

HOUSE JOURNAL

EIGHTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION

PROCEEDINGS

FIRST DAY — TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2019

In accordance with the laws and Constitution of the State of Texas, the members-elect of the house of representatives assembled this day in the hall of the house of representatives in the city of Austin. At 12:02 p.m., the Honorable David Whitley, secretary of state of the State of Texas, called the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas to order.

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Ed Thompson of Brazoria County who introduced Father Victor Perez, pastor, Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Angleton, who offered the invocation as follows:

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts to you today on behalf of our whole state. In history, when Cabeza de Vaca came to Texas from the Gulf, he saw a great river. He named it "Los Brazos de Dios," the Brazos, the arms of God. We place our state in your arms, O God. Keep us safe. We thank you, how through floods and hardship you have used others to extend your arms to help families get back on their feet. Bless all the families of our state. We especially intercede for those who have suffered any tragedy and are grieving. We thank you for your providence, providing for our people, providing employment. Keep sustaining our economy. Also, we want to pray for all the children of our state as they start the school semester. Please watch over them.

Through your son, Jesus, you said, "but he that is the greatest among you shall be your servant." We thank you for these men and women who are public servants, who take a break from their day-to-day jobs to better our state. Protect them and bless their families. Also today, Lord, I ask you to bless those who are new to this chamber and are newly elected. As they go through this transition, be with them and give them peace. As Psalm 127 says, "if the Lord does not build a house, in vain do the builders labor." Bless this house. Thanks for the freedom we had to vote these people into office. Help each of these representatives, Lord, with an outpouring of your spirit. Enlighten them with the gifts of counsel and wisdom. Give them fortitude and courage. Unite them in a sincere desire for the common good. Let the sense of true justice and charity guide them and a respect for all the people of our state since you created each one of us in your own image and likeness. Prosper the work of their hands. Bless these days ahead and journey along beside them. Bless our governor, and bless our nation of which we are a part. Let Texas continue to be a blessing to these United States of America. Amen.

Secretary Whitley recognized Abby Price, daughter of the Honorable Four Price, Heather Lewis, Chris Truong, and Michael Follis, students from the Butler School of Music at The University of Texas, who sang the national anthem.

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Dan Flynn of Van Zandt County who led the house in the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag, and the Honorable James White of Tyler County who led the house in the pledge of allegiance to the Texas flag.

ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The Honorable David Whitley, secretary of state of the State of Texas, addressed the house, speaking as follows:

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the 86th Texas Legislature. I won't keep you long, I promise. I want to extend a special welcome to my wife and to families, friends, and special guests. Thank you all for joining us, and thank you for the sacrifices you've made to be with us today. I'd also like to thank Governor Abbott for his leadership and for giving me the opportunity to serve as Texas' 112th Secretary of State.

To new and returning members: Congratulations on being here today, and thank you for your dedication to public service. I trust you will all make your constituents proud during this 140-day journey. Each one of you is expected to rise to the challenge of addressing issues that face Texans in their everyday lives and to do so in a way that is uniquely Texan: with honor, integrity, strength, and with our Texas pride. You must always bear in mind that the decisions you make impact not only your lives but also the lives of your fellow Texans, and your priorities must always be with them. As Texas secretary of state, my principal duty and my priority is to protect the integrity of our most sacred institution, the electoral process. But this responsibility is not mine alone. As a state, we rely on officials in each of Texas' 254 counties—from Harris to Hudspeth, Dallas to Dickens, and Bexar to Borden. And whether it's a local, state, or national election, our county officials are at the vanguard of defending our democratic process. I would like to extend a hand in partnership and offer the secretary of state's office as a steadfast resource as we continue to work together to protect and preserve our most cherished civic institution. Our democracy is only as strong as the electoral process that maintains it, and I look forward to working with all of you to make it even stronger.

It's also important to remember that ensuring we have a prosperous future means we need to continue to cultivate strong relationships with our international partners. Not only is Texas the top exporting state in the nation, but we've also received a top ranking for foreign direct investment in the nation. Our economy is larger than that of many global superpowers, and steering it is no easy task. The incredible responsibility of keeping Texas a global leader falls to all of us as servants to the people of the Lone Star State. And today, the people of Texas put trust in you to secure the prosperous future that Texas has always and will always deserve. I know you're up to the challenge. Thank you for your service. God bless you, good luck, and may God forever bestow a special blessing on the great State of Texas.

