

# SENATE JOURNAL

EIGHTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE — REGULAR SESSION

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AUSTIN, TEXAS

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PROCEEDINGS

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SECOND DAY

(Continued)

(Tuesday, January 15, 2019)

AFTER RECESS

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

HOUSE CHAMBER

Austin, Texas

Tuesday, January 15, 2019-1

The Honorable President of the Senate

Senate Chamber

Austin, Texas

Mr. President:

I am directed by the house to inform the senate that the house has taken the following action:

THE HOUSE HAS PASSED THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

**HCR 6**

Geren

Granting the legislature permission to adjourn for more than three days during the period beginning on Wednesday, January 16, 2019, and ending on Tuesday, January 22, 2019.

**HCR 26**

Craddick

Congratulating S. Javaid Anwar for being named the 2018 Top Hand by the Permian Basin Petroleum Association.

**SCR 3**

Whitmire

Sponsor: Wray

Providing for a joint session to canvass the votes for the governor and lieutenant governor and for a joint session for the inaugural ceremony.

**SCR 4**

Whitmire

Sponsor: Wray

Granting the legislature permission to adjourn for more than three days during the period beginning on Thursday, January 10, 2019, and ending on Tuesday, January 15, 2019.

Respectfully,

/s/Robert Haney, Chief Clerk  
House of Representatives

## JOINT SESSION

(To inaugurate the Governor-elect and Lieutenant Governor-elect)

The Senate met at 11:00 a.m. in Joint Session with the House of Representatives in the space reserved for the Legislature adjacent to the platform erected at the north entrance of the Capitol for the inauguration of the Governor-elect and Lieutenant Governor-elect.

The Members and guests stood for the presentation of colors by the Texas National Guard, Color Guard, Marching Unit.

Guests were announced and advanced to the platform as follows: Senator Jane Nelson; Morgan Meyer; J. Bruce Bugg and wife, Alethea; Jeff Hildebrand and wife, Mindy; Ray L. Hunt and wife, Nancy; Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht; Judge Don R. Willett and wife, Tiffany; Jared Scruggs and wife, Shane; Judge Ryan Patrick and son, Zachary; President Pro Tempore Kirk Watson; Senator John Whitmire; Speaker Dennis Bonnen and wife, Kim; Lieutenant Governor-elect Dan Patrick and wife, Jan; Governor-elect Greg Abbott and wife, Cecilia, and daughter, Audrey.

The Members and guests stood for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Boy Scout Troop 201 of Longview, "The Star Spangled Banner" played by The University of Texas Longhorn Band, and the Texas Pledge of Allegiance led by Dr. Renu Khator.

The Honorable Kirk Watson, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, called the Senate to order and announced a quorum of the Senate present.

The Honorable Dennis Bonnen, Speaker of the House of Representatives, called the House to order, announced a quorum of the House present, and stated the purpose of the Joint Session.

Speaker Bonnen introduced Rabbi Kenneth D. Roseman, Rabbi Emeritus, Congregation Beth Israel, Corpus Christi, who offered the invocation.

Speaker Bonnen announced that the Constitutional Oath of Office would be administered to Lieutenant Governor-elect Dan Patrick by Judge Don R. Willett.

The Honorable Dan Patrick, accompanied by his family, took the Constitutional Oath of Office.

The Honorable Jane Nelson and the Honorable John Whitmire presented Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick, who addressed the Joint Session as follows:

Good afternoon everyone. I want to thank Senators Jane Nelson and John Whitmire for introducing me today. They both helped me become a better Senator when I joined the Senate in 2007, a better Chairman when I became Education Chair in 2013 and they continue to help me be a better Lieutenant Governor.

John is the longest serving Democrat, 48 years in the legislature, and Jane is the longest serving Republican, joining the legislature in 1993. My first session as Lieutenant Governor, I appointed Senator Nelson to be the first female Finance Chair, not because she was a woman, but because she was the best person for the job.

You may not know this, but Senator Whitmire and I started the first Texas prison seminary – and only the second in the nation – for long serving inmates to become 24/7 pastors behind bars. We've graduated 66 pastors to date and have nearly 200 in the program. Once they graduate we send them out to other prisons in teams of 4. The program has had amazing results to date.

