

# 7/18 District 45 Update

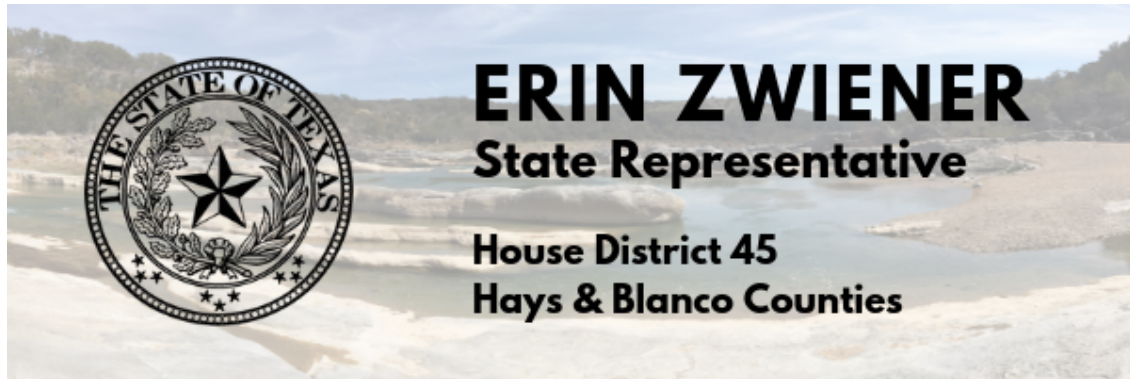
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## Your District 45 Weekly Update

Friends -

It's been almost two months since the 86th Legislative Session adjourned, but we've been keeping busy. Two of my bills -- one to preserve our dark skies and one to establish an aquifer storage and recovery program -- became law!

Texas Monthly also published their rankings of the best and worst legislators, and [yours truly received an amazing shout out](#).

Scroll through this newsletter for additional updates about what my office and I have been up to since May 27!

We'll also be doing a social media wrap up of the session that you can follow on our Facebook page [here](#).

For a better Texas,

**Erin Zwiener**

**LET'S CONNECT!**

State Representative | District 45  
Hays & Blanco Counties

**Note:** Now that session has ended, we'll provide monthly updates rather than weekly updates. Please follow us on social media to stay up-to-date!

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## *Contact Us*

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Click [here](#) to sign up for our office newsletter!

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**NOW OPEN!**

**District Office:**

225 S. Main Street  
Suite 102  
Kyle, TX 78640

**Office Hours**

Monday: 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Tuesday: 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Thursday: 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Wednesday & Friday: Appointment Only

**Need to meet with us at another time?**

Make an appointment: 512-463-0647

Stay tuned for our pop up office locations in other House District 45 cities.

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## The Main Stories

### *Visiting Carrizo Springs*



I joined the Children's Defense Fund-Texas at the site of the Trump administration's Carrizo Springs Child Detention Camp Wednesday, July 3, to advocate for the wellbeing of the children housed there.

I felt the need to visit Carrizo Springs because it is our duty to advocate for all those in our state and in particular our most vulnerable population: our kids. I'm disturbed by the reports that have been circulating about condition in Border Patrol facilities, and no children should be living in inhumane conditions in Texas.

The new facility in Carrizo Springs is operated by the federal Health and Human Services Department and ostensibly is working to unite unaccompanied minors with their families. Unfortunately several Trump administration decisions have inflated the number of children that need care and slowed down the process of reunification.

I joined the Children's Defense Fund for a demonstration to advocate for fair treatment of these children, and HHS staff gave me an impromptu tour. The facility I saw was clean, appropriately furnished, and seemed to be run efficiently. The children (about 160 at the time from age 13-17) appeared clean, appropriately addressed, and engaged in appropriate activities such as soccer, school, and playing cards. I am concerned that the immigrant rights group RAICES is having trouble being granted the access they were promised. Watchdog groups need regular access to every facility that holds children to both ensure appropriate treatment and to offer legal assistance.

Texas legislators are staying vigilant. Several members visited the Border Patrol facility in Clint earlier this month. Last week, the House Homeland Security and International Relations Committees held a joint hearing on the humanitarian crisis at the border. [The Mexican American Legislative Caucus](#)

[sent a letter \(that I signed onto\) to the US Department of Homeland Security to insist on better treatment of immigrants at the border.](#) Next week, I will be joining a delegation of state representatives touring the Border Patrol operated Donna Holding Facility near McAllen.

According to multiple reports, the most basic needs of families in these Border Patrol facilities are not being met, and federal law regarding the detention of children is being ignored. [The biggest challenge we are facing right now is the Trump Administration broke faith with the American People and so we have to remain vigilant anywhere they are keeping children, or really any migrants to make sure that basic standards of human decency are present on site.](#)

I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure that all children on Texas soil are treated with care and decency, that humane conditions are provided to all immigrants, and to ensure that unaccompanied minors are reunited with families as quickly as possible.

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## ***Court Challenge Against Kinder Morgan Fails***

A few weeks ago we received the devastating news that a Travis County District Court ruled the Texas Railroad Commission isn't required to set standards for routing pipelines that have the power of eminent domain. This is something that I fought for throughout the entire 86th Legislative Session.



FILE PHOTO: Helmets line a shelf in a control room at Kinder Morgan's Westridge Terminal on Burrard Inlet in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada November 17, 2017. Picture taken November 17, 2017. REUTERS/Chris Helgren

I filed six bills related to the dangerous practices of pipeline operators and three bills to provide oversight of the exercise of power of eminent domain by private pipeline companies.

I'm disappointed in this ruling but am renewing my commitment to ensuring public accountability when a company is given the power of eminent domain. Currently the people of Texas have zero input in the routing of these pipelines, and it's wrong. The City of Kyle and Hays County are continuing their legal challenges, and I will continue my efforts.