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Secretary Whitley announced the appointment of temporary officers and employees for the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas.

ParliamentariansSharon Carter and Hugh L. Brady
 Chief ClerkRobert Haney
 Journal Clerk.....Jennifer Teigen Doran
 Sergeant-at-ArmsDavid Saucedo
 Voting ClerkScottie Hagen
 Reading Clerk.....Bianca Alonso
 Committee CoordinatorStacey Nicchio
 ChaplainsFather Victor Perez and Pastor Scott McKay
 DoorkeeperChristopher L. Currans
 Honorary Pages.....Gregory Bonnen and Jackson Bonnen, co-chairs;
 Jack Madison Abernathy, Ann Elizabeth Birdsong, Beau Birdsong, David
 Bonnen, Luca Bonnen, Pax Bonnen, Sebastien Bonnen, Alex Bruno, Emerson
 Eichler, Hayden Eichler, Leigh Grammer, Walker Grammer, Tate Jistel, Annelise
 Kirchner, Pace Kirchner, Ruby Martin, Mace Massingill, Caleb Warren, Joshua
 Warren, Finnick Winder, Saje Winder, and Sophia Winder.

STATEMENT REGARDING HOUSE DISTRICTS 79, 125, AND 145

Secretary Whitley directed the chief clerk to read the following statement:

The Honorable Joseph C. Pickett, elected to serve House District 79, the Honorable Justin Rodriguez, elected to serve House District 125, and the Honorable Carol Alvarado, elected to serve House District 145, have notified the governor that they decline to qualify for the 86th Legislature. Their letters of declination will be entered in the journal.

The following letters of declination were submitted for inclusion in the journal:

HOUSE DISTRICT 79

December 19, 2018

Honorable Greg Abbott
 Governor of Texas

Dear Governor Abbott:

Although elected to the 86th Legislature of Texas, to District 79, as a State Representative, it is with a heavy heart and a bit of trepidation, that I have decided to decline to qualify for that office pursuant to Section 201.001, Election Code.

I have served the people of my district and the State of Texas proudly and with honor and humility for the last 24 years as I appreciate you and your service to our state.

Respectfully,
 Joseph C. Pickett

HOUSE DISTRICT 125

January 4, 2019

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas

Dear Governor Abbott:

Having been elected to the 86th Legislature as State Representative for House District 125, I hereby decline to qualify for that office pursuant to Section 201.001, Election Code.

It has been an honor to serve the constituents of House District 125 for the last six years. I wish my colleagues in the Texas House of Representatives much success in the upcoming session.

Sincerely,
Justin Rodriguez
State Representative

HOUSE DISTRICT 145

December 21, 2018

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas

Dear Governor Abbott:

Having been elected to the 86th Legislature as State Representative for House District 145, I hereby decline to qualify for that office pursuant to Section 201.001, Election Code.

Sincerely,
Carol Alvarado
State Representative

**ROLL OF MEMBERS-ELECT SHOWING
DISTRICTS REPRESENTED**

Secretary Whitley directed the chief clerk to call the roll of members-elect of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas, according to representative districts.

The roll was called as follows:

<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>NAME</u>
District 1	Gary VanDeaver
District 2	Dan Flynn
District 3	Cecil Bell Jr.
District 4	Keith Bell
District 5	Cole Hefner
District 6	Matt Schaefer
District 7	Jay Dean
District 8	Cody Harris

District 9	Chris Paddie
District 10	John Wray
District 11	Travis Clardy
District 12	Kyle Kacal
District 13	Ben Leman
District 14	John Raney
District 15	Steve Toth
District 16	Will Metcalf
District 17	John P. Cyrier
District 18	Ernest Bailes
District 19	James White
District 20	Terry M. Wilson
District 21	Dade Phelan
District 22	Joe Deshotel
District 23	Mayes Middleton
District 24	Greg Bonnen
District 25	Dennis Bonnen
District 26	D.F. "Rick" Miller
District 27	Ron Reynolds
District 28	John Zerwas
District 29	Ed Thompson
District 30	Geanie W. Morrison
District 31	Ryan Guillen
District 32	Todd Hunter
District 33	Justin Holland
District 34	Abel Herrero
District 35	Oscar Longoria
District 36	Sergio Muñoz Jr.
District 37	Alex Dominguez
District 38	Eddie Lucio III
District 39	Armando "Mando" Martinez
District 40	Terry Canales
District 41	Bobby Guerra
District 42	Richard Peña Raymond
District 43	J.M. Lozano
District 44	John Kuempel
District 45	Erin Zwiener
District 46	Sheryl Cole
District 47	Vikki Goodwin
District 48	Donna Howard
District 49	Gina Hinojosa
District 50	Celia Israel
District 51	Eddie Rodriguez
District 52	James Talarico
District 53	Andrew S. Murr
District 54	Brad Buckley

