



NEWS RELEASE

Senator Robert Nichols

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Nichols named President Pro Tempore, after a successful 85th Legislative Session

Austin -- On Monday, the 85th Legislative Session came to a close, marking another successful session for the people of Texas. Senator Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville), was also elected President Pro Tempore, by a unanimous vote from the members of the Texas Senate.

"Working together, I believe this Legislature has passed integral legislation to benefit the entire State of Texas," said Senator Robert Nichols. "Serving the people of Senate District 3 has been one of the greatest honors of my life, and I look forward to continuing to work for them."

As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, Nichols played an important role in determining the state's \$217 billion budget for the next biennium. This includes \$300 million from the Economic Stabilization Fund to begin much needed repairs of our state hospital system and \$63 million in additional funding for the states mental health services. The budget also includes \$800 million to secure the border and hire new troopers, and an additional \$2.65 billion to cover enrollment growth in the state's education system.

Nichols served for the third session as Chairman for the Senate Transportation Committee. "I want to thank Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick for his leadership and for entrusting me with this Chairmanship," said Nichols. "We passed important legislation to allow Texas to maintain its competitive edge when it comes to exporting products and directed \$5 billion in sales tax revenue to address transportation issues across the state."

On Sine Die, Senator Nichols was named President Pro Tempore. If the Governor and Lt. Governor are out of the State at the same time, Nichols will be the acting Governor in their absence. This is based on seniority and made by a vote of the Senate members.

"I am honored to be named President Pro Tempore. I look forward to serving in this position throughout the interim, and am grateful for the trust of my colleagues in the Senate," said Nichols.

Other legislative highlights include:

- Senate Bill 16 which lowered the License to Carry Fee application and renewal fees in Texas. Making it one of the lowest fees in the Nation.
- Senate Bill 24 which provides protections for Pastors by prohibiting the subpoena of their sermons by state officials
- Senate Bill 12 to allocate \$25 million for protective vests for law enforcement
- HB 62 - bans texting while driving across the state
- Senate Bill 7 which creates a criminal offense and cracks down on improper teacher-student relationships
- Senate Bill 4 which bans 'Sanctuary Cities' in the State
- Increased the funding for Child Protective Services by over \$500 million

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