

JOSÉ MENÉNDEZ

An Open Letter to the Citizens of Senate District 26



The Senate of The State of Texas Senator José Menéndez

Dear Friends:

District 26

I hope that you and your family are well as we continue to navigate these unprecedented times. Each of us have personally battled through these challenges, and it is important that we communicate and stay as connected as possible. This newsletter is one way to keep you up-to-date with what your Senate District 26 office has been doing to respond to constituent concerns. We also ask that you continue sending us your input as we offer assistance and relief through this public health crisis. I hope you find these pages to be informative and useful.

As we get through this second year of the COVID-19 pandemic while recovering from the statewide freeze and power failure of February 2021, it is important to remember that the love of family and caring neighbors will provide strength to help us through these adversities. We extend our sincere appreciation to all the health care professionals, first responders, teachers, and essential workers who have dedicated their lives and sacrificed their time to keep our State moving forward. When working together, we are stronger. We will persevere as long as we stay focused and committed to taking the necessary precautions to keep each other safe and healthy.

Remember that this office belongs to you. Whether you need assistance with a state agency or have questions about policies discussed at the Texas Capitol, please contact us at (210) 733-6604 or (512) 463-0126 and let us know how we can help. Your health, safety and well-being is most important to us. Please take good care of yourselves, your families and your neighbors.

Queridos Amigos:

Espero que tanto tu como tu familia se encuentren bien y sigan adelante en esta época sin precedente. Cada uno de nosotros ha enfrentado estos retos y es importante que nos mantengamos lo más posible comunicados y en conexión. Este boletín es para ponerte al tanto de lo que la oficina del Senado del Distrito 26, ha venido haciendo para atender las preocupaciones de los electores. Aprovecho la oportunidad para pedirles que nos sigan enviando información para brindarles asistencia y auxilio en esta crisis de salud pública. Espero que estas páginas resulten útiles y de información oportuna. Mientras avanzamos en este segundo año de la pandemia derivada del COVID-19, mientras nos recuperamos del congelamiento y corte de energía en febrero de 2021, es importante recordar que el amor de nuestra familia y de nuestros estimados vecinos nos dará la fortaleza para enfrentar estas adversidades. Expresamos nuestra más sincera consideración a todos los profesionales de la salud, socorristas, profesores, trabajadores esenciales que han dedicado su vida y han sacrificado su tiempo para hacer que nuestro Estado siga adelante. Si trabajamos juntos, somos más fuertes. Hemos de perseverar, en tanto sigamos enfocados y comprometidos para tomar todas las precauciones necesarias a fin de mantenernos sanos y salvos.

Recuerden que esta oficina les pertenece. Sea que requieran ayuda con alguna oficina estatal o tengan dudas sobre los asuntos de políticas públicas discutidos en el Capitolio de Texas, por favor hagan contacto con nosotros al (210) 733-6604 o (512) 463-0126 y déjenos saber como podemos ayudar. Su salud, seguridad y bienestar es lo más importante para nosotros. Por favor cuídense, cuiden a su familia y cuiden a sus vecinos.

Sincerely,

José Menéndez



WORKING TOGETHER

2021 LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Through the last two years, we turned to our constituents and community and asked for your ideas on legislation. Together, we authored or sponsored the following bills during the 87th Legislative Session that successfully became law.

FUNDING FOR SAN ANTONIO SENATE BILL 1

- ★ \$5 Million for the Cybersecure Advanced Manufacturing Program at the University of Texas San Antonio (UTSA)
- ★ \$139,000 for the Institute of Texan Cultures at UTSA
- ★ Funding for the Bexar County Fostering Educational Success Pilot Project
- ★ \$275.5 Million to finish construction for the San Antonio State Hospital
- ★ \$7.5 Million to support the new Multi-Assistance Center at Morgan's Wonderland

EDUCATION

- ★ **Senate Bill 89** - Directs school districts to prepare individualized supplemental information for each student enrolled in the school district's special education program during the 2019-2020, 2020-2021 school year.



- ★ **Senate Bill 2050** - Requires the Texas Education Agency to create a cyber-bullying and bullying policy to serve as the minimum standard for our school districts around the state and provides for tracking incidents.
- ★ **Senate Bill 2066** - Strengthens bilingual students by changing out-of-date terms, such as limited English proficiency to emergent bilingual students.



