



THE FLYNN REPORT

January 26, 2007

Greetings Friends, Constitutes and Supporters:

This week closed with Speaker Tom Craddick announcing the appointment of committee assignments for the members of the 80th Legislative Session of the Texas House of Representatives. I will continue to serve on the Sunset Advisory Commission and the Financial Institution Committee and was moved up to Vice Chairman of this committee. I was also selected to serve on the State Affairs Committee. I feel the placement on these important committees will allow me to better serve the citizens of House District 2 and the people of Texas. The members will spend the next several days organizing the committees and will then be about serving the needs of the state.

Speaker Craddick and Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst presented a common set of budget priorities for the upcoming biennium. We expect the current budget surplus to be in excess of \$2.5 billion. Keep in mind that monies in last year's special session were set aside toward the promised property tax cuts. In addition, there were accounting adjustments required for the budget cuts needed toward balancing the 2003 budget. This is, of course, much different from the nightmare faced in the past with revenue shortfalls presented in the previous Legislative sessions. The 80th Legislature will be able to return surplus revenue to taxpayers in the form of promised property tax relief and will be able to address the new initiatives to be faced such as border security, higher education needs, state parks, prisons and other legislative priorities.

The final version of Governor Rick Perry's special task force on appraisal reform was released this week. The Texas Task Force on Appraisal Reform headed up by Chairman Tom Pauken of Dallas released their recommendations on reforming the property tax appraisal system in

Texas. The report includes provisions calling for voter approval, improving the fairness of the appraisal process, changing the comptroller's Property Value Study, prohibiting unfunded State mandates and the requirement of sales price disclosure. They recommend better protections for taxpayers from silent tax hikes, more accountability through elected representation on appraisal review boards and greater tax predictability for homebuyers.

If their recommendations are implemented they could go a long way in addressing problems with an appraisal system that penalizes property taxpayers and increases the growth of local government. The Task Force listened to testimony from all over Texas regarding Texas' property tax appraisal system. This will be a valuable tool to the Legislature in addressing property tax reform.

I was called into active duty for the Texas State Guard this week to participate in operations along the southern border of Texas. It was an experience to be involved and to see first hand the work being done to secure our borders. I was a part of a task force that included the Homeland Security Forces, the Board Patrol, Texas Parks and Wildlife, Texas Department of Public Safety, local county law enforcement, the Texas National Guard and the Texas State Guard. Positive steps are in place and results are being accomplished daily. My role included ground and air support and I was very proud to be a part of what I observed as a successful operation. After spending time participating in this operation I understand better the political, economic and personal aspects of this challenge. I believe blanket amnesty is a dangerous thought and understand a need for workers, but we must know who they are, where they are going to be, and how long they are staying if allowed into our country. I would caution each one to be very careful in their demands of solutions to a very complicated challenge. Many hard working and dedicated individuals are spending much time and effort to arrive at a successful and humane conclusion to this challenge. Many bills have been filed to address these challenges and I am an author or joint authority to many of them. It must be remembered that federal pre-emption may override Texas Legislative decisions.

I am looking forward to hosting our Hunt County, Rains County and Van Zandt County days as the time draws closer for these special occasions in Austin at the State Capitol. If you have the opportunity to participate in these occasions I hope you will contact our office so we can provide you with the necessary information for you to attend.

We continue to welcome your input and your questions. Contact our office located in the Capitol extension: E1.302. Mailing address: P. O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768. Email District2.Flynn@house.state.tx.us. Toll free number 1-800-734-9515.

May God bless you and our great state of Texas,

**Dan Flynn
State Representative, District – 2**