



# Pete's Periódico

## *86th Legislative Session Nears End*

by Sen. Pete Flores, Senate District 19

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The Senate Chamber in the Texas Capitol is a distinguished place—murals and portraits of Texas battles and heroes line the wall; two large chandeliers split the middle of the room, lightbulbs circularly arranged spelling "Texas." The room resonates the story of our great state. And in this room I have spent the majority of the past five months—adding another chapter to our growing story.

My first session in the Texas Legislature is almost in the books. It was a whirlwind of committee hearings and bill debates, long nights and early mornings. But, as the Session nears to a close on May 27 after 140 days of governing, we begin to reflect on our work and see what we did to make a better Texas.

Coming to office, my goal was to fight for the people of Senate District 19, a group of Texans ignored in this Legislature for too long. All communities and counties, big and small, from my district deserved to be served, recognized who they are and what they contribute to this state.

At every opportunity, I advocated for you. Whether in Senate Finance Committee, on the Senate Floor, in meetings with other legislators, industry leaders, or national news. I am always pitching Senate District 19: what I believe to be the hidden treasure trove of Texas.

As a Texas Senate, we had big goals this Session: lower property taxes, reform school finance, rebuild from Hurricane Harvey, and more. These bills are nearing a close and will come to a resolution in the next few days—I will wait for a future Periódico to explain them in detail.

While supportive of the big goals, I had various smaller goals this session. I authored 27 Senate Bills and coauthored another 50—of those 27 bills I authored, I expect around a dozen to reach the Governor's desk and become Texas law. While nothing is official yet, if around half my bills pass that might be a new record; in recent Legislatures, 1 in 5 bills make it that far.

The bills I worked on covered a spectrum of issues: helping Texas A&M University – San Antonio begin an athletics program, promoting the school's brand and developing a stronger student culture; assisting the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas to better protect their reservation with commissioned peace officers; giving the city of Pearsall the ability to keep more of its taxes to build, improve, and maintain facilities to attract additional tourism.

I worked to protect vulnerable consumers with implementing more accountability for car dealerships; exempt honorably retired Texas peace officers from repetitive and unnecessary training, saving time and money and the state; help ensure our west Texas roads are safe from overweight commercial vehicles; establish a new military license plate for veterans who have received the Army Occupation Medal. These bills and more address specific needs brought to my attention by my constituents.

Through my work in Senate Finance Committee, I fought for important priorities in our Senate District, including money for infrastructure, border security, local air quality, mental health, university funding, and the San Antonio State Hospital. And that's not everything.

I served in this office with a constituent-first mindset and, if all of these bills became law, it will be multiple victories for Senate District 19. Representing Senate District 19 these past 140 days have been an absolute honor and I have all of you to thank for it. Thank you for calling the office, stopping me in public, and reading these columns—you're the boss.

I conclude as I always have: Adelante. Onward to these final days of the 86th Texas Legislature, the interim, and beyond. Thank you for reading.

*Sen. Pete Flores is a Republican Texas Senator representing Senate District 19.*

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