- ★ **Senate Bill 2081** - Limits Pre-K classrooms to have no more than 22 students, ensuring that these class sizes are manageable and create an optimal learning environment.
- ★ **House Bill 999** - Allows an individual graduation committee to determine a high school senior's eligibility for graduation without considering the student's end-of-course test performance



FOSTER CARE

- ★ **Senate Bill 2049** - Assists dual status children who are in both the welfare and juvenile justice system by better clarifying the role of a guardian ad litem, allowing children and youth to have access to the advocacy they deserve.

- ★ **Senate Bill 2054** - Allows funding within the Texas Comptroller's office to include driving classes and driving test waivers for foster and homeless youth.
- ★ **House Bill 2107** - Ensures that children who are unfit to proceed in juvenile court proceedings as a result of an intellectual disability to receive appropriate services or treatment, including outpatient services as necessary.

SENIOR CITIZENS

- ★ **Senate Bill 263** - Changes the eligible age requirement to receive the Temporary Assistance for Needy Family payments from 45 to 25 years, and expand eligibility to kinship caregivers.
- ★ **House Bill 1156** - Creates a new offense of financial abuse for a person who knowingly engages in the wrongful taking, appropriation, obtaining or use of money of an elderly person.



HEALTH

- ★ **Senate Bill 640** - Assists in understanding the behavioral health technology landscape by conducting a survey that will review technology readiness to ensure the state's mental health infrastructure is as robust as its physical health system.
- ★ **Senate Bill 2038** - Prevents price gouging from freestanding emergency rooms by prohibiting entities from charging unnecessary fees or raising the price of visits for consumers.
- ★ **House Bill 4074** - Requires the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council to create a suicide prevention subcommittee to focus on suicide prevention efforts using information collected by the council.

CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

- ★ **Senate Bill 398** - Establishes that a municipality cannot enact extra restrictions on the installation of solar generation to homeowners than what a homeowners' association may enact. This bill also provides key disclosures and other consumer protection information for the distribution of renewable generation sources.
- ★ **House Bill 872** - Increases consumer data privacy standards by requiring a government operated utility be excluded from a Public Information Act request disclosing whether services have been disconnected or are eligible for disconnection.
- ★ **House Bill 1787** - Establishes liability coverage under a personal automobile insurance policy for a temporary vehicle provided to an insured automobile facility, must also insure any resident relative of the insured and licensed operator residing in the household.



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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

★ **Senate Bill 804** - Helps our tourism industry in San Antonio and around the state by clarifying the current statutory authority of cities to add new hotels into an existing tourism public improvement district.

★ **Senate Bill 2046** - Codifies current Texas

Department of Housing and Community Affairs practices by correctly allocating deficiency demerits to responsible parties.

★ **Senate Bill 2062** - Creates a permanent eleven-member advisory board for the motor fuel metering and quality program to advise our state agencies on technical standards of operation, testing, requirements for license and other issues.

★ **House Bill 3510** - Seeks to continue flexibility made during the pandemic by establishing conditions for a business to allow an employee to work from a remote location, while maintaining the same secure services to the public.

TRANSPORTATION

★ **House Bill 912** - Requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to issue a specialty license plate for recipients of the Borinqueneers Congressional Gold Medal.



★ **House Bill 1863** - Establishes a Make-A-Wish license plate and appropriates a portion of the revenue raised to serve as grants for non-profit organizations.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE/LAW ENFORCEMENT

★ **House Bill 1307** - Requires a prompt review of the health care services provided to a pregnant woman after a sheriff or the Texas Department of Criminal Justice receives a report of a miscarriage or assault.

★ **House Bill 1589** - Allows a peace officer who is enrolled in a military branch seven more days of paid leave if they are called to respond to a declared disaster.



VETERANS

★ **House Bill 3821** - Requires the Texas Veterans Commission to employ and train mental health professionals to assist the Health and Human Services Commission by administering a mental health program to veterans.

★ Co-Authored **Senate Bill 623** (Vanessa Guillén Act) - Establishes a sexual assault response coordinator within the Texas Military Forces.

★ Co-Sponsored **House Bill 1535** (Medical Cannabis) - Provides necessary improvements to the Texas Compassionate Use Program so patients with debilitating medical conditions, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), may access low-THC cannabis products for treatment.



Thank you to all our veterans for your service to our country!

COVID-19 - PROMOTING UNITY IN OUR COMMUNITY

Although we have continued to adapt to the changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, this virus has exacerbated pre-existing issues within our institutions and communities.

