

From the office of
Texas State Representative - Dan Flynn

THE FLYNN REPORT

Legislative Newsletter
September 19, 2003

Greetings constituents, supporters and friends:

Much has happened since my last report. The constitutional election to consider 22 amendments was held on September 13th. You know by now that all of them passed. In my opinion the most important one was #12, the medical malpractice amendment. I was pleased that it passed and believe it will be a major step towards meaningful lawsuit reform and in sending a message to our doctors and hospitals that we support their efforts. I think it is a major step towards bringing health care cost down. If this does not work I assure you the Legislature has the will to correct these concerns. This is seen by many as the most meaningful attempt of tort reform in the nation.

My staff and I held a special open house on September 15th at our Canton District office. We were honored with visits from individuals from every area of Van Zandt County and Rains County. I want to thank all that participated in making this open house a grand success. I am happy to report that in the coming weeks we will be opening our Greenville District office and will have another open house celebration so all in Hunt County and across the district will be able to find our locations so that we may serve you better.

I am sure many of you are aware Governor Rick Perry called a third special session of the Texas Legislature to consider redistricting and other matters important to the business of Texas. The House was called to order on Monday the 15th and recessed until Tuesday the 16th. We then passed out of the House the same bills we had approved in the two previous special sessions. It is now up to the Senate to take care of their constitutional responsibility to bring this issue to closure. I continue to be asked why the Governor continues to push this issue. The answer is simple; it is our constitutional responsibility, and the whole issue is about who is in charge. The Constitution requires us to address redistricting. The reason the census, and redistricting is based on the census, is required by the Constitution is to preserve the principle of one man one vote, i.e., that each man's vote will be of equal value or worth. This is absolutely essential in preserving a representative democracy, for if one group discovers its votes are not given equal weight to that given to other groups, the less representative groups will soon abandon their consent to abide by the electoral method of resolving disputes.

Recently State Senator Steve Ogden (R-College Station) said it very well, **“Whatever one thinks about redistricting, legislators' flight was a dereliction of duty and the fugitive legislators did damaged the rule of law.”**

While much has been said about the circumstances surrounding the fleeing of the legislatures to avoid consideration of a bill they oppose, what still needs to be understood is they are required by law to show up for work in Austin. They say their strike is justified. I strongly disagree. When we, as elected officials, are sworn into office, we promise to protect, preserve and defend the Texas Constitution. We cannot do this while, at the same time, violating its express directives. Our constitution, in no uncertain terms, requires that the legislature meet when called into session by the Governor.

When the Legislature first met in January, we all agreed by rule not to be absent unless we are sick or unable to attend. By refusing to comply with the Governor's call, those not attending are deliberately undermining the Texas Constitution, violating their oath of office, and ignoring the rules we all voted to adhere. They have claimed that redistricting is unfair and that the end justifies their illegal means. That would be a terrible example to set for our State not to mention our young people and would be a precedent that cannot go unchallenged.

Our country has been more successful than most because we believe in the rule of law and in our duty as citizens to voluntarily comply with it. The behavior of those that do not is contrary to our country's tradition of law and order and, left unchecked, threatens its viability. If a sufficient number of Texans simply decided to ignore the law or violate oaths they found burdensome, the government would literally be unable to enforce them. The inability to enforce compliance would not justify their conduct and would have devastating effects. One only needs to look at the rogue bandits in the Middle East or in many of the African nations to see the results. Whether we're talking about stopping at a red light, paying income taxes, telling the truth in court or risking life and limb fighting in Iraq, voluntary compliance is the norm in this country. The foundation on which our society is built is with the **consent of the governed** and by the **rule of law**.

An issue that concerns me greatly has been the battle of the Ten Commandments monument between Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore and a Federal Judge. You might be interested in knowing a total of 23 wire reports were published in Texas newspapers concerning this issue. Sadly underreported is the CNN/USA Today poll conducted by Gallup reporting that 77 percent of Americans disapproved of the U.S. District Judge's court order to remove the monument from the Montgomery Court House. Here again we must adhere to the process and work to change the law by compliance with the rule of law as interpreted by the Federal Courts. We can only do this by having strong conviction and being involved.

Recently in an article by my dear friend Representative Leo Berman (R- Tyler) he like many of us have been asked, "Why would a Christian get involved in politics?"

Here again the answer is simple; Christianity addresses itself to every aspect of life, home, school, community, business and politics -- as well as to the church. It involves everything we do and is a way of thinking, speaking, and behaving. Our Christian belief requires that we become involved in government and bear witness to the truth that our nation became great because of our faith in God. The very foundation of our nation was

built upon Christian principles as we launched ourselves as "**One nation under God.**"

Today, these principles are under attack and many want to deny our Christian origins. To remain a great nation I believe we must have Christian leadership at every level of government. The Apostle Paul wrote, "To aspire to leadership is an honorable ambition." He described Christian leaders as above reproach, faithful to their wives, sober, temperate, courteous, hospitable and good teachers, not given to drink or brawling, of a forbearing disposition, avoiding quarrels, and not lovers of money. None of us can meet those standards through mere human wisdom and power. Only Jesus was perfect and pure. Christians must involve themselves politically to seek out individuals who approach Paul's description of a Christian leader and are willing to live, lead and step out in faith believing. We must all then work hard to elect them to office.

Unfortunately, there are too few willing to involve themselves in government. As a result, we are experiencing a devastating erosion of moral standards in our nation. This deterioration is typified by an absence of ethics in government, a glorification of sex and violence, an increase in drug and alcohol use, accompanied by rising crime rates, and a proliferation of socialism. The latter has progressed to the point that millions of individuals are relinquishing responsibility, initiative, and self-respect to the Government. They are relying on government rather than themselves, their families or God to direct their lives and provide for them what they want.

President Lincoln, in 1859 wrote a letter to his brother listing a number of priorities that are just as relevant today as they were then. They are as follows:

You cannot bring about prosperity, by discouraging thrift.
You cannot strengthen the weak, by weakening the strong.
You cannot help the wage earner, by pulling down the wage payer.
You cannot further the brotherhood of man, by encouraging class hatred.
You cannot help the poor, by destroying the rich.
You cannot establish sound security, on borrowed money.
You cannot keep out of trouble, by spending more than you earn.
You cannot build character and courage, by taking away man's initiative and independence.
You cannot help man permanently by doing for them what they would and should do for themselves.

I believe in God, and in exercising common sense in government Christians must become involved in politics as elected officials, candidates, and campaign workers, to strengthen and preserve our great nation by insuring that it remains "**one nation under God.**" Christians have stayed aloof from politics far too long. When prayers are banned from schools, preachers of the Gospel are denied freedom of speech, and with moral standards at their lowest levels, surely it is time for Christians to act.

My staff and I welcome your input and your questions. You can reach us in our office located in the Capitol extension: **E1.324**. Mailing address: **P. O. Box 2910, Austin, TX**,

78768 and our phone number is **512/463-0880**. Canton District office: **P. O. Box 999, Canton, TX, 75103** phone number **903-567-0921**. Email **dan.flynn@house.state.tx.us**.

God bless you and God bless Texas,

Dan Flynn

State Representative, House District 2

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