

T E X A S S T A T E S E N A T O R

BORRIS L. MILES

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CITIZENS OF SENATE DISTRICT 13



BORRIS L. MILES
STATE SENATOR • DISTRICT 13

Dear Friend:

Thank you for continuing to allow me the privilege of serving YOU in the Texas Senate. This was a productive session that addressed the needs of the state like improving public education and recovering from Hurricane Harvey, and largely avoided divisive issues like the bathroom bill from last session.

After the devastating education cuts from previous sessions, it was good to see the leadership of the state finally prioritize public education. The State of Texas is now fully funding pre-k for all children, increasing state funding per student, raising educational benchmarks, and funding teacher pay and benefits increases. Unfortunately, part of the package was property tax cuts that will have a minimal effect on your property tax bill, but will greatly limit local governments ability to quickly and efficiently deliver public services.

I passed more than two dozen pieces of legislation to help the people of Senate District 13. These measures include a new fund that will allow local hospitals to draw down \$1 billion a year in federal funds for uncompensated health care for poor people. Another bill will end the practice of rent-to-own companies criminally prosecuting customers who fall behind on their payments. Legislation addressing the Sugarland 95 will ensure that those victims of the state's convict leasing system will have a dignified resting place that will also teach the community about what happened there.

While the Legislature waits to convene until the next session, we still conduct business and study issues during the interim. At my request, the Lieutenant Governor will be creating a special interim committee to study Senate Chamber artwork, which includes multiple Confederate figures, for their historic relevance.

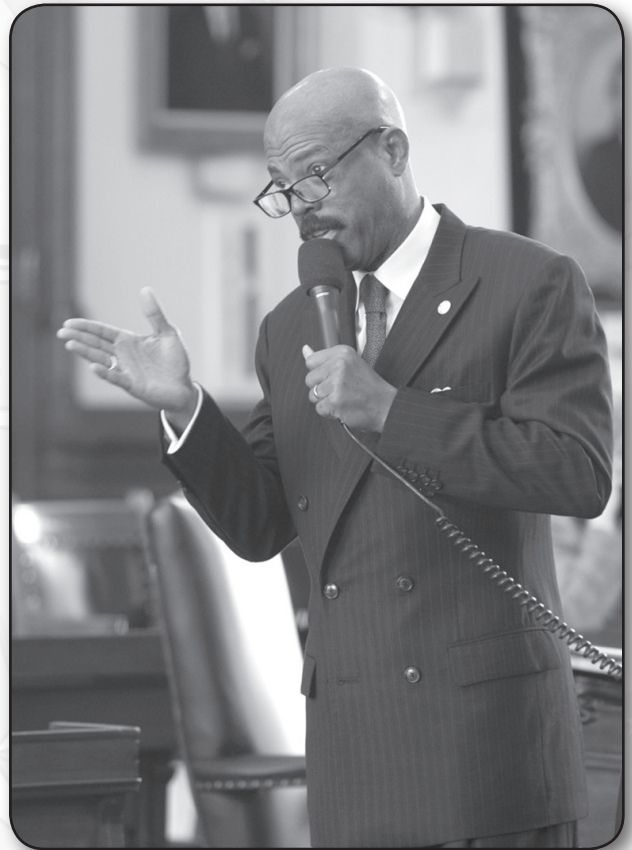
While the work in the Capitol is important, the work our offices do in Houston is crucial. There are three offices in Senate District 13 available to assist you with any issues you have with a government agency. These offices have also been hard at work addressing local issues like the expansion of I-45 and assisting neighborhoods fighting polluters trying to build near residential communities.

Thank you to all the Senate District 13 residents who came to the Capitol throughout the session. As always, you can count on me to be "Your Voice in Austin."

Keep the Faith, Keep the Fight!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Borris L. Miles".