District 55	Hugh D. Shine
District 56	Charles "Doc" Anderson
District 57	Trent Ashby
District 58	DeWayne Burns
District 59	J.D. Sheffield
District 60	Mike Lang
District 61	Phil King
District 62	Reggie Smith
District 63	Tan Parker
District 64	Lynn Stucky
District 65	Michelle Beckley
District 66	Matt Shaheen
District 67	Jeff Leach
District 68	Drew Springer
District 69	James Frank
District 70	Scott Sanford
District 71	Stan Lambert
District 72	Drew Darby
District 73	Kyle Biedermann
District 74	Poncho Nevárez
District 75	Mary E. González
District 76	César J. Blanco
District 77	Evelina "Lina" Ortega
District 78	Joe Moody
District 79	(vacant)
District 80	Tracy King
District 81	Brooks Landgraf
District 82	Tom Craddick
District 83	Dustin Burrows
District 84	John Frullo
District 85	Phil Stephenson
District 86	John Smithee
District 87	Four Price
District 88	Ken King
District 89	Candy Noble
District 90	Ramon Romero Jr.
District 91	Stephanie Klick
District 92	Jonathan Stickland
District 93	Matt Krause
District 94	Tony Tinderholt
District 95	Nicole Collier
District 96	Bill Zedler
District 97	Craig Goldman
District 98	Giovanni Capriglione
District 99	Charlie Geren
District 100	Eric Johnson

District 101	Chris Turner
District 102	Ana-Maria Ramos
District 103	Rafael M. Anchia
District 104	Jessica González
District 105	Thresa "Terry" Meza
District 106	Jared Patterson
District 107	Victoria Neave
District 108	Morgan Meyer
District 109	Carl Sherman
District 110	Toni Rose
District 111	Yvonne Davis
District 112	Angie Chen Button
District 113	Rhett Andrews Bowers
District 114	John Turner
District 115	Julie Johnson
District 116	Trey Martinez Fischer
District 117	Philip Cortez
District 118	Leo Pacheco
District 119	Roland Gutierrez
District 120	Barbara Gervin-Hawkins
District 121	Steve Allison
District 122	Lyle Larson
District 123	Diego Bernal
District 124	Ina Minjarez
District 125	(vacant)
District 126	E. Sam Harless
District 127	Dan Huberty
District 128	Briscoe Cain
District 129	Dennis Paul
District 130	Tom Oliverson
District 131	Alma A. Allen
District 132	Gina Calanni
District 133	Jim Murphy
District 134	Sarah Davis
District 135	Jon E. Rosenthal
District 136	John M. Bucy III
District 137	Gene Wu
District 138	Dwayne Bohac
District 139	Jarvis D. Johnson
District 140	Armando Lucio Walle
District 141	Senfronia Thompson
District 142	Harold V. Dutton Jr.
District 143	Ana Hernandez
District 144	Mary Ann Perez
District 145	(vacant)
District 146	Shawn Nicole Thierry

District 147

District 148

District 149

District 150

Garnet F. Coleman

Jessica Cristina Farrar

Hubert Vo

Valoree Swanson

A quorum was announced present.

OATH OF OFFICE ADMINISTERED

Secretary Whitley directed the chief clerk to administer the constitutional oath of office to the members-elect of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas, all of those present rising together and repeating the following oath, prescribed by the Constitution, as it was read to them, as follows:

"I, _____, do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of member of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this state, so help me God."

TEMPORARY RULES ADOPTED

The Honorable Ina Minjarez of Bexar County moved to adopt the house rules of procedure from the Eighty-Fifth Legislature, excepting Rule 3 of the House Rules, as temporary rules, where applicable.

The motion prevailed.

