



## Representative Garnet F. Coleman's 86th Session Wrap Up

### **From the Desk of Representative Coleman:**

This session, the Texas Legislature focused on important issues that affect the lives of everyday Texans. I am glad that my experience in the Texas House enabled me to pass a number of bills that will improve the lives of those in District 147, Houston, and Texas.

My highlights of the session include passing legislation to address the destruction caused by Hurricane Harvey, improve our public schools, bolster the institutions of higher education in District 147, and improve public health in the state of Texas.

Beyond that, I was able to accomplish so much more. Please see below for a record of my accomplishments this session, and know that I could not have done it without your support.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Garnet F. Coleman".

Garnet F. Coleman  
Texas State Representative - District 147

### **HARVEY RECOVERY**

Heading into this session, the County Affairs Committee that I chair did two interim studies relating to Hurricane Harvey and disaster response, recovery, and mitigation. The County Affairs Committee found that many political subdivisions such as counties, cities, school districts, etc. lack the resources to properly respond to Hurricane Harvey and/or mitigate future disasters. This session, I worked hard with my fellow legislators to ensure that the damage of Hurricane Harvey and future disaster mitigation was addressed. This includes filing **HB 4279** and **HJR 114** which would have provided \$10 billion in general obligation bonds for grant funding for disaster response, recovery, mitigation, and general infrastructure. Additionally, I amended an additional \$3.5 billion for a total of \$4 billion to HJR 145 by **Representative Sarah Davis** (R-Houston). However, to pass the bill out of

the House, the amount was lowered to a total of \$750 million. Regrettably, her HJR with my amended language died in the Senate.

Though my bills did not pass, they influenced the policy that led the Legislature to make more grants and use general obligation bonds to make larger investments. I am proud to be a joint author of **HJR 4** by **Representative Dade Phelan** (R-Beaumont), which, if approved by the voters this November, will authorize the sale of general obligation bonds to fund flood infrastructure to assist in the financing of drainage, flood mitigation, and flood control projects. Additionally, the Legislature provided for [\\$1.7 billion out of the Economic Stabilization Fund](#) for disaster mitigation and recovery projects.

I was a joint sponsor of **SB 812 (HB 1842)** by **Senator Eddie Lucio Jr.** (D-Brownsville) that was sponsored in the House by **Representative Senfronia Thompson** (D-Houston). SB 812 helps protect homeowners from having their property unfairly appraised when rebuilding after a natural disaster such as Hurricane Harvey. SB 812 fixes the law to ensure that any homeowner whose property is damaged due to any federally-declared natural disaster and that receives federal funds to help rebuild their home is not unfairly subject to having their repairs deemed "new improvements" under their property tax appraisal. Prior to SB 812, the Legislature had to add each federally-declared disaster one by one. Now, each federally-declared natural disaster will automatically be covered under Texas law. The Governor signed this bill into law on May 7th.

I was a joint sponsor of **SB 289** by **Senator Eddie Lucio Jr.** (D-Brownsville) that was sponsored in the House by **Representative Geanie Morrison** (R-Victoria). SB 289 creates a Disaster Recovery Task force under the General Land Office. This task force will be key to making sure state agencies and local governments are better able to collaborate and work together before, during, and after a disaster. This bill was signed into law on June 10th.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION**

**HB 826 (SB 650)** authored by **Representative John Zerwas (R-Richmond)** and I, sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Joan Huffman (R-Houston)**, created the **University of Houston College Of Medicine**. The Governor signed this bill into law on May 1st. I started the process of creating the UH College of Medicine in 2015 when I added a rider to the budget to get the ball rolling on a medical school for the University of Houston. In 2017, **Representative Armando Walle (D-Houston)** and I worked together to make



*UH Vice Chair Peter Taaffe, **Representative Ana Hernandez** (D-Houston), UH Student Regent Andrew Teoh, **Representative Dennis Paul** (R-Houston), Regent Gerald McElvy, UH Chancellor Renu Khator, **Representative Garnet Coleman** (D-Houston), **Representative Armando Walle** (D-Houston), Regent Jack Moore, **Representative Nicole Collier** (D-Ft. Worth), and **Representative Mary Ann Perez** (D-Houston) on the House Floor on UH Day at the Texas State Capitol*

sure the UH medical school rider was included in the Texas Budget again. The UH College of Medicine is needed because the population of Houston has grown by nearly 4 million people since the last medical school was established in 1972, and Texas is projected to need another 6,260 primary care physicians by 2030. The UH College of Medicine will integrate with the University's existing health and health-related professions, colleges, and programs to raise the quality of all the programs. Additionally, the College of Medicine will elevate the research capabilities of many of the existing research centers and activities already occurring at the University of Houston. Furthermore, I worked to ensure that the medical school will receive **\$20 million** in state funds next biennium to help with start-up costs.