Borris L. Miles



MAJOR ISSUES: 86th Session

EDUCATION & HIGHER EDUCATION

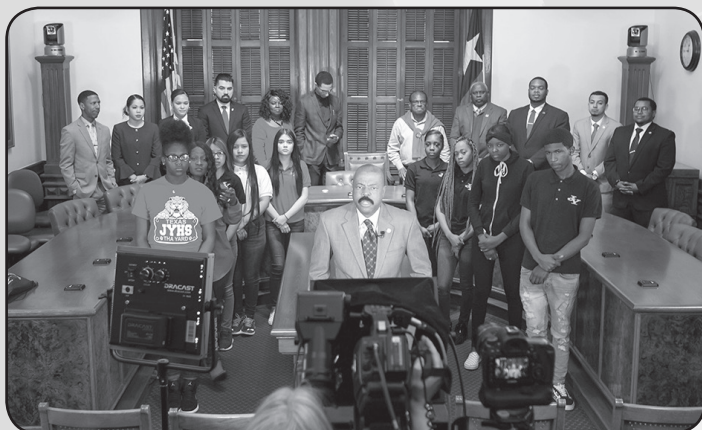
Education is always a top priority of the Legislature and this year we were able to come together and pass House Bill 3. House Bill 3 increases the state's basic funding allotment per student by twenty percent. We also fully fund pre-k for low income students; adopted high quality K-3 reading standards; increased the state's share of education funding by thirty-eight to forty-five percent (depending on the district); and, to protect students, we created a "do not hire" registry of teachers. We also included over \$2 billion in pay raises for teachers, counselors, librarians, and nurses. HISD alone estimates \$97 million for pay raises and other programming under HB 3, as well as saving around \$650 million in Robin Hood payments to the state over the next two years.

To address school safety and tragedies like the Santa Fe shooting or those in our inner cities, we passed Senate Bill 11, the School Safety Bill. The bill provides \$110 million for school safety upgrades, creates the Texas Mental Health Consortium, requires TEA to adopt building safety rules, requires teacher safety training and teacher access to electronic communications devices, requires districts to adopt emergency plans, creates threat assessment teams in schools, and provides loan repayment for school psychologists. SB 11 also creates a grant program for facilities hardening.

We also addressed the STAAR test in House Bill 3 by prohibiting teachers from being measured based on students' performance on standardized tests. We also passed House Bill 3906, which requires the TEA commissioner to appoint a technical advisory committee regarding the development of valid and reliable tests. This should address issues that have come up over the years about the test's readability.

PROPERTY TAX REFORM

The big-ticket item this session for the majority of the Legislature was property tax reform. By limiting how much money local cities and counties can raise, some members hoped to provide property tax relief to home-owning Texans. To this end the Legislature passed Senate Bill 2, requiring that local governments hold elections whenever they want to raise property taxes by more than 3.5% over the last year. Together with school finance reform, SB 2 should save Texans around \$5.1 billion in property taxes over the next two years. However, reducing revenue to local governments will likely lead to fewer services and slower delivery by local governments.

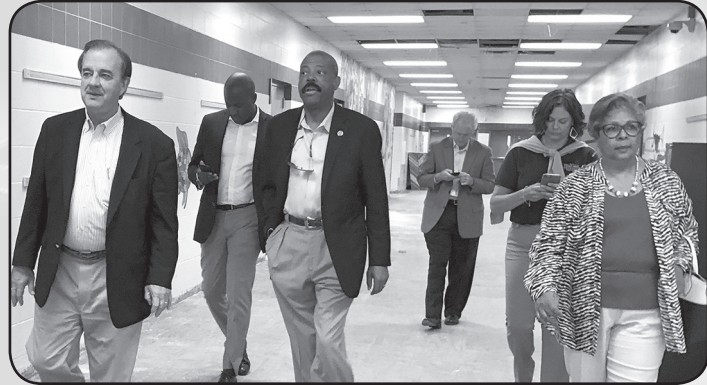


Students from Jack Yates High School and Texas Southern University joined Senator Borris Miles to tape a video about the Miles Ahead Scholars program to help our students succeed.

