

## Senator Joan Huffman Files Senate Base Budget

AUSTIN — Today, Senator Joan Huffman, R-Houston, filed Senate Bill 1, the Senate's base budget for the 2026-2027 biennium. The General Appropriations Bill is a culmination of months of due diligence and input from state agencies and stakeholders. It establishes property tax relief, public safety, education, energy, water infrastructure and supply, and many other critical needs as priorities for the upcoming two-year budget.

“The Senate’s base budget ensures that the State of Texas continues to have the strongest and most successful economy in the nation,” said Huffman. “We have an obligation to the people of Texas to make investments that will keep Texas as the best place to live, work, and raise a family. The base budget is a starting point, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to develop a conservative and sustainable budget that addresses our needs and strengthens our economy.”

As filed, SB 1 appropriates \$332.9 billion in All Funds and \$151.6 billion in General Revenue. Highlights of SB 1:

- Assumes \$51 billion in property tax relief since 2019, including the following amounts appropriated to the Foundation School Program for the 2026-27 biennium: \$3 billion to further compress school district M&O tax rates under HB 3 (86R) provisions, \$3.5 billion to maintain relief provided by SB 2 (88-2), \$3 billion to raise the homestead exemption by \$40,000, and \$500 million to provide tax relief to businesses;
- Fully funds school district entitlements through the Foundation School Program, including \$1.7 billion to reflect changes in student population projections and \$0.8 billion related to increases in the golden penny yield;
- \$5 billion in additional funding for the Texas Energy Fund to ensure long-term reliability and resilience of the state’s electrical grid;
- \$4.85 billion to increase teacher compensation pending the passage of legislation that provides an across-the-board teacher pay raise with additional salary increases for rural districts, and increases awards of the Teacher Incentive Allotment;
- \$400 million to double the school safety allotment pending the passage of SB 260;
- \$450 million in additional funding for TRS ActiveCare to contain healthcare premium increases for teachers, in addition to \$1.2 billion appropriated since 2021 to keep healthcare premium increases for teachers below market rates;
- \$6.5 billion to maintain support for Operation Lone Star, the state-sponsored effort to secure our southern border;
- \$403 million to fund over 560 new Department of Public Safety commissioned officers, plus associated support staff;
- \$331 million to maintain the fund created in 2023 to bolster law enforcement and criminal justice efforts in rural Texas communities;
- \$850 million to an endowment fund to support capital needs for career and technical education programs at Texas State Technical Colleges, contingent upon the passage of legislation;

- \$3 billion to capitalize a new fund to support the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, contingent upon the passage of legislation and voter approval;
- \$80.8 billion for Texas Medicaid across all agencies, including \$74.4 billion for client services through the Health and Human Services Commission, to fund projected caseload growth;
- \$1.8 billion to increase the base wage for Community Attendants;
- \$439.1 million for women’s health programs, including \$10 million for additional Women’s Preventative Mobile Health Units, plus \$13.6 million to provide a 10 percent increase to Medicaid reimbursement rates for maternal fetal medicine services to improve access to complex maternal services across the state;
- \$40 million to provide for eight additional Youth Crisis Outreach Teams (YCOT) in urban areas and additional funding to expand crisis mental health services for existing Teams;
- \$81.9 million to continue to expand Community-Based Foster Care into four new geographic areas;
- \$739 million to contain healthcare premium increases for state employees;
- \$192 million to clear the backlog of Volunteer Fire Department grant requests through the Texas A&M Forest Service, providing equipment and training for rural departments; and
- \$36.2 billion to address the state’s transportation needs through highway project development, construction, and maintenance.

SB 1 also includes an informational rider outlining several priority items intended to be funded in the upcoming supplemental budget for the 2024-2025 biennium, including:

- \$2.5 billion in new funding to bolster the state’s water infrastructure and expand access to supply, contingent upon the passage of legislation;
- \$1 billion to the Employees Retirement System for a one-time legacy payment to the System’s unfunded actuarial liabilities to reduce long-term interest costs;
- \$350 million to TxDOT for non-state roadway rail grade crossing separation projects to improve public safety, contingent upon the passage of legislation;
- \$315 million to the Texas Division of Emergency Management for seven additional Emergency Operations Facilities around the state;
- \$194 million to Texas A&M Forest Service to acquire additional aircraft for wildfire suppression; and
- \$328 million to the Department of State Health Services for the construction of new state laboratory space to expand highly-complex testing capacity for disease investigation, food and water safety, and newborn screening.

*(Senator Joan Huffman represents District 17, which is comprised of Colorado, Jackson, Matagorda, and Wharton counties and portions of Brazoria, Fort Bend, Harris, and Waller counties. Huffman currently serves as Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance and as a senior member of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice and the Legislative Budget Board.)*

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