



THE FLYNN REPORT

January 3, 2006

Greetings Friends, Constitutes and Supporters:

I trust that you and your families enjoyed a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. As we greet this new year of 2006 we should do so with much anticipation and excitement. All of the major newspapers around the country are reporting a job forecast that is the brightest in years. An expanding economy and skilled labor shortage is creating this resurgence. The Dallas Morning News on January 1st stated that this resurgence makes this year's outlook for job seekers the best since the turn of the millennium. They further reported that chief economists from the state's major chamber of commerce's see strong employment growth that will begin to stretch many segments of the labor force. Most of the areas of the state have not seen the job market with this kind of robust growth since 2000.

These forecasts continue to prove that Texas is one of the best places to do business and raise our families in America. The continued improvements have come about by the effort to balance state budgets with no new taxes and investing more money in education and health care. This has given confidence that the conservative leadership and conservative philosophy continue to benefit the state and should continue. Texas is among the best equipped states in the nation to handle a large-scale health disaster. A report by *Trust for America's Health* gave the federal government a failing grade on health-crisis preparedness. Texas ranked among the eight best prepared states in the group's third annual report on protection from widespread health catastrophes.

If you were to read the dire headlines and stories from Texas' leading newspapers in 1990 you would see they are reporting the same headlines today. These stories would lead you to understand that the current legislators did not create the current challenges – they have inherited it.

Most continue to believe there is no correlation between funding levels and

better academic achievement. With the average families giving 40 percent of their income back to the government, most are skeptical that more money doesn't solve education woes and that educational achievement hasn't risen in the last few decades despite all of the money spent.

The desire and plan is to try to work with districts and come up with a plan that will begin to push that money into the classroom and focus more on teacher compensation, improved academic results, and whittle down on the giant administration that has been built up through mandates.

I believe that every child receives a "top-notch" education at nearly all of the 17 public school systems in Hunt, Rains and Van Zandt Counties. Data show overall Texas comes up short in ensuring that ALL Texas children get a top-notch education. According to the Texas Comptroller, less than 51 cents out of every dollar collected for statewide public education actually makes it into the classroom. The ISDs in House District 2 do better than that.

The Texas Education Agency reports that between 1997 and 2004, teaching positions statewide are growing slower (17 percent) than school administrator positions (32 percent) and central office positions (35 percent). Texas now has one non-teaching position for every teacher position. Between 1997 and 2004, school-operating expenses increased 57 percent while student enrollment increased just 13 percent.

Property owners and businesses are taxed heavily. The challenge is trying to find a way to spread the burden with a fair and broad base tax. This could be achieved by an increase in sales taxes to reduce personal property tax and requiring the many businesses that have found a loophole in the franchise tax to pay their fair share. Most believe that would provide adequate funding and allow everyone to pay their fair share. These needs will probably be addressed and corrected in a special session sometime in April or May of 2006 to meet the deadline imposed by the Texas Supreme Court of June 2006.

A number of my colleagues in the Texas House of Representatives have joined me in petitioning the President and the U. S. Congress to increase their efforts to protecting our borders. We believe that with the ongoing War on Terrorism we can no longer afford to ignore those coming across our Texas borders illegally.

The ongoing danger and cost of these illegal entries into our state and country cannot be ignored and must be addressed immediately. We must prevent illegal entry at the border by increasing the number of border

patrol agents; provide physical barriers when necessary, and developing state-of-the-art technology.

Any fix we come up with for education will only be temporary as long as the federal government refuses to control our southern boarder. We don't have an education-funding problem; we have an illegal immigration problem that is straining both our health care system and our education.

We must end the catch and release practice along our border, address the hiring of illegal workers, no longer allow violent felons to gain legal entry and crack down on the alien gangs. We must increase enforcement and penalties for alien smuggling and for aliens re-entering illegally, begin a policy of integrating cooperation between local and federal law enforcement agencies and the operations between customs and the border. Develop international and domestic policies that will deter illegal entry. Our country is one of immigrants, legal immigrants who abide by our laws. United States citizenship is a privilege and a great honor. We must take action to control illegal immigration and secure our borders immediately.

Once again the campaign season has arrived and I will be facing an opponent in the Republican primary in March and a Democrat opponent in the General Election in November. This is the process and I welcome a review of my record of service to the citizens of House District 2 and look forward to earning a third term. It has been my honor and privilege to serve and I would appreciate your continued support to complete my goals of property tax relief, revamping our tax code to provide a better finance system for our public schools and our teachers, and to insure our strong support for faith and traditional family values.

We continue to welcome your input and your questions. Contact our office located in the Capitol extension: E1.324. Mailing address: P.O. Box 2910; Austin, TX 78768. Email dan.flynn@house.state.tx.us or you can call our toll free number 1-800-734-9515. Anyone not receiving this report please feel free to forward it to them.

God bless you and God bless Texas,

Dan Flynn
State Representative, District – 2