



The 87th Texas Legislative Session has officially drawn to a close. Looking back on this first term, I am proud of what my team and I have been able to accomplish. We were able to get a number of bills to the Governor's desk, and I believe all of these will be beneficial to the people of House District 60.

The people of House District 60 have made it abundantly clear there are two issues of utmost importance. First, the people of the district – and most Texans, for that matter – value unborn life and desire full, legal protection. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of Senate Bill 8. This legislation takes a step forward in protecting unborn lives by banning abortion once a heartbeat is detected. Governor Abbott signed this bill on May 19th and it will become law on September 1st.

The second issue of utmost importance to constituents is protecting our cherished Second Amendment rights. I co-authored House Bill 1927 (Constitutional Carry) to more fully protect these Constitutional rights. This bill protects your constitutional right to carry a firearm. It also enhances criminal penalties for those found with a firearm who have lost their right to have one, such as felons and those who have perpetrated crimes of family violence. This law will take effect September 1.

Another vital piece of legislation that I was proud to co-author is House Bill 5. This legislation will work to expand broadband Internet access across the state, especially to rural areas. This legislation is very important to me, as it helps address all three of my campaign pillars: providing the best educational opportunities for our rural students, incorporating new and innovative healthcare options for rural communities, and expanding economic development opportunities for our towns and cities. Having access to high-speed Internet will open up countless opportunities in all three of these areas.

Prior to being sworn in to the legislature in January, I spent a good bit of time traveling across the district to learn what issues were important to the people of House District 60. After speaking with many district and county clerks, I learned that the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for clerks to complete the necessary training hours as prescribed by state law. Other county and district officials, such as county commissioners, treasurers, and tax assessors, are able to carry over a certain number of hours from one year to the next. My team and I were able to get House Bill 1831 through the House and Senate quickly. Governor Abbott signed the bill into law on May 15th.

Similarly, while in Brownwood, I was made aware that municipal development districts could not engage in development projects outside of that municipality's defined city limits, even if the project was in the municipality's extraterritorial jurisdiction. Once again, I went to work with my

team to fix this issue. House Bill 1554 will allow cities like Brownwood to take advantage of the economic opportunities available to them. This bill has been sent to the Governor.

I also learned about Deputy Kenneth H. Maltby while visiting Eastland County. Deputy Maltby was tragically killed in the line of duty on September 7, 2016. Kenneth had devoted his life to law enforcement and was the definition of what an officer of the law should be. My team and I worked hard to get House Bill 2807 to the Governor. This bill renames a portion of Farm-to-Market Highway 570 in his honor. The “Deputy Kenneth Maltby Memorial Highway” is but a small token of our appreciation of Deputy Maltby’s sacrifice.

While we had our successes, we also had a few disappointments. A handful of bills I authored did not make it to the Governor. House Bill 3507 sought to give retired teachers a supplemental payment through a 13th check. House Bill 2557 would have created opportunities for honorably discharged veterans and law enforcement to serve as security guards at our schools. House Bill 2766 would have created a pilot dual credit program for rural students who do not have access to such programs. Though these initiatives did not make it through the process this session, I will not abandon them. I feel strongly about all of these, and I will continue working to bring their benefits to the people of House District 60.

Though this session has come to an end, we will almost certainly see the Governor call a special session to deal with a handful of important remaining items and to address redistricting. When these sessions are called, I will continue to share information about those sessions to keep you informed of what is going on in Austin.

In all, I am proud of the progress my team and I made during this session. The bills we did get passed will be a tremendous help to House District 60. I am excited to get back to the district and spend more time meeting with all of you to hear your comments and concerns and to continue helping you when needed.

May God Bless each of you, and May God bless Texas!