



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rick Perry

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81st Legislative Session Accomplishments

Budget & Taxes

- Reduced General Revenue and General Revenue-Dedicated Funds spending by more than 1 percent for 2010-11. (SB 1)
- Left the state's Rainy Day Fund untouched, leaving an expected balance of at least \$9.1 billion in the Fund at the end of the 2010-11 biennium.
- Cut taxes on small businesses that are the backbone of our economy by raising the total revenue exemption to \$1 million. (HB 4765)
- Took steps to reduce diversions from the State Highway Fund providing an additional \$378 million for road construction and maintenance, and expanded highway and debt service payment line items in the Texas Department of Transportation budget for greater transparency. (SB 1)
- Passed important reforms to the appraisal process to help property taxpayers, including limits on what is considered a comparable sale for appraisal purposes, an expedited arbitration process, and certain restrictions on appraisal increases after a successful appeal; ensuring residential property is appraised only as a homestead; and passed other appraisal process reviews related to the practices of appraisal districts, and local options to improve the independence and quality of Appraisal Review Boards (SB 771, HB 8, HB 3611, HB 3612, HB 3613).

Economy & Workforce Training

- Increased funding for the Skills Development Fund by more than \$30 million to provide grants for public community or technical colleges and employers to provide customized job training in targeted industries and specialized occupations. (Total of \$80 million in General Revenue)
- Provided an additional \$20 million for the Texas Enterprise Fund, providing \$200 million in economic development funding to help close deals in the nation's most successful job creation initiative.
- Provided an additional \$94 million for the Emerging Technology Fund to support Research Superiority Acquisition Awards, Commercialization Awards, and Matching Awards through the state's institutions of higher education. (Unexpended Balance authority + \$94 million = \$203.5 million for 2010-11)
- Increased funding for the state's film incentive program from \$20 million to \$60 million to attract more feature film and television production projects to Texas.

Higher Education

- Significantly increased financial aid for the TEXAS Grant program and the Texas Educational Opportunity Grants for community college students.
 - TEXAS Grant increased \$186.4 million, totaling \$614.3 million for 2010-11, a 44% increase.
 - Texas Educational Opportunity Grants for community college students increased \$10 million, totaling \$24 million for 2010-11, a 71 percent increase.
- Modified the top 10 percent automatic admissions law by capping the percentage of the entering freshman class at 75 percent and allowing the remaining students to be selected based on other criteria. (SB 175) In addition, expanded financial aid based on merit by increasing funding for top 10 percent scholarships from \$20 million to \$54 million.
- Increased transparency in higher education by requiring institutions to post course syllabi online; conduct student course evaluations and establish a plan to post those evaluations online; and provide certain information to parents and students, including information about tuition costs and student success rates. (HB 2504 and SB 174)
- Provide in-state tuition for all military veterans. (SB 297)

- Established a pathway and the future resources necessary to support additional national research universities in Texas. (HB 51)
- Provided \$5 million in funding for the Texas Hospital-based Nursing Education Partnership Program.

Public Education

- Renewed funding for the Texas High School Project which supports math and science initiatives for low-income students through the state's 32 math and science academies and high schools on college campuses.
- Increased funding for the nation's largest teacher merit pay program by \$50 million, making \$394 million available to reward teachers who improve student achievement and teach at hard to staff campuses and subjects.
- Passed first of its kind legislation strengthening accountability by applying college-ready standards to the state's K-12 curriculum, aligning high school graduation exams with higher education expectations, and providing parents with unprecedented access to student achievement data. In addition, expanded opportunities for students to take innovative career and technology courses in high school that align with college-ready standards as set by the State Board of Education. (HB 3)

Disaster Preparedness

- Funded a much-needed disaster fund to enable the state to prepare for and respond to disasters and emergencies, allowing the state to better address needs in a timely manner. Provided \$78.6 million – a five fold increase – in funding for disaster relief and debris removal.
- Passed legislation that will assist first responders and residents confronted by a disaster. (HB 1831)
- Passed necessary reforms to the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association to provide a critical safety net for property owners along the Texas coast. These reforms will, for the first time, allow the state to build a significant catastrophic reserve fund to recover from future storms. (HB 4409)

Public Safety and Security

- Provided \$113.2 million in funding for the state's border security and gang strategy, including prosecution resources for local district attorneys; overtime and operational costs for local law enforcement, state troopers, and Texas Military Forces; fully funded the Joint Operation and Intelligence Centers; and funding for additional Texas Rangers, state troopers, and game wardens. (includes \$29.6 million in Byrne Grant funds)
- Passed legislation giving law enforcement additional tools to combat the spread of transnational gangs and expand gang prevention efforts. (HB 2086)

Infrastructure

- Provided funding to support the acquisition and construction of reservoirs in the State Water Plan to adequately prepare for the state's growing water needs.

State Supported Living Centers (State Schools)

- Passed legislation and funding to increase oversight and accountability for the protection of intellectually and developmentally disabled residents in state schools and community-based care. (SB 643)

Eminent Domain

- Passed a proposed Constitutional amendment to strengthen property protections in the Texas Constitution to prevent government from taking private property unless it is for a legitimate public use.

Cancer Prevention

- Provided funding for debt service for \$450 million in cancer research bonds to fund cancer prevention research and prevention programs.

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