I authored **HB 1516 (SB 1198)** that was sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Borris Miles** (D-Houston). HB 1516 removes the requirement that Texas Southern University (TSU) go back to the legislature every five years to get re-approved for a student athletics fee that has already been approved by the student body. The athletics fee helps pay for scholarships, coaches, and a vibrant athletics program at TSU. Having a vibrant Tiger athletics program will be key to bringing football back onto campus. The Governor signed this bill into law on June 4th.

I also fought to ensure that TSU would receive **\$16 million out of the Economic Stabilization Fund (ESF)** for maintenance of the university's central thermal plant and site/steam tunnels.

I was able to add **\$45 million** in the state budget to help cover the costs for new facilities for the UH Law Center and the UH Hobby School of Public Affairs. This money will provide the necessary funding to get both projects off the ground. Additionally, I fought for **\$26 million** in funding for the UH System to help cover the costs of Hurricane Harvey recovery.

A part of higher education is skills training, that is why this session **Senator Borris Miles** (D-Houston) **and I** helped direct half a million as part of the Skills Development Grant to the Houston Area Urban League. The Houston Area Urban League will help train a diverse workforce with industry skills consisting of industry-specific modules that cover various trade skills topics, including basic safety and OSHA compliance, industry or trade specific math training, industry or trade specific tools training, basic communication skills, and basic employability skills.

## **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

### ***Expanding Full Day Pre-K***

This session, I authored **HB 2081** to expand full day Pre-K. **I have always been a strong proponent of early childhood education.** This includes authoring legislation to fund prekindergarten as far back as 2001, and working in the 1990s to ensure that early childhood development was included as part of the TANF Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and that the maximum number of children could qualify. Though

my HB 2081 did not pass, full-day Pre-K expansion was included in **HB 3**, which was the major school finance bill of this session by **Representative Dan Huberty** (R-Houston).

I voted for HB 3, which expands state funding for full-day Pre-K to all students that are economically disadvantaged or that are on free and reduced-price lunch. The reason why I have fought for full-day Pre-K is because it is [key to closing the education achievement gap](#).

In addition to expanding full day Pre-K, HB 3 is also a big win for the Houston Independent School District (HISD). HB 3 lowers the amount HISD has to pay back to the state due to recapture over the biennium from roughly \$700 million to about \$45 million. HB 3 also adds over \$200 million in new funding over the biennium for HISD.

The Governor signed HB 3 into law on June 12th. For a full breakdown of HB 3, please [click here](#) to read the report on HB 3 from the Texas Legislative Study Group (LSG), which is the nonpartisan House Caucus that I have chaired since 2009. The LSG is dedicated to advancing sound public policy that benefits **all** Texas families.

### ***Making Our Schools Safer***

Key components of **HB 2095** that I authored were included in **Representative Four Price's** (R-Amarillo) **HB 18 (SB 913)**, **HB 19 (SB 914)** and **HB 1070**, all of which I joint authored, and were sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Kirk Watson** (D-Austin). These bills increase the behavioral health resources for students through psychologists, registered nurses, clinical social workers, and a family therapist on campus.

HB 18, 19, and 1070 continue the work I have done since 1995 to improve mental healthcare in Texas including the behavioral health services in our schools. I have continued working on legislation that has provided better behavioral health in schools prior to this session—including during the last interim as chairman of the House Committee on County Affairs. Leading up to this session, the County Affairs Committee looked into what could be done to improve behavioral health in our schools. One of the committee's recommendations was to increase the number of behavioral health professionals at our schools. HB 18, 19, and 1070 help make that recommendation a reality. The Governor signed these three bills into law in June 2019.

