



March 2011

## A Message from Senator Mike Jackson

Dear Friends,

Thank you for subscribing to my monthly electronic newsletter. In this month's *Capitol Update* you'll find information about some of my legislative priorities and bills that have passed the Texas Senate so far this session. I also encourage you to read about a website where you might discover valuable unclaimed property. Finally, please read about the great strides made at the University of Texas Medical Branch since Hurricane Ike damaged their Level 1 Trauma Center.

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](mailto: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

## Legislative Priorities for the 82nd Legislative Session

The 82nd Legislative Session is in full swing and Senator Jackson is working on legislation to help grow the Texas economy. "Economic development is the driving force behind our state's success," said Senator Jackson. In addition, he will work with his colleagues to pass a balanced state budget without increasing taxes.

"From requiring voter identification at polling places to calling on Texas employers to use the E-verify system, both chambers will take a long, hard look at how Texas can get tough on immigration issues," said Senator Jackson. Already this session, the Senate has passed a voter identification bill, Senate Bill 14 by Senator Troy Fraser and co-authored by Senator Jackson.

The legislation requires voters to show identification in the form of an unexpired driver's license, state-issued picture ID, or a concealed handgun license card. Senator Jackson also supports increased border security. He said, "It's clear that border security isn't a political matter, but an issue of national security."

This session, legislators are facing tough decisions as they attempt to produce a constitutionally required balanced budget in the face of a revenue shortfall. "It is unfortunate that we as legislators are faced with making significant reductions across-the-board to fulfill our constitutional obligation," said Senator Jackson. "Most, if not all, state programs could be affected by budget cuts. It is up to us to make those cuts as strategically and fairly as possible."

Constituents of Senate District 11 are, as always, encouraged to contact Senator Jackson's office to express their views on legislative and budget issues. "I've been elected to serve the interests of my constituents and that's what I'm here to do," said Senator Jackson. "Please keep your opinions coming."

Anyone interested in tracking a bill as it moves through the legislative process may access information through the Texas Legislature Online at [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us). Use the "Search Legislation" function to find out more about pending legislation.

## **Comptroller Provides Texans a Tool to "Claim It"**

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs oversees more than \$2.2 billion in forgotten money and estimates that one of every four Texans has unclaimed property.

"Sixteen percent of the unclaimed money that has been turned over to the state comes from dormant accounts in various banks whose owners couldn't be found," said Comptroller Combs. "In addition, financial institutions send us the contents of an average of 4,100 abandoned safe deposit boxes each year."

Besides forgotten bank accounts and safe deposit boxes, unclaimed property includes utility deposits or other refunds, insurance proceeds, un-cashed checks, and other items.

To find out if you have unclaimed property waiting for you, check the Unclaimed Property database anytime at [www.ClaimItTexas.org](http://www.ClaimItTexas.org).

## **Restoration of Level 1 Trauma Center at UTMB**

The University of Texas Medical Branch recently announced that it has once again been designated as a Level 1 Trauma Center, one of three in the greater Houston area.

"After Hurricane Ike ravaged Galveston in September of 2008, everyone worried about how long it would take to get this vital trauma center back on its feet," said Senator Jackson. "We all worked as a team to secure the necessary funds for UTMB to begin recovery. This re-designation is an example of how teamwork and dedication can really pay off."

According to information released by UTMB, when the emergency room opened a year after Ike, UTMB was once again able to provide the same level of trauma care as it did before the storm. However, to regain Level 1 designation as specified by the American College of Surgeons

(ACS), UTMB had to document that it was again providing the research support, educational programs and 24-hour availability of specialty care required of such trauma centers, and collect that data for 12 months.

A special committee of trauma experts from the ACS recently confirmed that UTMB had met the criteria outlined in the *Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient* manual and confirmed that UTMB had demonstrated its commitment to providing the highest quality trauma care for all injured patients. The three-year designation came from the Texas Department of State Health Services. The notification states that UTMB should “be commended for its ongoing commitment to ensure quality care” for trauma patients.

Since the ER reopened, an average of 100 people per day have been treated, with about 25 percent of those patients being admitted to John Sealy Hospital. Prior to the storm, the National Trauma Data Bank ranked UTMB’s trauma center No. 1 in survival rates among all Level 1 trauma centers in the United States.

"Congratulations to UTMB on this milestone," said Senator Jackson. "The real winners in this are the people of our region who depend on this award-winning trauma center."