

Erin Elizabeth Gámez

HOUSE DISTRICT 38 - END OF SESSION UPDATE

"Your Voice in Austin"

Dear neighbor,

Thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve you in the Texas House of Representatives. We have finished our 140-day regular legislative session and 1st Called Special Session. It was a tough fought session, but I am proud of the victories we had in the Capitol. Additionally, it has been wonderful to see so many familiar and friendly faces from the Valley that made the long trek up to Austin to visit your state Capitol. I look forward to continuing to work and represent you through any additional special session, and in important interim work as we prepare for next session.

Sincerely,

Erin Gámez

REPRESENTING OUR COMMUNITY

Rep. Gámez passed several important policies for Brownsville and Cameron County. Her HB 2282 was amended on to HB 5012 by Rep. Clardy, which she co-authored. This bill will allow Brownsville to create a Qualified Hotel and Zone Project. During the 1st 10 years of the Project, state sales tax revenue produced by the project will stay in Brownsville to help develop Brownsville instead of being sent out of Brownsville to state General Revenue. This is projected to keep over \$80 million in state sales tax in Brownsville over the 1st 10 years of the project.

Rep. Gámez passed HB 2058 out of the House to help develop more skilled labor for in-demand jobs in the Valley. This passed in the form of a Budget rider which provides \$5 million for the Brownsville Navigation District for workforce development and skill credentialing for in-demand jobs.

Rep. Gámez also helped to secure thousands of dollars in funding for pilot programs for Cameron County to address public health, and at-risk juveniles.



Rep. Gámez and Sen. LaMantia meeting with Leadership Brownsville.



Rep. Gámez being awarded Mexican American Legislative Caucus' (MALC) Freshman of the Year Award.

SUPPORTING OUR SCHOOLS

Rep. Gámez co-sponsored SB 10 by Sen. Huffman, which will put nearly \$5 Billion into the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) to provide retired teachers with a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) and a one-time 13th check.

Rep. Gámez co-authored HB 8 by Rep. VanDeaver that overhauls our state's community college funding system. Because of this bill passing, our community college—Texas Southmost College—will receive millions more in state funding in the future. She also co-authored HB 1755 by Rep. Button which creates the Lone Star Workforce of the Future Fund which will provide \$5 million in grants to fund workforce training around the state.

Rep. Gámez fought hard all session for teacher pay raises. Including co-authoring HB 1548 by Rep. Talarico that would have given teachers a \$15,000 raise. She also voted for several bills and amendments to increase teacher pay. Rep. Gámez hopes that teacher and staff pay will be addressed in an upcoming special session.

Rep. Gámez worked with a bipartisan coalition of House members to block public school funds from being syphoned off by a proposed unaccountable school voucher system.

COMMITTEE WORK

Rep. Gámez is a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources and the House Committee on Transportation. These committees heard hundreds of bills during the 140 day legislative session, and passed out over 200 bills combined.



Rep. Gámez with the House Committee on Transportation.

Key pieces of legislation from these committees include SB 28 by Sen. Perry which Rep. Gámez served on the Conference Committee for as well. SB 28 creates the Texas Water Fund which will provide \$1 billion for water infrastructure development in Texas.

She also helped pass legislation to improve planning of groundwater management areas by joint-authoring HB 3278 by Rep. Price and helped Valley communities by passing HB 4742 for the Texas Water Development Board to study issues facing communities with artificial drainage systems with fellow Cameron County

Rep. Gámez also authored HB 3125 & 3126 that passed out of the Transportation Committee and are now headed to the Governor's desk. These two bills improve highway safety.



Rep. Gámez discussing legislation with Union Members.

SUPPORTING OUR WORKING FAMILIES

Rep. Gámez fought hard for working Texas families. She co-authored HB 12 by Rep. Rose that will extend postpartum Medicaid coverage for mothers from 6 months to a full year.

Additionally, she was a co-sponsor of SB 379 by Sen. Huffman which exempts essential baby items, such as diapers and wipes, along with feminine hygiene products from the state's sales tax. This will provide much needed tax relief to mothers and families in our state.

Rep. Gámez also co-authored a trio of bills that passed to help lower prescription drug prices: HB 25 by Rep. Talarico, HB 916 by Rep. Ortega, and HB 999 by Rep. Price.

Rep. Gámez co-authored HB 9 by Rep. Ashby to create the Texas Broadband Infrastructure Fund, which will provide \$1.5 billion in funding to expand broadband to Texans who need it.



Rep. Gámez speaking to students, teachers, and parents from the district on their visit to their Capitol.