BUDGET

The Legislature passed a \$250.7 billion budget for the state under House Bill 1. This is the one bill the Legislature is constitutionally required to pass. The 2020-2021 biennium budget includes the \$72.67 billion for public education; \$343 million new funds for school safety; \$6.5 billion in new

state funding for schools; \$5.1 billion in property tax relief; \$3.5 billion from Rainy Day Fund for Harvey relief, including \$806 million for TEA for schools to rebuild; and \$350M to state agencies for rebuilding from Harvey. House Bill 1 also includes \$66.5 billion in all funds for Medicaid, which includes \$3.3 billion for behavioral health services and \$4.4 Billion for CHIP behavioral health services. The budget also includes \$6.9 billion in all funds for TDCJ, which equals an \$11,000 increase per case under supervision or a \$55,000 increase per incarcerated individual, and includes \$84 million to restructure correctional officer pay and parole officer pay and to provide salary increases.



After Hurricane Harvey, Senator Borris Miles personally invited Rebuild Texas Commissioner and Texas A&M Chancellor John Sharp on a tour of the hardest hit areas, including Hilliard Elementary, Kashmere Gardens, East Houston, Scenic Woods and Trinity Gardens.

HURRICANE HARVEY

Emergency management and disaster recovery are major issues highlighted by Hurricane Harvey. In response, the Legislature created the Statewide Emergency Response Plan under Senate Bill 6. Under SB 6, the Texas Department of Emergency Management will create a model guide for local officials' disaster recovery and response. SB 6 also codified debris management and disposal procedures, and directed the creation of a workgroup to create credentials for local emergency managers to use during disasters.

To address flooding, the Legislature created the Flood Infrastructure Fund and Infrastructure resiliency fund under Senate Bill 7. SB 7 uses \$1.7 billion from the Rainy-Day Fund to create the Flood Infrastructure Fund for the Water Development Board to fund and develop flood control projects. SB 7 also creates the Infrastructure Resiliency Fund for local governments to fund infrastructure repairs and storm hardening improvements.

Finally, we created the Texas State Flood Plan. Senate Bill 8 grants the Texas Water Development Board the authority to create the state flood plan via a network of regional planning groups. The bill ensures and requires cohesion among regional plans in order to form the state plan.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Most important criminal justice reforms could not be agreed upon by the legislature, like Senate Bill 418 which would have reformed how we determine who is competent to be executed under the death penalty, we still agreed upon and fixed some major issues.

The Legislature addressed Human Trafficking by passing Senate Bill 20, which provides for the nondisclosure of certain crimes by victims of human trafficking, like prostitution or possession of drugs. Senate Bill 20 also creates an offense for online pimping and requires heightened reporting by licensed massage parlors. We also addressed the rape-kit backlog crisis through House Bill 8 which requires the audit of police rape kits and testing within 90 days of the collection of evidence, and prohibits destruction of rape kits until the statute of limitations has run out. Further, House Bill 1590

requires the Attorney General to develop protocol for the collection of sexual assault evidence in consultation with experts, victim organizations, and state agencies. House Bill 1590 also creates a task force in the governor's office to develop policy recommendations.

After my push to end the infamous Driver Responsibility Program (DRP) last session, the Legislature repealed the DRP via House Bill 2048, pardoning current fines and replacing trauma care funding with DRP fees with fines on drunk and uninsured drivers.

Regarding marijuana reform, House Bill 1325, which intended to legalize industrial hemp by allowing the sale of low-THC cannabis (0.3% or less), has had the unintended effect of District Attorneys statewide, including Harris County, announcing limited moratoriums on certain marijuana possession prosecutions. House Bill 3703 expands the diseases eligible for medical marijuana under the compassionate use program (THC content of 0.5% or less) to include multiple sclerosis, autism, terminal cancer, or an incurable neurodegenerative disease.