Kinder Morgan told the court that it was up to the state legislature, not the court, to change the pipeline permitting process and that is exactly what I will continue to fight for. Pipelines should go through the same public process that our electric lines, railroads, and major roadways have to. These decisions should be made in the light of day, not in a corporate boardroom.

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### ***Effective Immediately: Preserving the Night Sky***



Dark Sky cities in the Texas Hill Country can now use their hotel occupancy tax dollars to protect the night sky. My Hill Country Night Sky Tourism Bill, HB 4158, is now law and effective immediately!

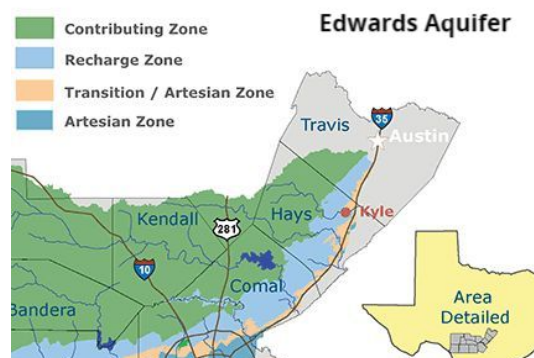
HB 4158 gives small cities in Hays and Blanco Counties another important tool to invest in local tourism efforts. This legislation recognizes the importance of dark skies to visitors and residents of the Hill Country and allows communities to use hotel occupancy tax funds to incentivize updating outdoor lighting.

It's a big win for our local economies, tourism, and those who enjoy a preserved night sky to observe at night. I'd like to thank the Blanco County Friends of the Night Sky, Hill Country Alliance, and Texas Hotel and Lodging Association for their work on this legislation. Thank you also to Senators Zaffirini and Buckingham for successfully moving this bill through the Texas Senate.

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### ***Effective Immediately: Protecting Buda's Water Supply***

Senator Donna Campbell and I worked together to pass legislation for the City of Buda to invest in aquifer storage and recovery. SB 483 allows fresh water to be stored in the Trinity Aquifer in times of abundance so the city can draw from it during peak usage times and drought.



With this legislation, we reduce reliance on Edwards Aquifer water and ensure Buda has access to an adequate water supply no matter the time of year. SB 483 was signed into law by Governor Abbott on June 10, and is also effective immediately!



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## *Effective Sept. 1: Addressing Sexual Assault*

### Passing HB 2672 as a Budget Rider



I filed HB 2672 to help Texas police departments, sheriff's departments, and district attorneys build the tools they need to be effective at enforcing our sexual assault laws and catch and prosecute repeat offenders.

HB 2672 received a hearing before the House Committee on State Affairs, but was never set for a floor vote.

There's more than one way to pass a bill, however. I started working with Rep. Donna Howard on a way to address the issue in House Bill 1, the budget. We introduced an amendment that creates an Audit Plan of Disposition of Sexual Assault Investigations. The audit will require a data release that includes the number of sexual assault reports that were either: (1) prosecuted as different criminal offenses, (2) closed or classified as inactive without being forwarded to the local county or district attorney, (3) not prosecuted (and the reasons why they were not prosecuted), or (4) dismissed after an indictment had been filed. The audit will examine a five-year period from calendar years 2014-2018 and include data from city and county jurisdictions across the state.

I am so thankful to Rep. Howard for her help in addressing this important issue. It is startling that there is no single source of data that provides a complete picture of crimes related to sexual assault offenses in Texas. This budget

picture of crimes related to sexual assault offenses in Texas. This budget amendment begins to fix that, and next session we can use this data to help dedicate more resources to sexual assault investigations and prosecutions.

Governor Abbott signed the budget into law on June 15, and it will come into effect on September 1, 2019!

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## ***Texas Monthly Shout Out***



A year and a half ago Texas Monthly wrote about how I was unlikely to win my primary much less my general election. Now they're saying this:

"Driftwood lawmaker Erin Zwiener was described by many as the most savvy freshman and potential future leader of the House Democrats."

Click [here](#) or on the image above to read the full article!

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## ***Recent Photos***





TOP LEFT: Kicking off Juneteenth celebrations in San Marcos at Rose Brook's cake auction!

TOP RIGHT: Watching the Dripping Springs High School Class of 2019 cross the graduation stage.

MIDDLE LEFT: Touring the Gay Ruby Dahlstrom Nature Preserve with Hays County Commissioner Mark Jones.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Visiting with the AP Government class at Hays High School.

BOTTOM LEFT: Speaking at a press conference outside the Easy Mix/Master Pools



Concrete facility at Signal Hill Road. I committed to continuing to work to strengthen Texas' regulation of the aggregate production industry & find substantive solutions.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Me and Razi participating in Wimberley's Independence Day Parade!

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## *Upcoming Events*



SAVE THE DATE

# DISTRICT OFFICE GRAND OPENING

STATE REP. ERIN ZWIENER

Saturday, August 10  
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

225 S. Main Street, Suite 102  
Kyle, TX 78640

**Save the date** for the grand opening of our district office! Tour our new office space, visit with staff, and chat with Erin about issues important to you!

**Saturday, August 10**

**11:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

**225 S. Main Street, Suite 102**

**Kyle, Texas 78640**

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## **Recent Articles**

[Rep. Zwiener's HB 4158, 'Hill Country Night Sky Tourism Bill,' Becomes Law](#)

[The House's LGBTQ Caucus Makes History](#)



[Zwiener Takes Lead In Fighting Bill On Pipeline Protests](#)

[Funding added to analyse data of sexual assaults in Texas](#)

[San Marcos joins other US cities holding vigils for migrants being detained at the border](#)



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**Our mailing address is:**

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