**SB 11** by **Senator Larry Taylor** (R-Friendswood) and sponsored by **Representative Greg Bonnen** (R-Friendswood) is an omnibus school safety bill that includes several policies that I worked on this session and in previous sessions. This includes **HB 1623**, which I filed this session to improve behavioral health training accountability and trauma training for teachers. The Governor signed SB 11 into law on June 6th.

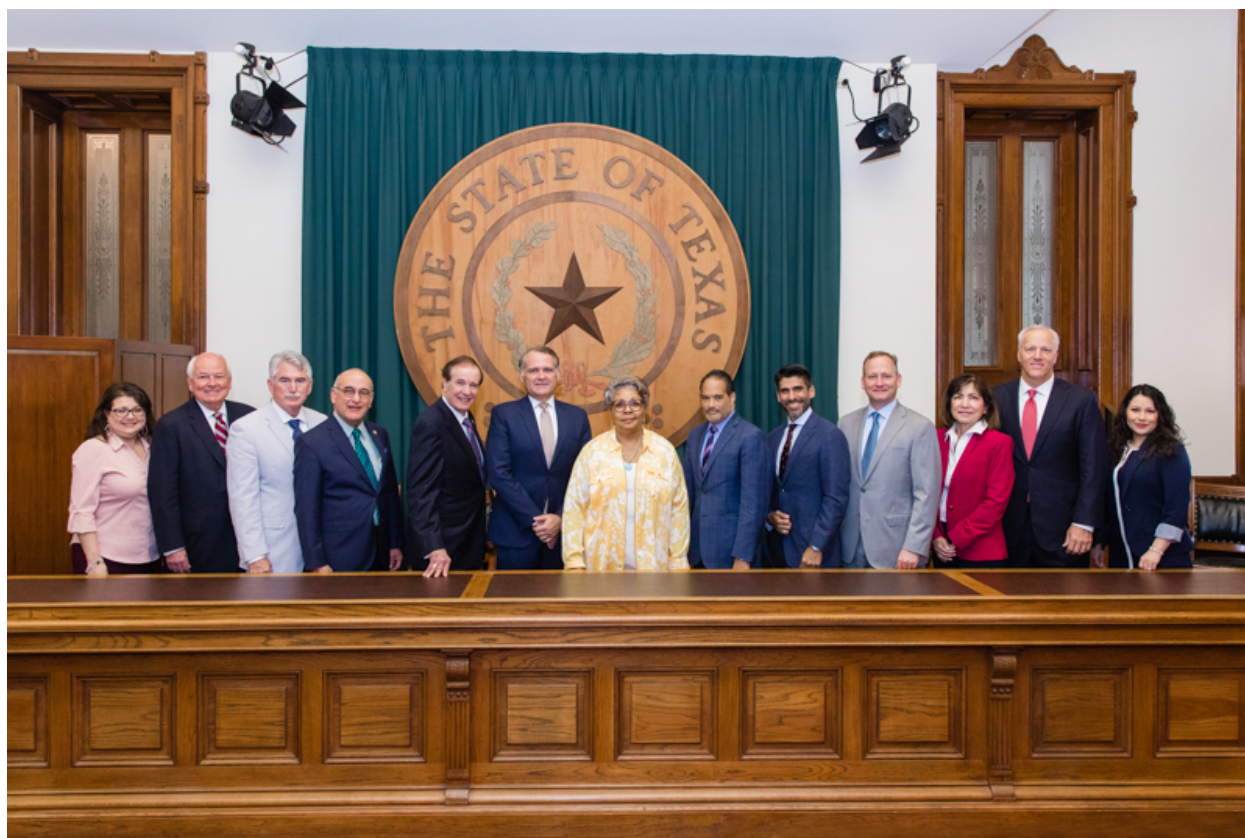
I joint sponsored with **Representative John Zerwas** (R-Richmond) **SB 10** by **Senator Jane Nelson** (R-Flower Mound), which creates the Texas Mental Health Care Consortium that passed as an amendment added on to SB 11. The Texas Mental Health Care Consortium brings together psychiatric professionals from higher education

institutions and mental healthcare providers to improve access to child mental health services. I added another amendment to SB 11 on the House floor making suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention available for school safety grant funding.

