



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE VICKI TRUITT'S CAPITOL NOTES



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 98 ★ NORTHEAST TARRANT COUNTY ★ SUMMER 2002

Dear Friends:

Thank you for taking some time to read my legislative update and completing the attached Texas Legislative Issue Survey. Your opinions are important to me. Your input greatly enhances my ability to serve our communities in the Texas House.

In preparation for the next session of the Texas Legislature, which will begin in January of 2003, the challenges faced by our state come into focus. The legislature will be forced to make tougher decisions than at any time during my tenure as your state representative.

The weakening economy leaves the state facing a budget shortage of approximately \$5 billion dollars to cover existing programs. Contrary to what some may believe, my legislative colleagues and I have presided over one of the most conservative state budgets in the nation (Texas ranks 50th in per capita spending among all states). In order to overcome the budget deficit, we must adopt a "bare bones" budget. That is what my constituents are doing with their family budgets and that's what the state will do.

Our school finance system must be overhauled. Too many school districts, including most districts in Northeast Tarrant County, are being forced to send local education dollars to the state under the current school finance system. We will no doubt work long hours in Austin wrestling with this issue. It is my top priority this session.

Other challenging issues include doctor, hospital and nursing home liability reform; a review of electric deregulation and its effect on competition among Texas' electric companies; the creation and funding of a state-wide highway and rail transportation plan; and the review and reform of the homeowners insurance industry in Texas.

Since my first day as your State Representative, I have worked from one simple perspective – my constituents come first. Please fill out the enclosed survey and let me know your opinions. If you have any questions or comments, please call my office.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you and your family in the Texas House of Representatives.

Sincerely,



*Rep. Truitt and Rep. Todd Smith discuss legislation while on the House floor*

## REPRESENTATIVE VICKI TRUITT'S DISTRICT COFFEE TOUR

State Representative Vicki Truitt's District coffee tour begins September 13. The annual tour offers constituents a convenient opportunity to visit with Representative Truitt about issues and concerns. She welcomes the opportunity to visit with citizens during her tour. Please plan to join her at one of these locations:

**Friday, September 13, 7:30-9:00 am**

*Colleyville - Braum's on Highway 26/Grapevine Hwy*

**Friday, September 27, 7:30-9:00 am**

*Southlake - Corner Bakery, Southlake Town Square*

**Friday, October 4, 7:30-9:00 am**

*Grapevine - Waffle Way on Northwest Hwy*

**Friday, October 11, 7:30-9:00 am**

*Westlake/Haslet - Cactus Flower At Alliance Airport*

**Friday, October 25, 7:30-9:00 am**

*Keller - Judge Beans on Highway 377*

**For information regarding the Fort Worth Coffee Tour or any other Tour questions, please call Era Lee Caldwell at 817-488-4098.**

**Please complete the Citizen's Survey inside, fold in half, stamp, and mail back **



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE VICKI TRUITT'S CAPITOL NOTES

## ENOUGH IS ENOUGH ... IT'S TIME TO CHANGE OUR SCHOOL FINANCE SYSTEM

The Grapevine-Colleyville, Carroll and Northwest Independent School Districts (ISDs) all face significant budget cuts in the upcoming years due to the state-mandated school finance "Robin Hood" plan. Keller ISD will face a similar scenario soon.

Property taxes are the primary source of funds for public education in Texas. Where local property values are high enough to adequately fund local schools, the surplus must be given over to other school districts that lack adequate school funding. This is what creates our funding crisis — not the lack of adequate funds, but the inability to keep and use the funds we have.



Rep. Truitt hosts a reception in Westlake for members of the Texas Joint Select Committee on School Finance.

The Texas State Legislature must correct key elements of this funding crisis. I understand these problems and their urgency, and I will work tirelessly to find solutions.

A Legislative Committee on Public School Finance is working on solutions to this problem. I have been actively involved and will continue working closely with the Committee and our local school districts to find a solution to this serious issue. I plan to take specific proposals to the legislature for consideration next year.

Some of my colleagues in both the House and the Senate are pessimistic we can accomplish much to correct these problems. But, no matter how hard it might be, we simply must do everything we can to find viable solutions. There can be no higher priority for me or other members of the Texas Legislature until these problems are resolved. I am committed to improving Texas' system for funding public education both in the near term and for the long term.

## *Remember ...*

- Representative Truitt values citizen communication and recommendations. Her four constituent advisory boards (*Education, Business and Industry, Transportation, and Constituent Relations*) will be meeting soon to advise her on important issues. If you are interested in serving on one of these committees, please call 817-488-4098.