No one is quite sure who wrote this quote, some say Martin Luther King, I'll give him credit for it- it's one of my guiding principles *"A person's life begins to end the moment they become silent on things that matter."*

You and the people of Texas did not elect those of us who are here today to come to Austin to be silent on the things that matter – You expect us to work together on the things that matter and in the Texas Senate we do. You won't hear about this in most of the main stream media because good news doesn't sell, but last session we passed almost 1600 bills in the Texas Senate and only 23 passed on a straight Republican vote. With all the hoopla in the media, people are amazed by that statistic. The folks in Washington could learn a lot about working together from the Texas Senate.

Most of what we do here is not partisan – it is all about doing what is best for the state. We govern the 10th largest economy in the world – 28 million people. Our state is growing and has its challenges, but in Texas, we get our work done.

Working with my friend and political partner Governor Abbott, we have had what I think are the two most conservative and productive sessions in history. We have at or near the lowest unemployment rate in modern history, we continue to be the business and jobs leader in the nation, and Texas continues to be a number one location for businesses to move to. We passed two conservative budgets, added to our reserve, and protected innocent life, our second amendment rights and our religious liberty.

But there is still much to do in our fast growing state.

As Governor Abbott and I traveled the state over the last year talking to Texans about what they want for our state, everywhere we went, three issues always come up that matter to Texans – property tax reform, teacher pay, and school finance reform. Nothing is a bigger threat to the hopes and dreams of Texans than skyrocketing local property taxes that are driving some Texans out of their homes and stifling business growth and expansion. We must have property tax reform and I am committed to making that happen – and I know Governor Abbott and Speaker Bonnen share that commitment.

We must also secure our border – illegal immigration costs Texas billions every year so it must remain a top priority. Transportation and healthcare are also looming, multi-billion dollar concerns – and, of course, we must fund the rebuilding and recovery of the nearly a quarter of our state that was devastated by Hurricane Harvey. Following that historic storm, Texas showed the nation and the world what it means when a state pulls together – we showed what it means to be TEXAS STRONG!

Going into this legislative session, it is clear that finally addressing property taxes, teacher pay and school finance reform are, without question, what people – both Republicans and Democrats – expect us to resolve.

Last week, for the first time in modern history, the Governor, our new Speaker and I addressed the state together, laying out our vision for the session. I don't know what the final property tax, school finance and teacher pay bills will look like – that's what session is for – but the leadership of our state is united to address those three issues that matter most to Texans.

I know he was introduced earlier, but I'd like to call Speaker Bonnen up here again, come on up Mr. Speaker, to underscore that we have pledged to work together in an unprecedented way this session along with our Governor.

Before I close, let me say just a little about education. I've been talking about increasing teacher pay since our last legislative session. Today, our teachers receive only about 32% of our state and local 60 billion a year education budget, even though, next to a parent, they are the most important part of a child's education. That is going to change!

About an hour ago Senator Jane Nelson filed Senate Bill 3 that will be the first across the board pay increase for teachers in nearly 20 years. Every one of our 350,000 teachers will receive a \$5000 raise beginning in the next school year – the first step in increasing the base pay of teachers by \$10,000. That \$5000 will be added to their pay from now on, meaning they will get \$10,000 more total in the next budget. This is the first step towards an overall increase of the base pay of \$10,000. Senator Nelson is also going to file her budget this afternoon that will include nearly \$3.8 billion to fund that pay raise. It's a big number but again there is nothing more important in education than a great teacher.

We will also pass legislation giving school districts the money to create their own incentive programs for teacher pay on top of the base raise. Taking a cue from a group of about 30 Superintendents I meet with regularly, we will also fund schools that want to add 4 weeks to the school calendar in July for students who are behind and need help. That will also put more money in teachers' pockets.

I'm sure the House will also have many ideas along these lines as the session progresses. I also like the Governor's property tax reform idea and there are many ideas on school finance. Those are big issues and will take months to resolve but we are committed to solving them.

I wasn't elected – none of us up here were elected – to focus on things that don't matter – we ran for office because we want to do whatever it takes – working across the aisle – to do what Sam Houston admonished us to do – make our state better for the people of Texas.

We are facing a critical time in our country and in the world. Divisions have never been deeper, passions have never been stronger. I remain a Christian conservative and you know I will never back down on the principles that are making Texas stronger and our country stronger. Over the decade that I

have spent in public office, I have always told you where I stand – and I will always tell you where I stand. And I also know this – the world depends on a strong America and America depends on a strong Texas. I like to say that I didn't come this far to only come this far. We have a moment in time right now to set the stage for an even greater Texas for future generations. It is within our grasp. The elections are over for now – we will have them again in two years to air out our differences – but for right now, it's time for us to work together for all the people of Texas. I intend to do my part.