SB 11 continues the work I have done since 2011 to improve behavioral health services in our schools. In 2011, in response to the suicide of Asher Brown who was an openly gay middle school student in the Houston area, I sponsored legislation allowing schools to implement training for their teachers on behavioral health and to refer students who may need help finding appropriate resources. In 2013, I authored legislation that made that training for teachers mandatory. Some of the County Affairs Committee's recommendations were to improve trauma training and ensure schools are held accountable for training their teachers. SB 11 helps make those recommendations a reality. The Governor signed SB 11 into law on June 6th.

I joint authored **HB 906 (SB 992)** by **Representative Senfronia Thompson** (D-Houston) and sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Beverly Powell** (D-Burleson), which creates a collaborative task force to study public school mental health services. This task force will be vital to building upon the work that I have done over the years to make our schools better able to address the behavioral health needs of our children. This bill was signed in to law by the Governor on June 14th.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**



**I was honored once again to serve on the House Committee on Public Health for the 14th consecutive session.** The Public Health Committee was made up of 11 House members this year (*from left to right*): Committee Director Milda Mora; **Representative Steve Allison** (R-San Antonio); **Representative J.D. Sheffield** (R-Gatesville); **Representative Bobby Guerra** (D-McAllen); **Representative Bill Zedler** (R-Fort Worth); **Vice Chair John Wray** (R-Waxahachie); **Chair Senfronia Thompson** (D-Houston); **Representative Garnet Coleman** (D-Houston); **Representative Eddie Lucio III** (D-Brownsville); **Representative Four Price** (R-Amarillo); **Representative Lina Ortega** (D-El Paso); **Representative James Frank** (R-Wichita Falls); Committee Clerk Selena Soriano.

I authored **HB 1518 (SB 349)**, which was sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Kel Seliger** (R-Amarillo) to protect young Texans by prohibiting minors (younger than 18) from purchasing over-the-counter cough syrups that contain the drug *dextromethorphan*. I have filed this bill every session since 2015 (85th-HB 1939 and 84th-HB 3066). The bill was finally passed and signed by the Governor on May 17th. The law is effective beginning Sept 1st. "Robotripping" is a serious public health issue in Texas, wherein the drug *dextromethorphan* in over-the-counter cough syrup is mixed with alcohol to create a deadly high. The National Institute on Drug Abuse found that approximately 3.4% of teens abused over-the-counter cough medicines to get high in 2018. The Texas Tribune recently published a story on the importance of this bill, [which you can read by clicking here.](#)

This session, **Governor Greg Abbott** (R-Texas) requested that I author **HB 4289 (SB 2256)** by **Senator Lois Kolkhorst** (R-Brenham), creating a safety net for Local Provider Participation Funds (LPPFs). LPPFs allow local public and non-profit hospitals to pool their money together and receive matching funds from the federal government to help pay for medical costs. LPPFs became a funding option in 2013, and since then every one that has been approved has gone through the County Affairs Committee that I chair. After this legislative session, 28 cities and counties have specific legislative authority to create an LPPF. HB 4289 is important because it creates a safety net for LPPFs that don't get federal government approval or get voided for one reason or another.

HB 4289 also authorizes local providers to use a standardized LPPF model as a fall back. Now, they do not have to forgo federal matching funds if the federal government voids their LPPF while the Legislature is out of session. These additional LPPF dollars go towards ensuring that the local providers can provide care. It was vitally important that we passed this bill this session because the billions of dollars Texas receives through the 1115 Transformation Waiver are set to expire soon. The Governor signed HB 4289 into law on June 10th.

**HB 3459 (SB 2022)** that I authored, sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Borris Miles** (D-Houston), creates the Harris County LPPF. These additional funds will ensure that the Harris County Health System can provide care to those in need. This bill was signed into law on May 24th by the Governor. I was also a joint sponsor with **Representative Abel**

**Herrero** (D-Corpus Christi) of **SB 2315** by **Senator Chuy Hinojosa** (D-Brownsville), which created the Nueces County LPPF.

**HB 2477 (SB 1196)** that I authored, sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Borris Miles** (D-Houston), gives hospital districts - including the Harris Health System - more control and flexibility over the implementation of their retirement plans. This bill was signed into law by the Governor on June 14th.