On a less optimistic note, we must still fight on major issues like, bail reform, raising the age (of adult criminal responsibility to 18), the death penalty, and fixing the Sandra Bland Act which has now twice been stripped of requirements that police departments adopt and implement written search and seizure policies.



Senator Myles furiously debates against SB 1663, which would limit a city's ability to remove a Confederate statue.

DIVISIVE LEGISLATION

While this was a productive legislative session, I did oppose many bills that would not help Senate District 13. As one of two African-American senators, I led the opposition to the SB 1663, dubbed the Confederate Monuments bill by some, that would have limited cities' ability to remove Confederate monuments. The bill passed the Senate but died in the House.

Senate Bill 1978, the Chick-Fil-A bill which did pass, prohibits a governmental entity from taking adverse action against a person based wholly or partly on that person's affiliation with a religious organization. Some parties say this gives businesses and persons a blank check to discriminate.

Senate Bill 22, bans cities or other political subdivisions from transferring anything of value to an organization, like Planned Parenthood, that provides abortions regardless of the other health care services they provide. House Bill 16 requires doctors provide medical treatment to "a child born alive after an abortion," and creates a \$100,000 civil penalty on physicians who fail to comply. I voted and fought against these bills.

LEGISLATIVE MILESTONES:

JOB-TRAINING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Houston Area Urban League Workforce Training Funding (Effective Immediately)

During this legislative session, Senator Miles secured \$250,000 for the Houston Area Urban League's Skills Workforce Training. This will allow HAUL to partner with the Texas Workforce Commission and provide needed workforce development training.

Senate Bill 390: Northeast Redevelopment District (Vetoed)

SB 390 Northeast Redevelopment District, to create the Northeast Houston Redevelopment District to revitalize the area and surrounding neighborhoods. It would also bring much-needed jobs, new businesses, and opportunities for the citizens. Although this bill passed both chambers with overwhelming support, Governor Greg Abbott vetoed this bill.



Senator Borris Miles honored Westbury High School Senior Essence Duplechain on the Texas Senate Floor for her outstanding achievements in and out of the classroom. Recently, she was awarded the Sallie Mae Bridging the Dream Scholarship and will be the first in her family to go to college.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Miles Ahead Scholars Funding (Effective Immediately)

During the 86th Legislative Session, Senator Miles secured \$11 million for the Miles Ahead Scholars Program. This program provides educational assistance to schools located in disadvantaged communities and have high number of struggling students. It is also targeted to assist African American males, who statistically test poorly on state assessments and who rank amongst the lowest of all groups to attend college. This is important as the program is getting off the ground and students from Wheatley, Kashmere Gardens, and Worthing High Schools are being selected for the inaugural class.

Senate Bill 1746 Helping Kids with Incarcerated Parents (Effective Immediately)

According to a research study conducted by the University of Texas at San Antonio, about one in twenty-eight children has a parent in prison. Students with incarcerated parents are at a much higher risk of suffering through academic difficulties in addition to poor diet, sleep, and having trouble staying focused in school. SB 1746 classifies kids whose parents are incarcerated as "at risk" of dropping out of school and provides intervention services via organizations like Houston's PACE Youth Academy, as well as compensatory services by the local school.

HIGHER EDUCATION

House Bill 1277 University of Houston - Downtown Student Center (Effective Immediately)

HB 1277 authorizes the University of Houston Downtown to collect a student-approved fee for the construction of a student activity center. A student activity center will help keep students on campus between classes and provide study space for UHD's student body, as well as a further sense of community and enhancement to campus life.

House Bill 1516 Texas Southern University Athletics Fee (Effective Immediately)

Most public universities in Texas include an athletics fee as part of the university's tuition costs, which requires approval from the students attending the university. In addition to obtaining student approval, Texas Southern University was bound by statutory provisions which required them to periodically renew the fee. HB 1516 remedies this issue and puts TSU on the same playing field as every other public university in Texas.

