

S T A T E S E N A T O R



MARIO GALLEGOS



Dear Neighbor:

The Lt. Governor has issued his legislative interim charges to the Texas Senate. These issues will be studied by the standing Senate Committees and several Joint Committees.

In the interim between legislative sessions, the legislature studies issues identified by the Lt. Governor and Speaker of the House. These studies will result in recommendations to the 78th Legislature scheduled to convene in January of 2003.

I am pleased to report that I have been named to the Senate Special Committee on Prompt Pay of Health Care Providers. In addition I will continue my service on the Redistricting, Health and Human Services, State Affairs, and Nominations Committees through the interim.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my offices. The committee charges are detailed below. It is a privilege and honor serving our community's interests as your State Senator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mario Gallegos, Jr.".

Mario Gallegos, Jr.  
State Senator  
District6



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**SENATOR MARIO GALLEGOS, JR. APPOINTED TO THE  
SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PROMPT PAY OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**

Lieutenant Governor Bill Ratliff created a Senate Special Committee on Prompt Pay of Health Care Providers to evaluate the effectiveness of existing state law and agency rules designated to ensure prompt payment of health insurance claims to providers by insurance companies. The committee will assess the level of industry compliance with current law and the necessity of additional enforcement measures. The committee will also determine the factors affecting the time lines of reimbursements and make necessary recommendations to improve the process.

*The issue of prompt pay for medical services is of great importance across the medical community. Doctors, hospitals, and health care providers must work together to ensure that payment for services are provided in a timely manner so that patients continue to receive the best medical attention this state has to offer.*

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Committee on Health and Human Services is charged with reviewing selected mental health and mental retardation issues, including the availability and adequacy of mental health services for children, the community health services delivery structure and the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation's method for delivering funds to local communities. The committee is also charged with reviewing the effectiveness of the state's Welfare-to-Work and related programs, as well as reviewing Texas' Supplemental Security Income disability determination procedures.

*As our state continues to grow, we must look to the services that provide assistance to those in need and ensure that adequate resources are available. While ensuring that adequate resources are available, we must also ensure that the delivery of these resources is carried out in a manner that will promote Texas's continued economic stability.*

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE AFFAIRS INTERIM CHARGES

The Senate Committee on State Affairs is charged with monitoring and assessing the Texas Department of Transportation's update of the Texas Transportation Plan, monitoring the developments related to the re-authorization of the TEA-21 and innovative transportation financing techniques, and evaluate developments related to the commercial trucking industry. In addition, the committee is charged with determining the need and feasibility for establishing a state agency or commission for Native American Affairs.

*The creation of alternative transportation funding mechanisms, easing traffic congestion and implementing new, more efficient, safety regulations will continue to play a significant role as Texas remains on a path of steady economic and demographic growth.*

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## DON'T FORGET TO VOTE YES FOR PROPOSITION #3 ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT



Senator Mario Gallegos and Rep. Joe Moreno passed legislation that will help Texas ports become a stronger participant in the coffee import business in the United States. S.B. 1574/SJR 47 creates an exemption from ad valorem taxation of raw cocoa and green coffee stored in Harris County.

This issue is a constitutional amendment and will be on the November ballot as **Proposition #3**. If passed it will allow Texas to be recognized as an exchange state on the New York Board of Trades Coffee Exchange. This exclusive designation is currently given only to New York, Florida and Louisiana. With a coffee exchange designation, any Texas port will be qualified to import coffee from most Central and South American countries, as well as Mexico, the largest coffee exchange country. Texas, with its proximity to Mexico and the rest of the coffee producing nations, can expect an increase in coffee shipments.

The coffee will be stored in special warehouses, and would be subject to taxation. Exchange coffee may be imported into any Texas port, but it must be stored in Harris County. The New York Board of Trade limits the exchange area to one county to ease the inspection of the coffee and storage facilities by officials. Taxes on private warehouses, equipment, and other taxable items to handle the stored coffee as well as the new jobs created for the residents of Harris County will also provide much needed additional revenue to the various taxing jurisdictions.

**I urge everyone in Senate District 6, and Harris County, to get out to the polls and encourage others to vote for continued economic development in our community. Help our Port become one of only four "Coffee Exchange Ports" in the country by voting yes on Proposition 3 (SJR 47), the constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation raw cocoa and green coffee that is held in Harris County.**