God bless you and God bless the great state of Texas.

*(Note: Prepared text)*

Speaker Bonnen announced that the Constitutional Oath of Office would then be administered to Governor-elect Greg Abbott by Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht.

The Honorable Greg Abbott, accompanied by his family, took the Constitutional Oath of Office.

The Members and guests stood for the Cannon Battery Salute and military flyover.

Speaker Bonnen presented His Excellency, the Honorable Greg Abbott, Governor of the State of Texas, who addressed the Joint Session as follows:

It's an honor to take the oath as Governor of the greatest state in America. We gather today for far more than just an inauguration. Today is the dawn of a transformative session that will usher in a new era. A new era for children, teachers, and taxpayers.

This will happen because of my partners here today: Speaker Bonnen, Lieutenant Governor Patrick, and all the members of the house and senate. It is a blessing to embark upon this mission with Cecilia by my side. A fabulous mother to our wonderful daughter Audrey. She's a powerful advocate for Texas. And she made history by being the first Hispanic First Lady of Texas.

I can't let this moment pass without thanking our large and diverse family, especially my father-in-law Bill Phalen. Unfortunately, health prevents the most famous mother-in-law in Texas, mi suegra, Maria de la luz Segura Phalen, from being here today.

I also want to thank my brother Gary and his wife Denise. Gary is a retired Commander in the U.S. Navy. He served our nation for 20 years.

We must never forget we have the freedom to build a better Texas only because of the men and women who served in the U.S. military. If there's anyone who's worn the uniform of the U.S. Military, will you please stand or wave your hand so we can thank you for your service.

Now, some people say Texas is at an apex. They rightfully point to the fact that more Texans have jobs today than ever before. In fact, Texans created almost a million new jobs over the past 4 years and we set record lows for unemployment.

Texas remains the unrivaled national leader in agriculture, energy, and exports, and we dominate fields like healthcare, finance, and technology. The Texas brand of opportunity attracts more of our fellow Americans to our state than any other state.

Despite the exceptional heights to which Texas has climbed, I believe we have only risen to the foothills of what we can become. I know we can do even more for our fellow Texans.

We can do more to educate the next generation and keep them safe at school. More to advance our universities to meet the changes sweeping the 21st century. More to rein in the property tax burden on our citizens. More to help our coastal region become resilient to catastrophic storms. More to crack down on human trafficking and the dangerous gangs promoting it.

All of this we can do. All of this we must do, because we live in the greatest state in America and we have an obligation to make it even better.

No doubt Texas has reached an unrivaled economic summit.

But from that perch, it is clear that too many young Texans have difficulty on their own journey to prosperity. Holding them back is an education system that's not adequate to put our students on the path to excellence that they deserve.

Yes, we are graduating more students from high school than ever before. At the same time, more students are graduating unprepared for college or a career.

Our students deserve better. Our teachers deserve better. Our taxpayers deserve better.

It is time for Texas to deliver real education reform. We don't have to look far for solutions.

Two years ago, Titche Elementary was one of the worst schools in Dallas. A year later, all that changed. Out of 145 elementary schools, Titche rose from being 132nd to the 2nd best elementary school in Dallas.

Five years ago, Dallas Independent School District had 43 failing campuses. Today, they have just four. And behavior is better. At Titche Elementary, school suspensions dropped by almost 90%. What changed?

A new principal was hired. He brought in highly rated teachers and set clear standards for students. He added people and policies that improved student success.

Know this: Titche Elementary is not an isolated example. Other districts in Texas like in San Antonio, Lubbock, and Pharr-San Juan have achieved similar results using similar strategies.

These achievements were possible because of bold leadership by superintendents and school boards who broke the mold making tough decisions to prioritize student achievement.

We must ensure destiny is not determined by zip code. Students from the most challenging circumstances can perform at the highest levels. But we have to give them the opportunity to succeed.

Success like this will not be achieved just by spending more money. It will be achieved by recruiting and retaining educators who deliver better outcomes for our students.

Today, we must dedicate ourselves to making our schools better than they have ever been.

This session, we must act to pay our best teachers more. We must reward teachers and school districts that achieve results. We must prioritize spending in the classroom, shore up the Teacher Retirement System, and yes, the state will invest more in public education.

The eyes of Texas are upon us. We have the opportunity and the obligation to get this right. We can and we will better fund education.

We will pay our teachers more and reward achievement in the classroom. We will reform a school finance system that robs one district to pay another. We will put our schools on a pathway to having all 3rd graders reading at grade level. We will prepare our high school students for college or a career. And we will do this without a court order.