I was a joint author of **HB 2755** by **Representative Four Price** (R-Amarillo) and sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Carol Alvarado** (D-Houston), which allows local public health districts to recover the cost of inspecting and licensing food vendors in their locale. Under the old law, local public health districts were arbitrarily limited on what they could charge for the inspection and licensing of food vendors. This was causing the local public health authority to lose money by providing a vital public service. HB 2755 allows the local authority to charge an amount to cover the cost of the service they are providing. This bill will help ensure that the food the public buys from restaurants and food trucks is safe for consumption. This bill went through the County Affairs Committee that I chair, was signed by the Governor on June 5th, and goes into effect on September 1st of this year.

### **Access to Care**

This session, I continued to fight for Medicaid expansion in Texas. I was part of **President Obama's** State Legislators for Health Reform, which was a working group of 32 state legislators which helped write, pass, and implement the Affordable Care Act (ACA). **For the 4th session, I authored a bill to expand Medicaid in Texas.** My **HB 565** would have expanded Medicaid in Texas and codified important ACA protections into Texas law. It received a hearing, but regrettably did not get voted out of committee.

Since its formation in 2008, the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) has made a tremendous impact on cancer research and prevention in the state of Texas, including helping fund the work of James Allison who won the Nobel Prize for Medicine last year. CPRIT was originally funded with \$3 billion in bonds. Those bonds are now running out, so the Legislature passed **HJR 12** by **Representative John Zerwas** (R-Richmond) that I proudly joint authored. HJR 12 will authorize another \$3 billion in bonds to be sold to continue to fund CPRIT. The final decision will be up to the voters this November.

**HB 29 (SB 732)**, which I joint authored with **Representative Ina Minjarez** (D-San Antonio) and sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Bryan Hughes** (R-Mineola), allows patients to see a physical therapist without needing to get a referral first from their primary care physician. This bill will save patients time and money. It was signed by the Governor on June 14th, and takes effect on September 1st.

**HB 278 (SB 311)**, which I joint authored with **Representative Tom Oliverson** (R-Houston) and sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Charles Perry** (R-Lubbock), provides

additional flexibility for physicians and the advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) or physician assistants (PA) working with them. This bill was signed by the Governor on May 16th and becomes effective on September 1st. Generally in Texas, only physicians have prescriptive authority. However, physicians are allowed to delegate prescriptive authority to the APRNs and PAs working with them. Before HB 278 was passed, this system was rigged to create unnecessary barriers to the effective delegation of prescriptive authority. HB 278 helps streamline the prescriptive authority agreements by removing barriers so that medical teams are better able to meet the demands of their patients and help people get better.

I was a joint sponsor with **Representative Tom Oliverson** (R-Houston) of **SB 1096 (HB 3685)** by **Senator Charles Perry** (R-Lubbock), which will help minimize delays and denials due to red-tape for those in the Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP) which serves approximately 5,600 children and young adults under the age of 21. Removing these unnecessary barriers will ensure these children get the medications they need without undue delay. This bill was signed by the Governor on June 10th.

My **HB 2593** was amended onto **HB 2847** by **Representative Craig Goldman** (R-Fort Worth). It clarifies the regulation of podiatry and allows podiatric medical assistants to practice under podiatrists. This amendment was necessary to clean up some inconsistencies that had risen from the licensing of podiatry being moved from the Texas Medical Board to the Department of Licensing and Regulation a few years ago. The Governor signed HB 2847 on June 14th, and it will be effective September 1st.

I joint authored **HB 3703** by **Rep. Stephanie Klick** (R-Fort Worth) expanding the Texas Compassionate Use Program (TCUP), which allows for the use of cannabidiol (CBD) oil that contains only 0.5% or less tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). **I have supported the medical use of marihuana since 2007** when I joint authored HB 1534 by Representative Elliot Naishtat (D-Austin), which would have created an affirmative defense to prosecution for those using medical marihuana. HB 3703 builds upon the work we did in 2015. In 2015, I was proud to joint author HB 892 by Rep. Klick that passed as SB 339 by Senator Kevin Eltife (R-Tyler) to create TCUP. SB 339 allowed the growth and dispensation of CBD oil, an oil extracted from the cannabis plant, for use in treating Texas residents diagnosed with intractable epilepsy for the first time. These individuals are at a higher risk for a shortened life span, excessive bodily injury, neurophysiological and mental health impairment, and social disabilities. They experience dozens or more severe seizures each week. The original 2015 bill made this low-THC oil available to the estimated 149,000 Texans living with this illness.