The University of Houston, \$486.7M Appropriation (Effective Immediately)

Under House Bill 1, \$486.7 million was appropriated for the University of Houston this biennium. Of that, \$2.5 million is earmarked for the University of Houston Multicultural Success Initiative to be used for expanding African American and Mexican American Studies programs; \$45 million is allocated for the update and remodel of the University of Houston Law Center, and Hobby School; \$20 million allocated for the University of Houston Medical School; and \$20 million was appropriated from the rainy-day fund for Hurricane Harvey Relief at U of H.

The University of Houston-Downtown, \$84.2 M Appropriation (Effective Immediately)

Under House Bill 1, \$84.2 million was appropriated to the University of Houston Downtown. This appropriation also includes \$100,000 earmarked for UH-D's Wonderworks Art and Culture program for high school students, and \$4 million for Hurricane Harvey recovery and relief.

Texas Southern University, \$162.4M Appropriation (Effective Immediately)

Under HB 1, \$162.4 million was appropriated to Texas Southern University. This funding includes \$3.8 million for professor pay increases and \$16 million for infrastructure improvement. This additional funding closes the gap to ensure TSU professors are adequately compensated and provides the university can build upon its success.



Senator Miles met with Planned Parenthood to reaffirm his support of women's health, affordable and accessible healthcare, HIV testing and treatment and a woman's right to choose.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

House Bill 3459 Local Provider Participation Fund (Effective Immediately)

Senate District 13 is home to the world's largest medical center with many safety-net hospitals working around the clock providing primary care services to many low-income and uninsured Texans. HB 3459 allows Harris County to create a local provider participation fund to enable local safety-net hospitals to gain access to the Texas Waiver and the Texas Health and Human Service Commission's new Uniform Hospital Rate Increase Program. The hospitals in these communities would receive millions of additional dollars in Medicaid payments as a result; dollars that otherwise would

have gone elsewhere. This means our hospitals would receive almost \$1 billion of federal funds to help offset some of the uncompensated care costs to help care for the indigent and uninsured in our community.

Senate Bill 1283 HIV Medication (Effective Immediately)

SB 1283 designates HIV drugs as a protected class under Medicaid. This guarantees that Medicaid recipients who are HIV positive are guaranteed access to their life saving retroviral drugs, and eliminates the need for prior authorization for patients.

House Bill 3405 Sickle Cell Task Force and House Resolution 117 Sickle Cell Awareness Month (Effective Immediately)

House Bill 3405 creates a task force within the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to partner with organizations to improve access to services, and utilize community health workers to improve care. House Concurrent Resolution 117 designates September as Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month to raise public awareness and complement the Task Force's work.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

House Bill 2524 Rent to Own Reform (Effective Immediately)

HB 2524 ends the practice of criminally prosecuting individuals who are merely unable to keep up with payments on rent-to-own contracts. This bill ensures that rent-to-own customers are prosecuted only when they had the intent to steal or commit fraud.

House Bill 373 Flexible Scheduling for Parolees (Effective Immediately)

It came to our attention that some probation officers do not consider a person's work or childcare schedule when setting probation appointments. Probation officers are supposed to be helping people. HB 374 requires probationers to consider a parolees' work schedule when scheduling these probation meetings. In addition, the meetings can be conducted through video conferencing like FaceTime or Skype.

House Bill 2079 Sir Romeo Law (Effective Immediately)

In 2018, Sir Romeo Milam was struck by a stray bullet while playing in his apartment. After the four-year-old underwent more than 30 surgeries and was released from the hospital, his grandmother wanted to move but did not have the means to do so. HB 2079 addresses this by allowing children who are victims of attempted murder that occurred within their own homes to be eligible to receive relocation cost reimbursement under the Crime Victims' Compensation Program. The program will provide up to \$2,000 in moving expenses and up to three months rental assistance of \$600 each month.