During the initial months of the pandemic, our office collaborated with many other Senate offices to assist the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) with unemployment cases. We were able to hear directly from Texans on how they were being affected. Our office continues to serve as a liaison for the TWC by assisting hundreds of Texans to gain access to much needed financial benefits during this difficult time.

As the Fall of 2020 approached, we conducted an online survey that gathered the concerns of an estimated 15,380 of our educators, parents, and students about returning to school. Many of these concerns centered around a fear of contracting COVID-19 and lacking access to technology. We sent the results of the questionnaire to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Governor's office, then submitted legislation to address these issues. The overwhelming response of parent with special needs children led us to host a virtual meeting to address their specific concerns. Our office also filed bills during the 87th legislative session that would have provided teachers with additional paid sick leave, allowed teachers to keep their benefits if they retired for the year due to COVID-19, appropriate funds to help address the digital divide, and discontinue the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), allowing more funds to assist Texas schools.

As the COVID-19 vaccines began to be allocated around Texas, our D26 office held a vaccine information session with experts from federal, state and local levels, to discuss the distribution locations. This event allowed our residents to ask questions and gain firsthand knowledge on the administration and importance of the vaccine.

While the pandemic continues, our office will keep finding ways to connect with residents. The voices of our community and our united efforts are essential to finding solutions that work best. Despite being a tough time for many, we know that when we unite and help our neighbors, we can overcome anything.

ND BEXAR COUNTY

Your Views On Issues Facing Texans

Date _____

Name _____ City _____

Address _____ ZIP _____

Telephone Number (____) _____ Email address _____

Legislative Issue/Idea _____ Pros _____

_____ Pros _____

_____ Pros _____

Proposed Solution _____ Cons _____

_____ Cons _____

_____ Cons _____

_____ Cons _____

Comments _____

CALLING ALL TEXANS & DISTRICT 26 CONSTITUENTS

COVID-19 has created numerous unforeseen challenges and impacted each of us in immeasurable ways. While some of us have been forced to face unemployment, lockdowns, isolation, lack of childcare, financial insecurity, and countless other severe challenges that have had both an economic and emotional impact on our daily lives, we have to ask ourselves: How can our community do better? What is it that our elected officials can do to help in times of crisis? What are some important topics that I would like to discuss or address in our upcoming legislative session?

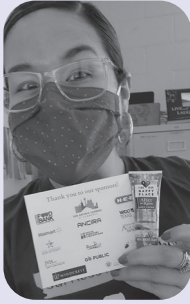
As elected leaders, it is important that we bring everyone to the table and that every individual voice is heard. As we experience these unprecedented times, we should understand that with crisis comes new realities and new opportunities. Therefore, I am asking each of you, now more than ever, to please submit your legislative suggestions and ideas so that we can help improve the lives of our fellow Texans. We are in this together, and united we will work to ensure that the state of Texas and our community is better than it was before.

Please let us know how we can help by filling out the attached input form and sending back to us by **February 1, 2022**.

Deadline: Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Recognizing Our Teachers - Appreciation Raffle - May 2021

Our local educators have been working above and beyond to offer students as normal a school year as possible. Their selflessness and sacrifice are always deserving of recognition. Therefore, we raffled 300 self-care packages as a huge thank you to all our teachers and school officials at the end of the school year! We are so grateful for everything they do for our children and families!



(fold here)

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State & Zip: _____

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Office of State Senator José Menéndez
4522 Fredericksburg Rd., Suite A-22
Balcones Heights, TX 78201