HR 1 - ADOPTED (by Geren)

The following resolution was laid before the house:

HR 1

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas, That pending the election of the speaker, all individuals other than members of the legislature, members of their families, the secretary of state, temporary officers and their staffs, and approved guests or press representatives be barred from the floor of the house of representatives inside the rail.

HR 1 was adopted by (Record 1): 146 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Present, not voting.

Yeas — Allen; Allison; Anchia; Anderson; Ashby; Bailes; Beckley; Bell, C.; Bell, K.; Bernal; Biedermann; Blanco; Bohac; Bonnen, D.; Bonnen, G.; Bowers; Buckley; Bucy; Burns; Burrows; Button; Cain; Calanni; Canales; Capriglione; Clardy; Cole; Coleman; Collier; Cortez; Craddick; Cyrier; Darby; Davis, S.; Davis, Y.; Dean; Deshotel; Dutton; Farrar; Flynn; Frank; Frullo; Geren; Gervin-Hawkins; Goldman; González, J.; González, M.; Goodwin; Guerra; Guillen; Gutierrez; Harless; Harris; Hefner; Hernandez; Herrero; Hinojosa; Holland; Howard; Huberty; Hunter; Israel; Johnson, E.; Johnson, J.D.; Johnson, J.E.; Kacal; King, K.; King, P.; King, T.; Klick; Krause; Kuempel; Lambert; Landgraf; Lang; Larson; Leach; Leman; Longoria; Lozano; Lucio; Martinez;

Martinez Fischer; Metcalf; Meyer; Meza; Middleton; Miller; Minjarez; Moody; Morrison; Muñoz; Murphy; Murr; Neave; Nevárez; Noble; Oliverson; Ortega; Pacheco; Paddie; Parker; Patterson; Paul; Perez; Phelan; Price; Ramos; Raney; Raymond; Reynolds; Rodriguez; Romero; Rose; Rosenthal; Sanford; Schaefer; Shaheen; Sheffield; Sherman; Shine; Smith; Smithee; Springer; Stephenson; Stickland; Stucky; Swanson; Talarico; Thierry; Thompson, E.; Thompson, S.; Tinderholt; Toth; Turner, C.; Turner, J.; VanDeaver; Vo; Walle; White; Wilson; Wray; Wu; Zedler; Zerwas; Zwiener.

Absent — Dominguez.

STATEMENT OF VOTE

When Record No. 1 was taken, my vote failed to register. I would have voted yes.

Dominguez

HR 2 - ADOPTED (by Price and Dutton)

The following resolution was laid before the house:

HR 2

BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives of the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas, That, in accordance with Sections 9(b) and 11, Article III, Texas Constitution, and the laws of the State of Texas, the House of Representatives of the 86th Legislature shall proceed to elect a speaker of the house from its own membership as follows:

SECTION 1. NOMINATIONS. (a) The secretary of state shall call for nominations from the floor for the election of speaker of the house of representatives and shall recognize each member who desires to make a nomination. The order in which members shall proceed to make a nomination shall be determined by lot.

(b) Each member recognized for this purpose shall immediately advance to the microphone at the reading clerk's desk and make the nomination in a nominating speech not to exceed five minutes in length.

(c) After all nominations have been made, the secretary of state shall declare nominations to be closed.

(d) The secretary of state shall recognize at any time a member whose name has been placed in nomination for the purpose of withdrawing as a nominee. A member who withdraws is not considered a nominee.

SECTION 2. SECONDS. (a) A person is not considered a nominee unless the nomination is seconded by at least one member.

(b) One seconding speech shall be allowed for each nomination in the order in which nominations were made, then other seconding speeches shall be allowed in rotation in the same order.

(c) No more than five seconding speeches shall be allowed for each nominee.

(d) A seconding speech may not exceed three minutes in length.

SECTION 3. MOTION TO ELECT BY ACCLAMATION. If, after the close of all seconding speeches only one member's name remains in nomination for election to speaker of the house of representatives, the secretary of state shall recognize a motion to elect that member as speaker by acclamation.

SECTION 4. OATH. (a) After the election, the secretary of state shall:

(1) appoint a committee of members to escort the speaker-elect to the speaker's rostrum for the purpose of taking the constitutional oath or affirmation of office by the speaker-elect; and

(2) direct the administration of the oath or affirmation of office to the speaker-elect.

(b) The speaker shall take the chair immediately after taking the oath or affirmation of office.