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- Senior Leadership Northeast is a group of active seniors addressing issues and problems that affect senior citizens living in northeast Tarrant County. Senior Leadership Northeast meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 9:00 AM at the Colleyville Chamber of Commerce. For more information, please call 817-488-7148.



Representative Truitt presents a framed Texas flag to Keller Mayor Dave Phillips at the dedication of the new Keller Town Hall.



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE VICKI TRUITT'S CITIZEN'S SURVEY

1. Do you favor or oppose replacing the current "Robin Hood" school finance system with a different state tax?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

2. Do you favor or oppose requiring one minute at the beginning of each school day in our public schools for reflection, meditation or prayer?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

3. Do you favor or oppose expanded use of toll roads to increase mobility in Tarrant County and North Texas?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

4. Do you favor or oppose expanded commuter rail lines in major metropolitan areas?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

5. Do you favor or oppose a state law requiring trucks to use the right lane except when passing?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

6. Do you favor or oppose limits on jury awards and lawyer fees in liability lawsuits?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

7. Do you favor or oppose allowing electric companies to compete for your residential electric service?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

8. Do you favor or oppose state price controls and caps on homeowner's insurance rates?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

9. Do you favor or oppose Texas charging a sales tax for purchases made over the internet?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

10. Do you favor or oppose the extension of the "3-day tax holiday"?

Favor  Oppose  Undecided

### PLEASE ADD YOUR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Please use additional paper if necessary and mail to address below.

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**Please fill out, detach this entire page, fold in half, stamp and mail back. Thank You.**

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Please  
Place Your  
37¢ Stamp  
Here.



**URGENT SURVEY  
RESPONSE**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE VICKI TRUITT  
PO BOX 2910  
AUSTIN TX 78768-2910



# VICKI TRUITT

State Representative District 98  
P.O. Box 2910 • Austin, TX 78768-2910

Official Business  
**STATE of TEXAS**  
State Penalty  
For Private Use

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## *How to Reach Representative Truitt :*

### **District Office**

1256 Main Street, Suite 248  
Southlake, Texas 76092  
(817) 488-4098  
(817) 488-4099 Fax

### **State Capitol**

P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, TX 78768-2910  
(512) 463-0690  
(512) 477-5770 Fax

Era Lee Caldwell, *District Director*      Carolyn Sims, *Chief of Staff*

**E-mail address:** vicki.truitt@house.state.tx.us

## *CITIZEN'S SURVEY ENCLOSED*



## HELPFUL STATE TOLL-FREE PHONE NUMBERS

### **Attorney General, Office of the**

Child Support Division  
800/252-8014  
Consumer Division  
800/621-0508

### **Comptroller of Public Accounts**

Sales Tax and General Information  
800/252-5555

### **Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse**

Chemical Dependency Information/Help  
800/832-9623  
Gambling Hotline  
800/742-0443

### **Consumer Credit Commissioner, Office of**

Consumer Helpline and Information  
800/538-1579

### **Deaf and Hearing Impaired, TX School for the**

Deaf Services and Information  
800/332-3873 (Voice/TDD)

### **Governor, Office of the**

Citizen's Assistance Hotline  
800/843-5789  
Crimestoppers  
800/252-8477  
Governor's Opinion Hotline  
800/252-9600

### **Housing and Community Affairs, Texas Dept. of**

Single Family Home Hotline  
800/792-1119

### **Human Services, Texas Department of**

Food Stamp Inquiry Hotline  
800/448-3927  
Long Term Care Facility Information  
800/252-8016  
Tel-Assistance  
800/343-8353

### **Insurance, Texas Department of**

General Information  
800/578-4677

### **Mental Health and Mental Retardation, TX Dept. of**

Client Services  
800/252-8154

### **Protective and Regulatory Services, TX Dept. of**

Abuse Hotline  
800/252-5400  
Adoption and Foster Care Inquiry Hotline  
800/233-3405  
Day Care Information Hotline  
800/862-5252

### **Secretary of State**

Elections and Voter Information  
800/252-8683  
Statutory Documents/Telephone Solicitation  
800/648-9642

### **State Bar of Texas**

Lawyer Referral Service  
800/252-9690

### **Transportation, Texas Department of**

Emergency Road Conditions  
800/452-9292  
Travel Information  
800/452-9292

### **Workforce Commission, Texas**

Career Information Hotline  
800/822-7526  
Labor Law Department  
800/832-9243  
New Hire Program  
888/839-4473



*Representative Truitt with students from District 98.*