governor David Dewhurst announced the appointment of Senator Mike Jackson as Chair of the Senate Economic Development Committee.

"Senator Jackson is a successful Texas businessman and seasoned legislator. He understands first-hand what it takes to attract business, grow our economy and create jobs here in Texas," said Lt. Governor Dewhurst.

The Senate Economic Development Committee is responsible for legislation and policy relating to economic development and job creation in Texas, including the Texas Enterprise Fund and the

Texas Emerging Technology Fund. The Committee will address legislation that will continue to improve the Texas workforce allowing our state to remain a national leader in job growth and one of the strongest economies in the nation.

"I look forward to working with the other members of the Committee to face the challenges put before us and to further build on the economic success we've seen here in Texas," said Senator Jackson.

In addition to his new role as chairman of the Senate Economic Development Committee, Jackson will continue to serve as a member of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Business and Commerce, Natural Resources, and State Affairs Committees.

Jumping Right In

On June 22, just days into his new post, Senator Jackson presided over his first hearing as chairman of the Senate Economic Development Committee. "Today we are here to discuss the effectiveness of our major economic development programs in Texas," said Senator Jackson during the meeting in Arlington. "There are many tools the state can use to lure and retain businesses and we need to determine our best measures for continued success."

The Committee heard testimony from the Governor's Economic Development Office and the Comptroller's Office on how Texas is maintaining the strongest economy in the country by creating and retaining jobs.

In written testimony provided to committee members, Aaron Demerson, Executive Director of the Governor's Economic Development Office wrote, "Texas continues to rank #1 in a number of areas. We continue to be the #1 exporter in the US, the #1 producer of wind energy, home to more Fortune 1000 headquarter companies than any other state, and we continue to have the best business climate for companies looking to expand or relocate their operations."

At the hearing, it was explained that the Texas Enterprise Fund and the Texas Emerging Technology Fund are two tools the state uses to recruit new businesses. In addition, the state utilizes the Texas Enterprise Zone Program to incentivize Texas-based companies that retain employees by giving a state sales tax refund for eligible applicants.

The Committee also heard testimony from the Metro 8 Chamber of Texas - a coalition of chambers of commerce from Arlington, Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio - and local municipalities about the effectiveness of tax abatement programs in their communities. These tax incentive agreements are instrumental to cities for recruiting new businesses, building new facilities and hiring new employees.

"I look forward to learning more about these issues and working with the other members of this committee to keep the Texas economy as strong as possible," said Senator Jackson. He was joined at the hearing by Senators Harris, Eltife and Watson.

Bring the Shuttle Home

With NASA's Space Shuttle Program set to retire in 2011, it's time to find permanent homes for all three U.S. shuttles. The NASA Johnson Space Center with its official visitors center, Space Center Houston, deserves to be one of the chosen sites. But the competition is fierce. Please visit www.bringtheshuttlehome.com to learn more about the importance of bringing home to Texas a retired shuttle and how you can help in this vital effort.

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