



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ETHICS COMMITTEE EXAMINES EMERGENCY LEAVE

AUSTIN – State Representative Ryan Guillen(D - District 31) called for action last week following a hearing conducted by the House Committee on General Investigation & Ethics which addressed the use of emergency leave by state agencies.

"We need to be sure that our state agencies are being held to the standards we expect of them," said Guillen. "While it's important that we give our agencies the ability to act freely, they should not be abusing this power."

Emergency leave is normally used to provide state employees with a few days of pay in the event of a death in the family, health issues, or another emergency. However, recently allegations have arisen that a number of state agencies have used emergency leave to continue to pay employees months after they've left their jobs.

Others argue that due to the vague wording associated with emergency leave, it has also been used in settlement agreements and to pre-empt employment disputes. The issue is being addressed as part of the committee's fourth interim charge, and already several law makers have promised to revise the policy.

"Emergency leave can be an amazing and helpful tool for state agencies when used properly," said Guillen. "We need to make sure that state agencies are using the tools that we give them carefully and responsibly."

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