



RYAN GUILLEN

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TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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GUILLEN FIGHTS FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS *New Measure Provides Law Enforcement with Funding to Test Evidence from Backlogged Sexual Assault Cases*

AUSTIN - Representative Ryan Guillen (D- Rural South Texas) is proud to announce that a measure to fund the testing of backlogged evidence kits from sexual assault survivors took effect this month. H.B. 1729, which Guillen was an author of, establishes a statewide grant program to fund the testing of sexual assault evidence and provides an initial \$4 million boost to the program.

"The number of untested sexual assault evidence kits sitting in storage is absurd," said Guillen. "These pieces of crucial evidence must be tested quickly so that justice may be served."

In the state of Texas, over 4,000 backlogged rape kits remain untested. A rape kit, formally known as a SAFE (Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence) kit, is a toolkit used to collect forensic evidence for suspected sexual assault cases. It safely stores and preserves critical forensic evidence to more easily prosecute the perpetrator.

H.B 1729 provides an innovative solution to the long-term funding of this testing by creating a grant program funded by voluntary donations from Texans when they apply for or renew their driver's licenses. During the past legislative session, Rep. Guillen also helped secure the \$4,219,000 in initial funding to test the backlogged kits.

"We must constantly strive for a better, safer Texas, and this measure is a necessary step towards that goal," Guillen added.

Serving ten rural South Texas counties in the Texas House of Representatives, Ryan Guillen is known for his hard work, fierce independence, and relentless efforts for South Texas families. Recently, Capitol Inside called him a "House Bill Machine," and a "one-person assembly line for legislation." Since elected, few other legislators have passed more bills than Guillen. Sign up for updates at ryanguillen.com, facebook.com/representative.guillen, and twitter.com/ryanguillen

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