**This year, HB 3703 expands TCUP to cover more diseases and disorders**, such as multiple sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), autism, terminal cancer, or an incurable neurodegenerative disease. It also includes privacy protections for the physicians enrolled in the cannabis provider registry and lowers the number of physicians whose recommendation is required for a patient to receive a low-THC cannabis prescription from two to one. This bill was signed into law on June 14th.



## ***Easing the Medicaid Appeals Process***

This session, I worked with **Representative J.D. Sheffield** (R-Gatesville) to bring uniformity to the Medicaid appeals process. We had an amendment added to **SB 2138** by **Senator Chuy Hinojosa** (D-McAllen), sponsored by **Representative Sarah Davis** (R-Houston), to ensure that hospitals, the Office of the Inspector General, and the Medical Appeals Unit are all using the same Federal Coding Guidelines with regard to hospital utilization reviews and audits. The Governor signed SB 2138 as amended into law on June 10th.

## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**HB 2079** was authored by me and sponsored in the Senate by **Senator Borris Miles** (D-Houston). **This bill was signed by the Governor on May 24th** and becomes effective on September 1st. I filed this bill in response to a child victim of gun violence in Houston, named Sir Romeo. Thankfully Sir Romeo survived the gunshot wound, but after multiple surgeries, he and his family are unable to afford to move out of the home where the incident happened. **HB 2079 allows a child who is a victim of a murder attempt to be eligible to receive a one-time-only assistance payment as part of the state's crime-victim's compensation fund.** ABC 13 Houston, which has covered Sir Romeo's story since it happened, recently published a piece on the passage of HB 2079. [Click here to read.](#)

## ***Sandra Bland Act***

During the interim before the 86th Regular Legislative Session, the County Affairs Committee that I chair met 3 times to discuss the implementation of the Sandra Bland Act and what additional steps needed to be made. Based on the recommendations from those hearings, I authored **HB 4468** and **HB 4571**. HB 4571 contained parts of the Sandra Bland Act that did not pass last session. Although once again these policies did not pass, many recommendations that were included in **HB 4468 passed as a follow-up bill to the Sandra Bland Act.**

I authored **HB 4468** this session, which made several improvements to our criminal justice system. HB 4468 was joint authored by **Representative Nicole Collier** (D-Fort Worth) and **Representative Yvonne Davis** (D-Dallas), and sponsored in the Senate by **Senator John Whitmire** (D-Houston). HB 4468 contains the following policies: fixing mental health transportation language; strengthening the Texas Commission on Jail Standards oversight of privately operated jails; expanding the prisoner safety fund to jails with 288 beds or fewer from 96 beds or fewer; allowing for in-kind contributions for healthy community collaboratives and lowering the match amount for rural counties from a dollar for a dollar to a quarter for a dollar; requiring jailers to be enrolled in basic training within 90 days of receiving their temporary license; and preventing a temporary jailer from becoming a supervisor.

One of the key policies from the Sandra Bland Act that did not pass last session or this session would limit the arrests for fine-only offenses. Thanks to the Sandra Bland Act that I passed last session, the Legislature better understands that this is a serious problem that disproportionately affects people of color. This session, **Representative Joe Moody** (D-El Paso), **Representative James White** (R-Hillister), **Representative Senfronia Thompson** (D-Houston), **and I** made multiple efforts to limit arrests for fine-only offenses. Those efforts included a bill I authored, **HB 4571**, a bill I joint authored by Rep. White, **HB 2754**, and an amendment by Rep. Moody to **SB 815** which I joint sponsored and passed out of the House. Regrettably, our efforts died in the Senate, but I will continue to work on this issue.

I was a joint sponsor of **SB 632** by **Senator Lois Kolkhorst** (R-Brenham). This bill helps promote communication between local law enforcement and those in the community who coordinate the services offered by Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs). This bill will help people who need help get diverted away from jails and into treatment instead. The Governor signed this bill on June 10th.