HR 2 was adopted by (Record 2): 147 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Present, not voting.

Yeas — Allen; Allison; Anchia; Anderson; Ashby; Bailes; Beckley; Bell, C.; Bell, K.; Bernal; Biedermann; Blanco; Bohac; Bonnen, D.; Bonnen, G.; Bowers; Buckley; Bucy; Burns; Burrows; Button; Cain; Calanni; Canales; Capriglione; Clardy; Cole; Coleman; Collier; Cortez; Craddick; Cyrier; Darby; Davis, S.; Davis, Y.; Dean; Deshotel; Dominguez; Dutton; Farrar; Flynn; Frank; Frullo; Geren; Gervin-Hawkins; Goldman; González, J.; González, M.; Goodwin; Guerra; Guillen; Gutierrez; Harless; Harris; Hefner; Hernandez; Herrero; Hinojosa; Holland; Howard; Huberty; Hunter; Israel; Johnson, E.; Johnson, J.D.; Johnson, J.E.; Kacal; King, K.; King, P.; King, T.; Klick; Krause; Kuempel; Lambert; Landgraf; Lang; Larson; Leach; Leman; Longoria; Lozano; Lucio; Martinez; Martinez Fischer; Metcalf; Meyer; Meza; Middleton; Miller; Minjarez; Moody; Morrison; Muñoz; Murphy; Murr; Neave; Nevárez; Noble; Oliverson; Ortega; Pacheco; Paddie; Parker; Patterson; Paul; Perez; Phelan; Price; Ramos; Raney; Raymond; Reynolds; Rodriguez; Romero; Rose; Rosenthal; Sanford; Schaefer; Shaheen; Sheffield; Sherman; Shine; Smith; Smithee; Springer; Stephenson; Stickland; Stucky; Swanson; Talarico; Thierry; Thompson, E.; Thompson, S.; Tinderholt; Toth; Turner, C.; Turner, J.; VanDeaver; Vo; Walle; White; Wilson; Wray; Wu; Zedler; Zerwas; Zwiener.

ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Secretary Whitley announced that the next order of business would be the election of the speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas and stated nominations for speaker would now be in order.

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Dustin Burrows of Lubbock County, who placed in nomination for speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas the name of the Honorable Dennis Bonnen of Brazoria County, speaking as follows:

Mr. Secretary, families, friends, and guests, welcome to the people's house. Members, as we begin the 86th Legislative Session, let us reflect on the fact that Texans from all corners of the state, all walks of life, have entrusted each of us to

craft policy that will improve the lives of all Texans, to help our districts be heard and accomplish their agenda, and to do this in a very short 140 days. Members, this session, Texans expect and should expect us to pass meaningful school finance reform and lessen the huge burden of property taxes for homeowners. And these big issues transcend the divides of party, ideology, and even geography.

On this, the first day of the 86th Session, the question we have to ask is, will we do it? And I predict at the end of 140 days, the answer is, absolutely yes, because we are the Texas House—the greatest legislative body in the entire country. However, in order to be successful, we need a speaker who will let the body work to realize its fullest potential, to let members represent their districts, and to stand up for the house. That is why I rise today to nominate a speaker that the Texas House deserves, Dennis Bonnen.

Dennis was drafted into this speaker's race not just because of his list of qualifications, which are plentiful, but because of his character and his vision for the house. Dennis is someone who respects the members by telling us the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Dennis is willing to jump into the arena and fight for what is right to build consensus. He doesn't wait on the sidelines to see which way the political winds are blowing. Time and time again, I have seen Dennis give voice to what is right without regard for how powerful the other side might be. Most importantly, he deeply respects this chamber and believes every member must be allowed to fully represent their district.

Let me close with this: Texas needs the house to lead this session. We need a speaker with the strength and tenacity to let that happen. It is for these reasons and so many more that I nominate my good friend Dennis Bonnen to be the next speaker of the house, a speaker for the entire house.

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Senfronia Thompson of Harris County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Dennis Bonnen, speaking as follows:

Mr. Secretary, Mr. Chief Justice, fellow members, and distinguished guests, today I'm honored to stand here in the people's house to nominate Representative Dennis Bonnen to serve as the next speaker of the people's house. It has been my distinct privilege to serve under six speakers. I'm eager for Dennis Bonnen to be my lucky number seven.

