



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
JOE STRAUS
SPEAKER

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**Texas House Speaker Straus Declares
81st Legislative Session a Success**

AUSTIN--- After deliberating for 140 days, today Texas House Speaker Joe Straus declared the 81st Texas Legislative Session a success. The Texas House of Representatives convened on January 13 and adjourned *Sine Die* on Monday.

In affirming his view of this year's session, Speaker Straus stated, "The 81st Legislative Session was a strong success. We invested more money in the classroom, college scholarships and healthcare while limiting spending and saving for the future in these uncertain economic times. Not only did we address the priorities of our people, but we did so with a renewed spirit of civility and cooperation, demonstrating that Texas matters more than party or politics."

The list of legislative accomplishments touted by the Speaker included:

- Adopted the 2010-2011 biennial budget which reduces general revenue spending by 1.9 percent.
- Unanimous passage of new education reforms that focus on student growth and achievement to rate schools.
- A \$1.9 billion dollar increase in public education money.
- A \$1.2 billion dollar increase in higher education funding.
- Seed money to lay the groundwork for additional Tier One Texas universities.
- Added \$250 million in financial aid to make college affordable for 35,000 more students.
- Reformed the Top Ten Percent rule to give the University of Texas more flexibility.
- Tax cut which will benefit approximately 40,000 Texas small businesses.
- Protected \$9.1 billion dollars in the state's Rainy Day Fund.

Unlike numerous states raising the tax and debt burden on citizens and employers, Texas legislators cut taxes for small businesses to help thousands of business owners survive the national recession. By leaving the \$9 billion dollar "Rainy Day Fund" untouched, legislators also created a budgetary cushion for the next legislative session when they have to address a structural deficit without the benefit of another infusion of federal stimulus funds.

Speaker Straus concluded by saying, "Together we proved much can be accomplished in a narrowly divided house if we are willing to find common ground, build consensus, and debate the big issues of the day in a spirit of civility. Perhaps nothing showed our shared commitment to moving Texas forward more than two significant votes: a unanimous vote to pass the House budget and a unanimous vote to make major changes to our system of school accountability.

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