

From the office of

Texas State Representative - Dan Flynn

THE FLYNN REPORT

Legislative Newsletter

October 17, 2003

Greetings constituents, supporters and friends:

I have been telling my friends that if anyone had told me back in January that I would have still been in Austin in October I would have had a big laugh. Well, the 78th Legislature finally closed the third, and I believe final, special session of 2003 this week.

I am proud to have been a part of the 78th Legislature. There is no question that the process we have gone through is one that the general public does not always get to see. Also, most of the information comes from the news media that does not always have all the facts nor do they always report all the facts. Be assured, however, that we were able to complete the most successful session in decades. I am proud of the conservative record we have established for balancing the budget without raising taxes and passing historic and sweeping tort reform that will save jobs, expand business opportunities and improve Texan's access to health care. In addition, we passed significant homeowners insurance reform that will save Texas taxpayers more than half a billion dollars in lower premiums and refunds. And despite a \$10 billion shortfall, we increased spending on health care by \$1 billion, increased spending on public education by \$1.3 billion and established an historic and innovative transportation improvement system.

After all of the members decided to return to Austin to take care of the State's business, both houses passed a redistricting map. I want to remind you that it was only two weeks in conference committee which as I am sure you know is not much time for a major bill to be considered. The bill passed by a majority in both houses and was then signed by Governor Perry. The opposition has already filed several of their anticipated lawsuits, but I continue to believe the redistricting map will stand the review by the Justice Department and the courts that consider it, and the map passed will be the new congressional district lines. I believe this is a fair and compact map that properly reflects the voting desire of the majority of Texans and meets all the legal requirements.

When the books are closed on this session, the record will reflect what other states are already saying, and that is that they would love to list the many accomplishments of this Texas Legislature as their own. To the critics I say: "Give us more than just 140 days and a couple of special sessions to correct the ills of our state." Redistricting will continue to receive far more coverage than it deserves, but here again, we are more concerned with other substantive accomplishments than with the press clippings.

I am sure you have been hearing comments concerning the government reorganization bill (House Bill 7) that was passed during this third special session. This bill was considered in each of the special sessions and debated on both the House and Senate floors. What is receiving the most attention is the shifting of some programs from the Comptroller's office back to the Legislative Budget Board where they were prior to

Comptrollers Bullock and Sharp. The Legislature, consisting of members from both houses and appointed by the Governor, believes that the LBB will be able to administer them more economically.

I regret that leaders have wanted to take to the media to criticize the accomplishments of this session. I trust and pray that all will set aside personal and political goals for the better good of all Texans and the conservative principals voters have said they wanted.

On a very positive note I want to report information we have received on our growing economy that is gaining momentum. Our president had a great news release that I hope many of you have already seen. If not, I would like for you to have the benefit of his comments as follows:

"Last month this economy exceeded expectations and added new jobs. Inflation is low. After-tax incomes are rising. Home ownership is at record highs. Productivity is high. Factory orders, particularly for high-tech equipment, have risen over the last several months. Our strategy has set the stage for sustained growth. By reducing taxes we kept a promise, and we did the right thing at the right time for the American economy."

--President George W. Bush, 10/16/03

The Wall Street Journal editorial board announced, *"The good economic news keeps coming,"* and a newly released report from the Federal Reserve shows that it is coming in from across the country!

Jobless claims are at their lowest levels in eight months.

Employment grew by 57,000 in September.

Stock market values have increased \$2 trillion in last ten months.

Disposable personal income is up 3.8%.

Homeownership is at **record highs** with a 68% ownership rate.

GDP growth is at 3.3% in the second quarter.

Productivity growth remains strong, which has bolstered profits.

Orders of manufacturing goods continue to increase.

Shipments and orders of durable goods increased this summer.

To this I say God bless America and her people.

My first annual **Dan Flynn First Monday Golf Tournament** was an outstanding success, and I thank all who helped make it so. Our plans are to have our Greenville office open within the next couple of weeks, and we will look forward to having an open house so all can come by for a visit.

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