



**RYAN GUILLEN**  
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TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **GUILLEN BILLS BOOST VETERANS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS**

*HB 61, HB 66, HB 69, HB 79 and HB 92*

*Guillen Education and Service Bills Through First Round of Hearings*

**AUSTIN** –State Representative Ryan Guillen (D-Rural South Texas) filed HB 61 and HB 79 seeking fair testing for special education students and better test score reporting for public schools. He also filed HB 66 increasing funding options for the four-year Armed Services Scholarship, and HB 92, a bill to help disabled veterans' spouses find jobs. His HB 69 will cut back on time consuming paperwork for public school educators.

This week all those bills were well received in House committees and drew support from other members, moving Texas a few steps closer to providing much needed aid to special ed. students, veteran's spouses, and our public school teachers.

**"Texas is simply not doing enough for our students, our teachers and our veteran families" said Guillen.**

HB 61 amends the Education Code to create a school performance indicator of success so that schools with successful special education programs get the recognition they deserve. HB 79 will make sure all qualifying special ed. students are allowed to take an alternative test designed for their cognitive development, and ensure evaluation scores are not penalized, as they are today, if they give the test to all their special ed. students. **"Schools should not be penalized for doing the right thing," said Guillen.**

HB 69 will allow a small change in the statewide PEIMS reporting system to automate onerous reporting requirements for students who live in Residential Housing situations away from their families. **"All the information is already in PEIMS and our teachers should not be forced to spend hours on reports that can be done automatically," Guillen explained.**

**"With the implementation of HB 61, HB 79 and HB 69, our students can receive a better education, and our teachers can spend more time focusing on teaching," Guillen said.**

Each year the governor, lieutenant governor, state senator, and state representative may appoint students to receive the Armed Services Scholarship. The Award is quite a prestigious achievement, and the scholarship amount can be up to \$5,000 per student per semester for all

four years. Currently, if a student for any reason loses their scholarship eligibility, there is no process to allow another student to be appointed in their place. HB 66 seeks to fix that issue to allow other eligible students to take advantage of the opportunity. Representative Guillen believes this bill will ensure that scholarship funds go to qualified students and are no longer wasted in the future.

**"The State can do better to ensure the Armed Services Scholarship funds are not being wasted. There's always a highly qualified alternate next in line who is deserving of these scholarship funds, and I see no reason why they shouldn't have their own chance to benefit." Guillen stated.**

Across the country spouses of disabled veterans struggle to find employment, and spouses of 100% disabled veterans do not receive enough from veterans' compensation to meet their family needs. The honorable men and women, who have bravely served our country, and their spouses who have supported them, both qualify for employment preferences under federal law. Veteran's spouses deserve to receive the same opportunity under Texas law. Representative Guillen believes that allowing the spouses of 100% disabled veterans to qualify for the Veteran Employment Preference in state hiring will further align Texas law with federal law.

**"Allowing the spouses of disabled veterans a preference with state agency hiring, other factors being equal, has become a fundamental necessity. This will help disabled veterans raise their children and provide sustainable living wages among many veteran families."**

The public hearings that took place this week were only the start of a long conversation, one necessary to improving our great state. Guillen encourages continued support for these bills as they wind their way through the legislative process.

**"With the passage of these bills, we can and will make a positive change in the lives of Texans across the state." said Guillen.**

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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