I want to make this very clear. We will do what no one thought possible. We will finally fix school finance.

While one generation is struggling to climb the ladder of success, others have a ceiling on how high they can go. A ceiling imposed by an archaic property tax system.

A system that punishes families and businesses and prevents younger Texans from achieving their dream of homeownership.

Just a few blocks from here you see cranes operating above sprouting skyscrapers. In the shadow of those giant cranes, businesses are shuttering, unable to keep up with skyrocketing property taxes.

Go a few blocks further and you'll find residents forced out of their homes. Victims of unaffordable housing. A by-product of those same skyrocketing property taxes. That is not what Texas is about.

Texas is a place of hope and opportunity where anyone can achieve their dreams if they're willing to put in the work. But the promise that Texas offers is threatened by out of control property taxes.

As you know, the property tax burden is not unique to Austin. I've talked to Texans from Amarillo to Laredo, Texans in suburbs and inner cities, and they all demand property tax relief.

As one woman from Waco recently told me: "Governor, something has to be done. Some homeowners here in the poorest areas of Waco had their home values doubled by the appraisal district. How is that honest or fair? It's not."

This session, we must finally rein in skyrocketing property taxes in Texas. Some people say we can't afford property tax reform. I say we can't afford not to reform a system that punishes homeowners, crushes businesses, and cripples our schools.

A state as prosperous as Texas should not punish seniors who have worked their entire lives to retire in a home they have already paid off. And it shouldn't force middle and low income Texans out of their neighborhoods.

To fix this, Texas must limit the ability of taxing authorities to raise your property taxes. At the same time, Texas must end unfunded mandates on cities and counties. And taxpayers should be given the power to fire their property tax appraiser.

Some cynics say we can't solve these intractable problems. They are too complex. Too political. Too hard. The cynics forget the legendary Texan resolve. The resolve of heroes who fought for Texas liberty while remembering the Alamo. That resolve has been passed from one generation of Texans to another. Through oil booms and busts, through Dust Bowls and devastating floods, through wind storms and billowing fires.

From moments of triumph to horrors of tragedy, generation after generation, Texans have been tested. And Texans have prevailed.

We live in a state where Texans have always tapped into our trademark resilience and ingenuity to rise above our challenges.

We live in a state where the grandson of a slave who was sold on the courthouse steps in Waco rose up to be Chief Justice of our highest court.

A state where a little girl shuffled from foster home to foster home drew strength from her grandparents in Houston. She went on to become the first American woman gymnast to win 4 Gold Medals in a single Olympics.

And yes, we live in a state where a young man can have his back broken in half and still rise up and be Governor of this great state.

We will muster that same resolve, that same ingenuity, to tackle the challenges of our time. And we will prevail.

Together, we will pay our teachers more. We will provide a better education for our students. We will make our schools safer. We will tackle skyrocketing property taxes. We will help Texans recover from storms that have ravaged our communities. We will do all this and more.

Together, we will ensure every generation reaches their mountaintop. And together, we will keep Texas the greatest state in America.

Thank you. God bless you all, and God bless Texas.

*(Note: Prepared text)*

Speaker Bonnen introduced The Most Reverend Michael F. Olson, Bishop, Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, who delivered the inaugural blessing.

The Members and guests stood as Speaker Bonnen introduced the Texas A&M Singing Cadets, who sang "Who Are the Brave."

Speaker Bonnen introduced Dr. Terry M. Turner, Pastor, Mesquite Friendship Baptist Church, who delivered the benediction.

### **INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF**

The interpretation of the proceedings was provided by Donna Valverde and Sarah Brown.

### **RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION**

The following resolution was adopted by the Senate:



**Congratulatory Resolution**

**HCR 26** (Seliger), Congratulating S. Javaid Anwar for being named the 2018 Top Hand by the Permian Basin Petroleum Association.

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ADJOURNED**

Speaker Bonnen at 12:17 p.m. stated the purpose for which the Joint Session was held having been completed, the House, pursuant to a previously adopted motion, would stand adjourned until 11:00 a.m. tomorrow.

**ADJOURNMENT**

President Pro Tempore Watson at 12:17 p.m. stated the purpose for which the Joint Session was held having been completed, the Senate, pursuant to a previously adopted motion, would stand adjourned until 11:00 a.m. tomorrow.

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**APPENDIX**

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**RESOLUTIONS ENROLLED**

January 9, 2019

**SR 1, SR 3, SR 4, SR 5**

