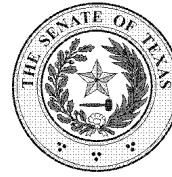




STATE REPRESENTATIVE
TRAVIS CLARDY

DISTRICT 11



Senator Robert Nichols

Senate District 3 www.senate.state.tx.us (512) 463-0103

January 3, 2018
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information Contact:
Sydni Mitchell Kelly Barnes
(512) 463-0103 (512) 463-0592

Nichols and Clardy Announce Significant Funding for Rusk State Hospital

Austin, TX- Today, Texas State Senator Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville) and Texas State Representative Travis Clardy (R-Nacogdoches) announced a significant allocation of funding for Rusk State Hospital.

"Rep. Clardy and I have worked hard to ensure there is awareness in the Legislature of the significant need for improved mental health funding and how it is important to invest in our state hospital infrastructure," said Senator Nichols. "After years of underfunding, which has resulted in building deterioration and closure of some hospital units, Rusk State Hospital will now have the necessary funding to meet the increased demand for state mental health beds."

During the 85th Legislative Session, \$300 million was approved to construct new state-funded inpatient psychiatric facilities, or significantly repair the state's hospital system during the 2018-2019 biennium. The Legislative Budget Board has given approval for \$4.5 million of this funding to be used to obtain the architectural and engineering plans for a 100 bed maximum security unit at Rusk. Construction could begin as early as 2019.

An additional \$4.5 million was also approved from the original funding to replace 100 civil/non-maximum security beds at Rusk State Hospital, as a project for the 2020-21 biennium. Though HHSC will begin architectural and engineering planning of this building, funding to construct this second 100 beds has not yet been secured.

"Thanks to Senator Nichols' leadership at the Capitol and the hard work and support of many others, I am confident the experienced professionals and staff will continue Rusk State Hospital's legacy of exemplary care and that these new state of the art facilities will set the standard for the compassionate treatment of mental illness in Texas," said Representative Clardy. "I'm honored to be part of the team to help make this innovative vision of the future a reality."

The Health and Human Services Commission will also partner with UT Health Northeast in Tyler to provide necessary and innovative mental health care services at Rusk State Hospital.

###