

## **Capitol Update (1-10-23)**

Greetings from your Texas Capitol! For those receiving our Capitol Update for the first time, let me tell you a little bit about it. I have deployed back to Austin for the 88<sup>th</sup> legislative session. As you know, the Texas Legislature meets every other year for 140 days to file bills, debate policies, and enact law on behalf of the people of Texas. Serving in the Texas Senate remains the great privilege of my life, one I don't take for granted.

In the 15 months since the conclusion of the third called special session of the 87<sup>th</sup> legislative session, my team and I have been very busy. Just as I do after each session, I spent several months traveling the newly drawn Senate District 22, which now includes four new counties; Comanche, Eastland, Erath, and Hamilton, and continues to contain Bosque, Falls, Hill, Hood, McLennan, and Somerville, along with a now smaller portion of Ellis County, and a larger portion of Tarrant County. I meet with constituents to discuss both the outcomes of the session and provide updates on activities directly impacting their respective communities. In addition to district visits, this interim has been unique. More so than in any of my previous interims, my post-session schedule was full of legislative activities, serving as Chairman of two committees, the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Border Security, as well as my duties as a member of four committees, three special committees, and several task forces to which I have been appointed.

To make sure I'm providing topical and pertinent information to you, the citizens I serve, my staff, and I typically compile this newsletter bi-weekly throughout the session, as the tempo of activity may direct. This Capitol Update will cover several items on which I want to update you, as well as some resources and alerts for the session. Look for more updates approximately every two weeks throughout the session. Thank you to all the constituents who stopped by my office yesterday during the opening day, and if you plan to visit the Texas Capitol for inauguration day, please feel free to stop by our office—my team and I are now located in office 1E.3 in the Capitol Building.



*Pictured here the Senate swearing in ceremony on opening day in the Senate Chamber and presenting Chair Lucas Robinson with a gavel for his service as Hamilton County GOP Chair.*

## **Additional District Office**

With the changes from the redistricting process to Senate District 22, we will be opening an additional office in Arlington. We are currently working on a space in the Arlington Highlands/ Parks Mall area, and we will update you with that office information as soon as it is opened.

## **Staff Announcements**

"Your subordinates' success is your success"—that's one of my favorite military maxims, as the success of my staff in their positions helps to make me a better servant to you. Therefore, I never go into a legislative session without properly assembling and preparing staff to help me serve the citizens of Senate District 22. We have a couple of familiar faces on "Team Birdwell," but we have many new staff members who have replaced fine members of my previous staff who have moved on to other opportunities. Back in August, I announced the promotion of my Committee Director JW Galloway to Chief of Staff. JW will lead the entire staff and my new Legislative Director, Gatlin Moncla will run all policy operations in my Capitol office. Additionally, our highly skilled team includes:

- Senior Policy Analyst MaKayla Arthur
- Policy Analyst Hunter Hinton
- Policy Analyst Carter Byrum
- Policy Analyst & Council Shelby Sterling
- Office Manager & Scheduler Kirstee Bock
- Constituent Correspondence Manager Ryan Hogan
- Bullock Scholar Allie Barnett (Senior, *Baylor University*)
- District Manager Shelly Verlander (Arlington & *Granbury Offices*)
- District Manager Robyn Morrison (*Waco Office*)

Along with my Capitol Office and District Office staff, I also have a highly qualified committee staff in the Natural Resources and Economic Development Office. That staff includes:

- Deputy Committee Director Clint Harned
- Policy Analyst and Clerk David Estrada

## **Key Dates for the 88th Legislative Session**

Here are a few of the key legislative dates of which I want to make you aware:

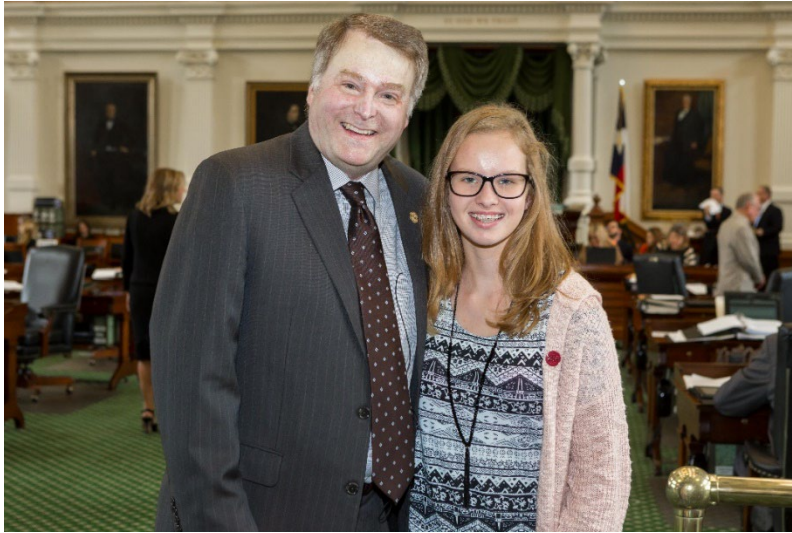
- First week of Session—Senate rules to be determined by the body.
- January 17, 2023—Governor and Lt. Governor Inauguration Day.
- Mid-Late January--Committee assignments to be designated by Lt. Governor Dan Patrick.
- March 10, 2023 (60th day)—Except for "local bills," all legislation must be filed with the Calendar Clerk in the office of the Secretary of the Senate.
- May 29, 2023 (140th day)—The final day of the 88th regular session, also known as "sine die." The final weeks—and particularly days—of the session are nearly non-stop; this date is Memorial Day, and the Senate will be working as we have in previous sessions.
- June 18, 2023—This is the 20th day following adjournment and the last day the Governor can sign or veto bills passed during the regular legislative session.
- August 28, 2021—This is the 91st day following adjournment, and the date that bills without specific effective dates become law.

## **Resources for the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session**

As always, I encourage you to check in on what's happening day to day at the Capitol. The official website of the Texas Legislature (<https://capitol.texas.gov/>) is an excellent resource for legislative information during the session. You can watch live video coverage of the chambers or committees—and even archived footage—for both the [House](#) and [Senate](#); you can track specific [pieces of legislation](#), and you can find a bevy of other information on the [FAQ page](#). If social media is your preferred method for following Capitol activity, be sure to follow the hashtag #txlege, which is widely used by legislators, media outlets and citizens alike. Additionally, my staff and I both update my Facebook and Twitter accounts regularly.

## **Senate Page Opportunities**

The Honorary Page Program in the Texas Senate is an exciting opportunity providing insight into lawmaking procedures for Texans 6-18 years of age. The duties of Honorary Page often include working on the Senate Floor during a legislative session day, communicating with senior Senate staff members, making deliveries to Senate offices, and assisting with assignments from Senate offices. Any parents or guardians interested in this opportunity may contact my Office Manager, Kirstee Bock, at [kirstee.bock@senate.texas.gov](mailto:kirstee.bock@senate.texas.gov).



*Elizabeth Lewis served as an Honorary Page for Senator Birdwell in 2017.*

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I hope you found the information above to be useful. Communicating with constituents is one of my top priorities, so I appreciate you contacting any of my offices to ensure my staff and I know how we may best serve you. In that same vein, I hope you will consider forwarding this Capitol Update to your family, friends, and colleagues [residing in Senate District 22](#). If you know someone who wants to receive future editions of our Capitol Update, please visit [my official website to subscribe!](#)

My colleagues and I have a great deal of work ahead of us, but it's important for you to know that I see each day as an opportunity to make sure I am casting votes based upon the principles and policies for which I told you I would fight. I appreciate the privilege to represent the citizens of Senate District 22, and it remains my distinct honor to serve each of you in this capacity.

God Bless,

Brian Birdwell  
State Senator, District 22

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