

The Senate of The State of Texas



BRIAN BIRDWELL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 18, 2013

Contact: Ben Stratmann  
(512) 463-0122

**TEXAS STATE SENATOR BRIAN BIRDWELL COMMENTS ON TRAGEDY FROM WEST**

WEST, TEXAS—“Approximately 20 hours ago a fertilizer plant in the City of West, Texas experienced a brief fire followed by a massive explosion. Though reports have varied, we know that a large number our citizens have been injured; some critically. Out of respect for the relevant families, I will not comment on fatalities until we have identified the exact number of deceased. Furthermore, the search and rescue process here in West is ongoing.

“Under the outstanding leadership of McLennan County Judge Scott Felton, Sheriff Parnell McNamara and Commissioner Will Jones, and thanks to the mobilization of necessary state support by Governor Rick Perry, great strides are being made to ensure the immediate safety and ongoing recovery of this small, historic community. It was an honor to be with our local officials and first responders today. The work they are doing is difficult, tireless and critical, yet being done with the spirit of teamwork you would expect from Texans.

“My office has received an overwhelming number of calls from the citizens of outlying towns and counties who want to be of support to their neighbors in West. At this time, county officials are asking that any donations be directed to the Red Cross, Salvation Army and/or the special accounts created to accept community donations at the PointWest Bank and State Bank of West. Additional information and helpful numbers and email addresses can be found on the McLennan County website at [www.co.mclennan.tx.us](http://www.co.mclennan.tx.us).

“Beyond this, I can only say that this terrible disaster is still very much a fluid situation. I have been in continuous communication with local, county and state officials since shortly after the explosion yesterday, and I will remain so until this incident is resolved. For now, I ask you pray for your fellow Texans and patronize the appropriate channels of charity and assistance if at all possible. May God bless the people of West during this tragic time.”

###

*Brian Birdwell is a native Texan, decorated military veteran, survivor of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the Pentagon, and a proud husband and father. He currently represents Bosque, Ellis, Falls, Hill, Hood, Johnson, McLennan, Navarro, Somervell and Tarrant [partial] Counties in Senate District 22.*