## **LGBTQ RIGHTS**

I have always been a supporter of LGBTQ rights. **In 1999, I authored HB 2489 which attempted to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation.** To this day I continue to fight for LGBTQ rights, and this session I filed 3 bills aimed at better protecting our LGBTQ community. Despite my bills not passing, it is important to continue to bring attention to these issues because Supreme Court Judges read newspapers, too.

**HB 2089** would allow people to ensure their state-issued IDs reflect their correct gender identity. **I have filed this bill for the last 7 sessions.** Right now, Texas courts have the authority to correct inaccurate vital statistic information. Problematically, no statutory guidelines exist for courts receiving petitions to correct the vital statistic information of a person who has received treatment from a physician due to identifying as a gender other than the gender indicated on that person's driver's license, birth certificate, or other official document. This lack of statutory guidelines has resulted in a patchwork of different procedures around the state with different jurisdictions developing different documentation requirements, affidavits and procedures. This creates a barrier to people seeking to correct their vital statistic information and increases legal costs. A standard process would ensure fair treatment for all Texans seeking to correct their vital statistic information. **HB 2089** received a public hearing in the Public Health Committee, but was not voted on.

**HB 1513** aimed to protect victims of crimes committed based on bias against the victim's gender identity or expression. **I have filed this bill for the last 7 sessions.**



*HB 1513 Press Conference*

The Texas Legislature passed the "James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Act" allowing trial courts to impose stiffer penalties for crimes committed due to bias against the victims' real or perceived "race, religion, color, sex, disability, sexual preference, age, or national origin." Gender identity or expression should be added to this current list of attributes because, like the currently listed attributes, it is a universal trait that has historically been a target for widespread and systemic discrimination and violence in our culture. HB 1513 received a public hearing in the House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence. The morning before HB 1513's hearing I led a press conference that featured members of the Texas House LGBT Caucus and trans advocates. You can watch a replay of the press conference by [clicking here](#). Regrettably, HB 1513 was not voted out of committee.

**HB 1512** aimed to repeal an unconstitutional statute in the Texas Penal Code. Currently, Texas Penal Code 21.06 lists "homosexual conduct" as a misdemeanor crime, despite being ruled unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court in 2003. Although unenforceable, 21.06 remains on the books. **I have attempted to remove this unconstitutional statute for the past 8 sessions.** HB 1512 seeks to repeal the statute so the written law reflects what is constitutional. It was referred to the House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence. HB 980 by Representative Michelle Beckley was almost identical to our bill, so I became a joint author on her bill. HB 980 received a hearing in the Criminal Jurisprudence Committee, but was left pending.

## **COUNTY AFFAIRS**



The House County Affairs Committee of the 86th Legislative Session that I chair is made up of 9 House members (*from left to right*): Committee Director Tara Blagg; **Representative Alex Dominguez** (D-Brownsville); **Representative Kyle Biedermann** (R-Fredericksburg); **Representative Jonathan Stickland** (R-Bedford); **Vice Chair Dwayne Bohac** (R-Houston); **Chair Garnet Coleman** (D-Houston); **Representative Charles "Doc" Anderson** (R-Waco); **Representative Dan Huberty** (R-Houston); **Representative Jon Rosenthal** (D-Houston); **Representative Sheryl Cole** (D-Austin); and Committee Clerk Brandi Granderson.

The committee met a total of 24 times in a combination of public hearings, organizational meetings, and formal meetings. A total of 207 House and Senate bills were received for consideration by the committee. Of these bills, the committee voted out 157, and 80 of those were signed into law by the Governor to be effective immediately or beginning on September 1, 2019.

One of the bills that went through County Affairs was my **HB 4703**, sponsored in the Senate by **Senator John Whitmire (D-Houston)**, which would have created an Improvement District off of Allen Parkway in Houston to develop a small tract of unused land. **Regrettably, the Governor vetoed this bill.** This bipartisan-supported piece of legislation would have helped develop vacant land in House District 147 into a mixed-use development with a hotel, condos, retail, and office space.

The bills passed out of the County Affairs Committee covered a wide array of topics impacting Texas counties, including those regarding hospital districts and indigent care funding, county jail standards, the establishment of special districts such as management or improvement districts, disaster relief, county powers and administration, and other various local bills impacting only specific counties in the state. I look forward to continuing our work on these issues during the interim.