In my 45 years serving in the Texas House, I've witnessed all kinds of politics. You know during those 45 years, I've witnessed all kinds of people. I've seen tremendous triumphs and devastating defeats. But the one thing that I've seen remain constant through all of this is the house works best when we work together. We come into this building as many different people from many different backgrounds. Each and every one of us carries dreams and ambitions. Some of those dreams are our own. That's the reason why we were on the ballots. Some of those dreams we carry on behalf of our constituents, holding their future and their children's future within each of what we can accomplish. But I cannot visualize those dreams, nor can you, alone. None of us could. Here in this chamber, every woman and man can and should have the opportunity to work with one another, to serve together, to discuss and debate together the dreams we

bring into this chamber. We do our best work when we set aside our differences and find common ground. When we work together and when we are empowered to serve our districts, we succeed.

Representative Bonnen knows this. In his 22 years of experience, he has learned the ins and the outs of the Texas House as well as anyone I've ever served with. As speaker, I can assure you that he would be committed first and foremost to helping us realize our dreams, to realize our potentials. I know this because he told me, and Dennis is a man who keeps his word. When Dennis says he wants the house to be united, I trust him. When he says he wants to reduce the partisan bickering that has at times plagued this floor in recent years, I trust him. When he says he wants to put school finance and the dreams we all carry for our children front and center this session, I trust him.

Dennis has fought his entire life and especially his entire legislative career with intelligence and determination. He has work ethics as long and as proud as Texas. And he wants to make sure that everyone—no matter who you are, where you came from, or why you're here—he wants everyone that works hard and fights fair to have every chance to succeed. Dennis will be a fighter and a champion for this house. That's why I'm so proud to nominate him and to lend him support to lead this house and to serve as the next speaker of the Texas House of Representatives.

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Matt Krause of Tarrant County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Dennis Bonnen, speaking as follows:

Good afternoon, colleagues. It's so incredible to be back here with you, and I know each of you who got sworn in would know that you would not be here without a support structure from home. I'm no different, so I want to publicly thank my amazing wife, Jenny, and our incredible kids, Jeremiah, Hannah Sue, James, Gracie, and Ruthie for the support and sacrifice you've given me and will continue to give the next 140 days.

On November 12, Dennis Bonnen called a press conference, and at that press conference he said, "The speaker's race is over." And he unveiled a list of 109 names, way more than the 76 he needed. In those two months we got kind of a window into how Representative Bonnen, soon to be Speaker Bonnen, will operate. There's two key aspects I want to look at. One was, right after that press conference he announced a working group to select the next parliamentarian. This is a very private decision for the speaker. As far as we know, in Texas history, this has never been done before, to allow members to have input on who the next parliamentarian should be. And so we appointed five republicans and five democrats. But it wasn't just that he had numbers from equal parties, it was who those republicans and democrats were. They showed a great cross section of the house. Every line of the political spectrum was represented there, and he even had individuals who were not on that list of 109 supporters that he had listed the day before. He made a great decision, and then he made another great decision by having Four Price and Joe Moody co-chair that committee, two of the hardest working and brightest members we have in this house today, and they did an

amazing job during that process. It spoke volumes of Representative Bonnen that he would bring the membership in and allow them to have input on this very important decision.

Then he was in Tyler a few weeks after that, meeting with some members, and the press asked, "What does a Speaker Bonnen administration look like?" And he said, "You know what? My job is to level the playing field, make sure every member is heard, not that they necessarily win the day, but that they have a chance to win the day." And I think that's all you can ask from a speaker, and really all you want from a speaker is to level the playing field and allow the members to represent their districts. And as a part of that, they said, "Well, what's your school finance plan?" He said, "That's the great thing about being speaker. I don't need a school finance plan. My job is to empower the members and get them in a room till we discuss and figure out what's going to happen." And I love that, because we're going to take on some issues that have vexed prior legislatures, right—big ticket items—and we're going to need somebody like him leading us through that.

Those past legislatures, we shouldn't forget their successes and failures. In fact, somebody told me, use the past. Use their hindsight as your foresight as you look for insight into what to do next. And I am confident by learning the lessons of the past, with the cooperation, unity, and hard work of the present, we can ensure a much brighter Texas future. That's why I'm so optimistic about Representative Bonnen. He's one of the rare individuals I've ever known who has a 30,000-foot view, gets the big picture, but can also get into the weeds on policy matters. Some people can do one or two of those things, a couple of people can do both those things, but rarely do you have somebody who can do them both well. He is the leader we need for this time. He's been appointed for such a time as this, and I'm honored to rise today to second the nomination for Dennis Bonnen for Texas speaker of the house. Let's get to work. God bless you guys.

