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REP. GUILLEN PROTECTS STUDENTS FROM SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
SB 7 Prohibits Sexual Interaction Between Educators and Students

AUSTIN - On **Monday, May 15**, SB 7 was enrolled in the Texas legislature and currently awaits action from the Governor. State Representative Ryan Guillen (D-Rural South Texas) is a sponsor of SB 7, which will prohibit sexual conduct between any educator and any student regardless of whether the student was enrolled in the district where the teacher worked.

"This is a non-partisan issue," Guillen stated, "We must hold educators accountable for the security and safety of our students."

The Texas Education Agency (TEA), which investigates teacher misconduct, reports an increased case volume of inappropriate relationships between educators and students. In a recent study from the TEA, the agency indicated that the number of new cases increased by 20 percent from fiscal 2011 to fiscal 2015. Similar studies have also found that many educators accused of such an incident are being silently terminated without any significant mark on their records. Those educators are then able to teach at a different school district with little to no repercussions.

Passage of SB 7 will provide instruction on preventing, recognizing, and reporting prohibited sexual conduct between an educator and a student, for instructors and principals alike, as well as put in place numerous safeguards to further protect Texas students.

"The increase of inappropriate relationships between educators and students is unacceptable," said Guillen. "There is no excuse for our educators to be involved in a relationship with their students, and with this bill we can better ensure such misconduct does not go unpunished."

Guillen was the author of HB 3769, the House companion for SB 7. Guillen also filled HB 49 on **November 14, 2016**, relating to the prosecution of the offense of improper relationship between educator and student.

Representative Ryan Guillen serves ten rural South Texas counties in the Texas House of Representatives, including Atascosa, Brooks, Duval, Jim Hogg, Kenedy, La Salle, Live Oak, McMullen, Starr, and Willacy.

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