



Representative Andrew Murr

Texas House District 53

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REPRESENTATIVE ANDREW MURR: PROPERTY TAX CUTTING LEGISLATION PASSES OUT OF COMMITTEE

AUSTIN, TX – On Wednesday, May 5th, State Representative Andrew Murr's (R-Junction) House Bill 59 was voted favorably out of the Ways and Means Committee of the Texas House. This legislation would abolish school district maintenance and operations (M&O) property taxes as of January 1, 2024 and cut taxes for Texas property owners by nearly 50%. HB 59 also includes directives for the Legislature to identify a better funding mechanism to replace any funding lost from the abolishment of school M&O taxes.

“Too often, our elected officials pay lip service to the idea of property tax relief without offering any meaningful solutions,” said Rep. Murr following the vote. “I’m glad the Ways and Means Committee recognized that this bill will take direct aim at the problem of skyrocketing property tax bills and voted favorably to send the bill to the floor of the Texas House.”

The driving force behind rising property taxes in Texas is the school finance system. While a statewide property tax is prohibited by the Texas Constitution, local school districts rely heavily upon local property taxes to help fund public education.

In the place of local school property taxes, House Bill 59 would mandate legislators find another source of funding to replace current revenue collected from property taxes. This could include a variety of options, including a consumption tax, the closing of current tax loopholes, or a combination of both. Ultimately by transitioning to a broader tax base from other sources, the state can better meet its obligation to provide for the public education of our children, while also reducing the burden on home owners and property taxpayers. The bill's language also stipulates that current funding levels for public education will not be reduced.

“While Texas is generally viewed as a low-tax state, the dirty little secret is that our property tax rates are among the highest in the nation. In fact, it's only places like New Jersey, Illinois and Connecticut who have higher rates than ours. Cutting the tax rates for property owners will provide tangible incentives for out-of-state businesses to re-locate to Texas and for existing businesses to expand and create new jobs.” remarked Rep. Murr. “It will give families greater opportunities for home ownership, while also protecting existing homeowners, particularly those on fixed-incomes, from skyrocketing appraisals and crippling tax bills.

Murr added, “My constituents and property owners across the state have been calling for tax relief for years. HB 59 would ensure we no longer saddle property owners with an unjust tax system that punishes them for owning their little piece of Texas.”

HB 59 now heads to the Calendars Committee of the Texas House to be scheduled for a vote of the full membership on the House Floor. If passed, it will then make its way to the Senate for further passage and then finally to Governor Abbott's desk for signage.

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Rep. Andrew Murr is a rancher, attorney, small businessman and former Kimble County Judge who has represented District 53 in the Texas House since 2015. House District 53 includes Bandera, Crockett, Edwards, Kerr, Kimble, Llano, Mason, Medina, Menard, Real, Schleicher and Sutton Counties.