



Senator Joan Huffman

Senate District 17

Senator Joan Huffman Files Bills to Bolster Public Safety Throughout Texas

AUSTIN — Today, Senator Joan Huffman filed three major legislative measures aimed at strengthening school safety, enabling judges to deny bail to the most violent criminals, and improving judicial transparency and accountability. Senate Bill 260 seeks to double school safety funding for both the “per student” and “per campus” safety allotments, while Senate Bill 293 focuses on enhancing judicial transparency and accountability. Additionally, Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 17 would grant judges the authority to deny bail to violent offenders.

"Last session, I worked diligently to craft a budget that committed \$1.4 billion in new funding for school safety and security," said Huffman. "Through ongoing discussions with school districts and the Texas Education Agency, it is clear that Texas must build on these investments to ensure our schoolchildren's safety. But safety is more than physical security—it includes making our judicial system fair, efficient, and equitable for all. The reforms in SB 293 and SJR 17 are key steps toward making Texas's judiciary a national model of excellence, and I look forward to collaborating with my colleagues on these critical public safety priorities in the months ahead."

Specifically, Senate Bill 260 aims to double the “per student” and “per campus” school safety allotments, with an estimated cost of around \$400 million. This additional funding will help school districts comply with House Bill 3 from the last regular session, particularly regarding the hiring of armed security officers.

In tandem, Senate Bill 293 and SJR 17 are designed to create a safer, more transparent, and more effective judiciary. Building on previous bail reform legislation championed by Senator Huffman, SJR 17, if approved by voters, would allow judges to deny bail to the most violent offenders who pose a clear and convincing threat to public safety, regardless of the defendant’s financial resources. This constitutional change would equip judges with an unbiased tool to make decisions based on risk, not resources.

"Over the last two legislative sessions, I have passed a version of SJR 17 out of the Senate five times with bi-partisan support," Huffman noted. "I am hopeful that in the upcoming session, we can finally send this measure to the Governor’s desk and give Texans the opportunity to vote on this common-sense public safety reform."

(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, Chair of the Senate Special Committee on Redistricting, and as a senior member of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice and the Legislative Budget Board.)

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