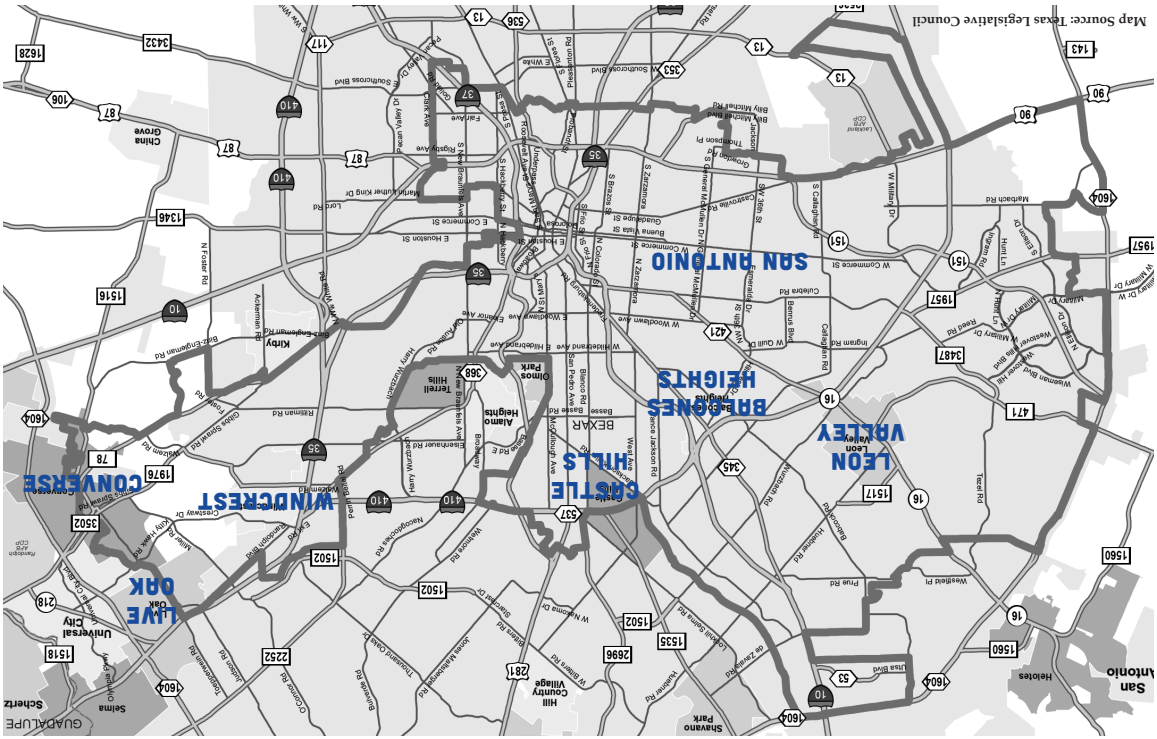
Helpful Phone Numbers

The District 26 office works with various state agencies that serve Texas residents. If you, or anyone that you know, needs assistance with a state agency, please do not hesitate to reach our office. We are here to help with any concerns that you may have. Listed below are some of the many agencies that our office works with every day.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Alcohol Establishment Concerns - Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC): 210-731-1720 ★ Capitol Tours (D26): 210-733-6604 ★ Child Protective Services (CPS): 1-800-252-5400 ★ Child Foster Care (CPS): 1-844-286-0769 ★ Child Support - Attorney General: 1-800-252-8014 ★ Children's Health Insurance - Health & Human Services Commission (HHSC): 1-877-543-7669 ★ Consumer Protection - Attorney General: 1-800-621-0508 ★ Dept. of Criminal Justice (TDCJ): 512-406-5900 ★ Driver's License & Identification - Dept. of Public Safety (DPS): 1-888-368-4689 ★ Adult Protective Services (APS): 1-800-252-5400 ★ Adult Foster Care (APC): 1-800-233-3405 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Dept. of Aging & Disability Services (DAS): 1-855-937-2372 ★ Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ): 1-877-901-0700 ★ Food Stamps - HHSC: 1-877-541-7905 ★ Mental Health & Rehabilitation Services: 1-877-541-7905 ★ Dept. of Licensing & Regulations (TDFLR): 512-463-6599 ★ State Resolutions & Texas Flag Requests (D26): 210-733-6604 ★ Transportation Issues - Dept. of Transpt (TxDot): 210-615-1110 ★ Texas Veterans Commission - TVC hotline: 210-617-5300 ★ Disabled American Veterans (DAV): 210-699-5064 ★ Texas Workforce Commission (TWC): 1-800-628-5115 ★ Workers' Compensation - Dept. of Insurance (TDI): 1-800 252-7031 |
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To mail questionnaire please cut along dashed line, fold, tape and place postage stamp.

SENATE DISTRICT 26



TEXAS SENATOR
JOSÉ MENÉNDEZ
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Austin, Texas 78711-2068

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THANK YOU

My family and I are grateful for the privilege of serving you.



Senator Menéndez with wife Cehlia; and children Dominic, Victoria, Austin; and granddaughter Adalisa.

District 26 December Toy Drive

The District 26 Holiday Toy Drive benefiting the Elf Louise Christmas Project brought the community together for a drive-by toy giveaway drop-off event in the parking lot of Wonderland of the Americas on Dec. 5, 2020. This event helped collect new, unwrapped toys to give San Antonio children in need of holiday cheer. Thank you to our generous donors and to everyone who participated!

We look forward to our upcoming D26 Holiday Toy Drive benefiting Elf Louise this December of 2021. For more information, please call us at 210-733-6604.

