



# RYAN GUILLEN

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TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
ALEX.GAUDIO@HOUSE.TEXAS.GOV

## **GUILLEN HELPS SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS** *H.B. 281 Allows Survivors To Track Status of Evidence*

**AUSTIN** - Representative Ryan Guillen (D- Rural South Texas) is proud to announce that H.B. 281, took effect Friday, September 1st. This measure, which Guillen helped author, establishes a statewide electronic tracking system for evidence collected in sexual assault cases.

**"Survivors deserve to know as much as possible about their case. Delays in the case or a lack of transparency in the process will only leave survivors feeling more anxious and traumatized," said Guillen. "With this tracking system, survivors can look up when and where their evidence is transferred to, whether analysis is pending or completed, and when and where it is stored or destroyed."**

Under previous law, sexual assault survivors could access some of this information, but, they had to go through a crime lab or law enforcement staff to do so, and there was no standard state-wide system to handle these requests. As a result, access to this information could be slow and sometimes the information couldn't be accessed at all. H.B. 281 makes sure survivors can directly access the status of their evidence and the progress in their case.

The system will track evidence through the entire criminal justice process, including from health care facilities, law enforcement agencies, laboratories and prosecutors' offices. Furthermore, the measure will not compromise investigations or the privacy of survivors because the tracking system will be confidential.

**"Giving survivors this additional information about their cases will increase trust and transparency in the criminal justice system," said Guillen.**

In order to not overburden local law enforcement agencies and labs, DPS will develop the service and roll it out to other entities. The law takes effect September 1, 2017 with full implementation expected by September 1, 2019.

*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](http://ryanguillen.com), [facebook.com/representative.guillen](https://facebook.com/representative.guillen), and [twitter.com/ryanguillen](https://twitter.com/ryanguillen)*

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