AFRICAN AMERICAN ISSUES

House Bill 4179 Sugar Land 95 Cemetery (Effective Immediately)

In 2018 Fort Bend ISD construction workers uncovered human remains at the site of a new facility. After an initial investigation, it was determined that the remains were of former prisoners who were part of the convict-leasing system. Working with local leaders and community members, two bills were drafted, passed, and signed into law to ensure the remains were returned and a proper memorial would be erected, honoring the victims. House Bill 4179 authorizes Fort Bend County to use public funds to maintain a cemetery for the Sugarland 95.

House Bill 2430 Sugar Land 95 Civil Issues (Effective Immediately)

House Bill 2430 clarifies that courts can appoint experts to help determine the best interests of the community and that the Texas Historical Commission can participate in the process.

HURRICANE HARVEY

Hurricane Harvey devastated the Gulf Coast more than two years ago. Hundreds of thousands in Houston were impacted with the loss of vehicles, homes and prized irreplaceable possessions. The Legislature took action to address Hurricane Harvey’s aftermath and below are the critical pieces of legislation Senator Miles passed:

SB 6 keeps county and city leaders informed on the best practices for disaster response.

SB 7 utilizes \$6 billion from the Rainy Day Fund to create a special fund to pay for flood mitigation projects, hurricane recovery and provide matching funds to pull down federal dollars.

SB 8 creates the first statewide flood plan.

SB 285 allows the governor to instruct state agencies to review and update their hurricane preparedness plan each year before hurricane season and to conduct outreach on the projects. Also, it directs the General Land Office (GLO) to conduct a public information campaign on housing assistance programs for hurricane or flood relief.

SB 300 instructs the GLO to enter into indefinite-quantity contracts before hurricane season with vendors to construct, repair, or rebuild property or infrastructure. The GLO faced a complex tangle of federal and other regulations when responding to Harvey, which led to slower response times and inefficient recovery measures, especially with trash and debris pickup. SB 300 authorizes contracts-in-waiting where these contracts would be negotiated, agreed to, and will have satisfied the necessary compliance before hurricane season.

Remembering Our Leaders

The late and great Congresswoman Barbara Jordan and Commissioner El Franco Lee are two major pillars in our community, the state and nation. Congresswoman Jordan was the first African American elected to the Texas Senate since Reconstruction and to the US Congress to represent Texas and was the first woman and African American to deliver a keynote speech at the Democratic National Convention.

Commissioner Lee was a former state representative and later became a Harris County Commissioner where he was instrumental in revitalizing and repurposing parks, hosting numerous programs to serve inner-city residents and deployed satellite health care clinics at county-run facilities in the Fifth Ward, Third Ward, Kashmere Gardens and other minority communities. To honor their legacy, two highways were named after these leaders. HB 519 designates State Highway 288 between Cleburne and Beltway 8 in Houston as the Barbara Jordan Memorial Highway and HB 635 designates US Highway 59 between Interstate 10 and Loop 610 as the El Franco Lee Memorial Highway.



Senator Miles met Rose Mary McGowan, sister of the late and great Congresswoman Barbara Jordan. They discussed Congresswoman Jordan’s legacy and the importance of the memorial for the community.

MILES ON THE MOVE

Check out these photos from around the district!

Senator Borris L. Miles is always on the move in Senate District 13. If you would like to invite him to your event or community meeting, please contact our office by calling 713-665-8322 or emailing Borris.Miles@senate.texas.gov.



After Hurricane Harvey, Senator Miles invited Rebuild Texas Commissioner and Texas A&M Chancellor John Sharp to tour some of the hardest-hit areas in SD 13 with Westbury community leader Becky Edmondson.



Senator Miles joined local leaders for the UTHealth Continuum of Care Campus for Behavioral Health Groundbreaking for their new mental health hospital on South MacGregor. This new facility will add 240 beds, train mental health professionals, and will ensure that individuals receive the help and treatment they need instead of going to jail.



Senator Miles hosts an Internship Fair at the Houston Community College in Missouri City where more than 300 students were able to secure either a summer job or an internship.



