



NATHAN JOHNSON
STATE SENATOR • DISTRICT 16

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Contact: Brenda Allen
Brenda.Allen@senate.texas.gov
972-701-0349

SENATOR NATHAN JOHNSON'S PRIORITY LEGISLATION FOR THE 88TH SESSION "MAKE PUBLIC SYSTEMS WORK"

AUSTIN, TX – State Senator Nathan Johnson announces a comprehensive, topical set of bills for the 88th Legislative Session aimed at providing Texans with reliable energy, reforming the criminal justice system, equipping schools with necessary resources for students, utilizing early prevention to reduce healthcare costs, and a thorough strategy to expand Medicaid in Texas.

"Good results come from good systems. Many of the bills I've filed aim to make the state systems on which we rely – for power, for free and fair elections, for public education, for health and healthcare, and for public safety and law enforcement – more responsive, efficient, and effective," said Senator Nathan Johnson (D-Dallas).

ELECTRICAL GRID RESILIENCY: POWER IN NUMBERS

- **SENATE BILL 1212 (*Distributed Energy Resources*)** – brings small-scale residential and commercial electricity generation (e.g., rooftop solar, facility-specific generation, and local microgrids) onto the grid by creating a standardized framework for their integration into power distribution systems.

BUILDING PUBLIC HEALTH AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS THAT PROTECT AND IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES

- **SENATE BILL 86 (*Fentanyl Test Strips*)** – reduces deadly unintentional fentanyl overdoses by decriminalizing the use, possession, delivery, and manufacturing of testing equipment that identifies the presence of fentanyl.
- **SENATE BILL 623 (*Overdose Prevention Testing*)** – reduces deadly overdoses and other drug-related deaths by broadening the legal forms of drug testing and tightening the definition of "paraphernalia." Allows and enables individuals to detect fentanyl and newer deadly drugs (like xylazine) using the latest forms of drug-testing equipment. *"Every day, approximately 15 Texans die of fentanyl or opioid-related overdose, often by drugs they had no idea contained deadly substances."*





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PROVIDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH RESOURCES, STABILITY, AND RESPECT

- **SENATE BILL 88 (*Basic Allotment Inflation Adjustment*)** – raises the per student basic allotment and ties it to inflation. Helps public schools manage finances with stability in the face of inflation and allows the state to keep prior promises to public education.
- **SENATE BILL 89 (*Pre-Kindergarten for Teachers*)** – offers free pre-kindergarten programs to the children of public school teachers, and provides teachers with automatic qualification for their children to enroll in public school Pre-K.
- **SENATE BILL 90 (*Charter School Campus Application*)** – raises the threshold of transparency and accountability in the establishment of new open-enrollment charter school campuses and sites. Requires charter expansion applications to include a study of the financial impact on the local school district and approval by the full State Board of Education.
- **SENATE BILL 263 (*School Enrollment Funding*)** – changes the Texas school finance system to be based on enrollment instead of attendance. While aligning Texas with almost every other state, this legislation provides schools with stable budgets based on expenses.
- **SENATE BILL 350 (*Paid Parental Leave Policy*)** – requires school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to adopt a paid parental leave policy and reimburses schools for associated costs.

FAIR, ACCESSIBLE, AND SECURE ELECTIONS

- **SENATE BILL 92 (*Online Voter Registration*)** – creates an online registration system for mail-in applications and Volunteer Deputy Registrar (VDR) applications. In Texas, voter registration is a mixture of court-ordered online registration (we're already doing it in some contexts) and tedious, slow, outdated, inefficient, and fraud-vulnerable paper forms. SB 92 makes it easier to register to vote and saves the state and county election officials time and money.
- **SENATE BILL 94 (*Earlier Voter Pre-Registration*)** – changes the pre-registration age to 17 years, helping kids pre-register to vote in time to vote in the year they turn 18.
- **SENATE BILL 293 (*Against Intimidation of Election Officials*)** – establishes a criminal offense for a person who harasses an election official; intentionally interferes with or prevents an election official from performing their duty; or disseminates personal information about an election official.

LOWERING HEALTHCARE COSTS THROUGH EARLY PREVENTION, EARLY DETECTION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCIES

- **SENATE BILL 290 (*Health Information Exchange*)** – authorizes the Texas Health Services Authority (THSA), a statewide Health Information Exchange (HIE), to collect and analyze clinical data as permitted under HIPAA, promoting statewide interoperability of electronic health records. It ensures oversight of Texans' clinical data by a Texas HIE and protects the privacy of Texas patients.





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- **SENATE BILL 294 (*Asthma Medicine in Schools*)** – allows schools to stock quick-relief medications to treat children in respiratory distress, such as inhalers, by aligning requirements to those currently in place for epinephrin.
- **SENATE BILL 550 (*Express Lane Eligibility*)** – reduces administrative burdens and streamlines the eligibility process for CHIP and Medicaid enrollment or re-enrollment by allowing the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to use previously verified income data.
- **SENATE BILL 344 (*State-Based Exchange*)** – establishes the Texas Health Insurance Exchange Authority to implement a state-based exchange to reduce net monthly premium payments, apply savings to higher enrollment, and lower out-of-pocket expenses.
- **SENATE BILL 619 (*Early Hearing Program Reform*)** - provides newborn and infant hearing screenings by enhancing provider understanding, improving reporting and referral rates, and reducing the state's loss to follow-up/documentation.

LEADING THE CHARGE FOR MEDICAID EXPANSION IN TEXAS

- **SENATE BILL 195 (*Live Well Texas Program by 1115 Waiver*)** – expands access to state Medicaid health insurance while preserving state control over funds and generating positive net revenue for the state. Directs HHSC to seek a waiver expanding eligibility for Medicaid benefits to all individuals for whom federal matching funds are available; encourages personal healthcare responsibility; increases healthcare accessibility; and ensures Medicare rate parity for Medicaid providers.
- **SENATE BILL 71 & SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 10 (*Medicaid Expansion by Constitutional Amendment*)** – a constitutional amendment to be submitted to voters on November 7, 2023, requiring the state to expand Medicaid. If approved by Texas voters, the constitutional amendment provided in SJR 10 directs Texas HHSC to adopt rules pursuant to Senate Bill 71.
- **SENATE BILL 72 (*Medicaid Expansion by Legislature*)** – requires Medicaid expansion by simple legislative vote. Texas has the highest uninsured rate in the country, with nearly one-fifth of Texans uninsured.
- **SENATE BILL 343 (*Medicaid Expansion by 1115 Waiver*)** – directs HHSC to use its discretion to craft a federally-acceptable section 1115 waiver to expand Medicaid coverage to all individuals for whom federal matching funds are available; encourage personal healthcare responsibility; and increase healthcare accessibility.

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About Senator Nathan Johnson: *Re-elected with bipartisan support in 2022, Senator Johnson proudly represents almost a million Dallas County residents in the growing and rapidly diversifying Senate District 16. Johnson currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Senate Committee on Jurisprudence; Senate Committee on Business & Commerce; Senate Committee on Water, Agriculture & Rural Affairs; and Senate Committee on Administration.*