Senator Borris Miles visits with the Donut Shop Crew to discuss the needs in the Northeast Houston community.



Senator Miles joined the little league teams of South Central Sportz for their Opening Day at Sunnyside Park.

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

<p>Texas Department of Insurance Consumer Help Line.....1-800-252-3439</p> <p>Division of Workers' Compensation Injured Worker Hotline.....1-800-252-7031 Safety Violations Hotline.....1-800-452-9595</p> <p>Texas Department of Public Safety Driver License Customer Service.....512-424-2600 Vehicle Inspection.....512-424-7293 Emergency Roadside Assistance.....1-800-525-5555 Texas Crime Stoppers Hotline.....1-800-252-TIPS</p> <p>Texas Department of Motor Vehicles Hotline.....1-888-368-4689</p> <p>Texas Medical Board Consumer Complaint Hotline.....1-800-201-9353</p> <p>Texas Veterans Land Board Veterans Hotline.....1-800-252-VETS</p> <p>Texas Workforce Commission Hotline.....512-463-2222</p>	<p>Texas Health & Human Services Commission Disaster Assistance.....3-1-1 Medical Hotline.....2-1-1 Non-Emergency Help Line.....3-1-1 Texas/United Way Help Line.....2-1-1 24-Hour Information and Referral Network Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner Consumer Helpline.....1-800-538-1579 Public Utility Commission of Texas Consumer Protection Division.....1-888-782-8477 United States Social Security Administration Help Line.....1-800-722-1213</p> <p>Office of Attorney General Child Support.....1-800-252-8014 Consumer Protection Hotline.....1-800-621-0508 Crime Victims Compensation Office of Consumer Affairs Hotline.....1-800-720-7777 Texas Youth Hotline.....1-800-989-6884 Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline.....1-800-252-5400</p> <p>Texas Department of Family & Protective Services Grievance Information.....1-800-204-2222 Hotline.....1-800-932-1900 Lawyer Referral Service.....1-800-252-9690</p> <p>Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Hotline.....1-888-777-3186</p> <p>State Bar of Texas Homebuyer Help & Education.....1-800-792-1119 Disaster Assistance.....1-877-541-7905 Fair Housing/Discrimination.....1-888-452-4778 Hotline.....1-800-525-0657</p> <p>Texas Department of Housing & Community Affairs Offender Parole Review Status Line.....1-844-512-0461 Offender Status Line.....1-800-535-0283 Victim Services Division.....1-800-848-4284</p> <p>Texas Department of Criminal Justice Children's Health Insurance Plan(CHIP)1-877-543-7669 Hotline.....1-800-582-5233 Disaster Assistance.....1-800-252-8263 Medical Hotline.....2-1-1 Texas/United Way Help Line.....3-1-1 Non-Emergency Help Line.....3-1-1 24-Hour Information and Referral Network Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner Consumer Helpline.....1-800-538-1579 Public Utility Commission of Texas Consumer Protection Division.....1-888-782-8477 United States Social Security Administration Help Line.....1-800-722-1213</p>
---	--



TEXAS SENATOR

Borris L. Miles

P.O. Box 12068

Austin, Texas 78711-2068

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 2468
AUSTIN, TEXAS

CONTACT SENATOR MILES

Central Houston Office
5302 Alameda Road, Suite A
Houston, Texas 77004
713-665-8322

Northeast Houston Office
3300 Lyons Avenue, Suite 301
Houston, Texas 77020
713-223-0387



Capitol Office
Room 3E12, P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711
512-463-0113

Fort Bend Office
2440 Texas Parkway, Suite 110
Missouri City Texas 77489
281-261-2360

EMAIL: BORRIS.MILES@SENATE.TEXAS.GOV
Facebook: www.Facebook.com/BorrisLMiles
Twitter: www.Twitter.com/BorrisLMiles
Sign-up for Senator Borris Miles' E-Newsletter by calling 713-665-8322 or emailing
Borris.Miles@senate.texas.gov