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Mary González of El Paso County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Dennis Bonnen, speaking as follows:

In December 1993, I was 10 years old. In the middle of the night right before Christmas, my dad, who's sitting with me today on the house floor, rushed into my room to get me and my brother out of the house because our house was burning down. That night, my family lost all of our belongings. And as sad as that moment is in my childhood, it was also very transformative, because that night a local farmer came and picked me and my brother up and took care of us. And for the next few months, people from all over the community came and fed us, clothed us, and helped us rebuild our home.

That moment is the reason that I am here and I work to give back to my community. After serving the last six years, I have learned that we all have stories like mine, the reasons that we serve. I have learned that we all love and care about our districts, our communities, and our state. When I first decided to run for office, my younger brother asked me, "But Mary, why do you want to be a state rep? All politicians are bad." Sadly, the divisions that exist in politics today encourage people to become disenchanted with the political process. Today and

for the next 139 days—well, hopefully 139 days—we can change this. We have the opportunity to change people's minds about politics and politicians. This session, we can come together to work on school finance, infrastructure, and economic development, and we can demonstrate what working together across differences looks like. Because what we do in this building matters, and we have an opportunity to model true leadership for the state, for the country, and for the younger generation. Do we want the younger generation to grow up in a society with divisions and distrust of their fellow Texans? Or do we want them to grow and to learn in a state that honors and respects everybody?

I am lucky that this has been modeled to me my entire life by my father, Alfred González. He's my best friend, my mentor, my next-door neighbor, and my favorite and most difficult constituent. To love and respect someone who is the political opposite of me allows me to enter the political space wanting to find common ground. And while he may worry about what his republicans will say about his democratic daughter, at the end of the day he has always shown me love and respect. That is why I am honored today to second the nomination of Chairman Bonnen. Chairman Bonnen shares the same characteristics as my father—a stern, fierce republican with the space in his heart and in his leadership style to treat everyone with respect and fairness regardless of ideology. He creates an environment where each of us can share our stories so we can serve our districts and the state. His tenure in the house will enable him to build a culture where members and our districts come first. I second this nomination not just for our Texas House but for future generations of Texans. May we make our state stronger for them. God bless Texas.

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Lyle Larson of Bexar County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Dennis Bonnen, speaking as follows:

"With all due respect"—how many times have you heard Dennis Bonnen say that on this house floor? "With all due respect"—that is his signature phrase. He's in good company. There's been many an English lord that has used this in Parliament when engaged in civil discourse. But there's also, more recently, an American cinema icon, Ricky Bobby. He used it famously in *Talladega Nights*.

The first time that Dennis Bonnen imparted his sage advice to me, it was about three weeks into my first session. I had a bill that was going to elect TxDOT commissioners, and my legislative director, Emily Eppright, who worked for Dennis Bonnen before, said, you need to go down and talk to Dennis about this bill. So I walked down there and laid out the merits of the bill, trying to convince him that it was a great bill. He listened patiently. Then he sat back in his chair, and he smirked, and he said, "With all due respect, the governor appoints those people, and you don't want to upset the governor, do you?" It was good advice. I probably should've listened a little bit more. He's given counsel to many of us. He talked about policy. He talked about procedure. He talked about political realities. And I don't want him to hear this, but he was about 90 percent right on the advice that he gave.

Confucius, the great East Texas philosopher, said, if your plan is one year, you plant rice. If your plan is for 10 years, you plant trees. If your plan is for 100 years, you educate children. Dennis Bonnen has been training for this position for over two decades, and I truly believe that he will have a multigenerational impact on our state. He's willing to tackle the giants—public school finance; comprehensive property tax relief and reform; water policy, which would include the post-Harvey flood challenges we had; and many other issues. His wit, his intellect, and his procedural genius—it has stirred us. It has entertained us. But most importantly, it has led us through some of the most fierce fights that we've had on this Texas floor over the past decade. He'll be undaunted by any naysayers that rise from this body or across the hall, but he'll guide us with precision and conviction.

So with all due respect, to anyone that would suggest that Dennis Bonnen shouldn't be our speaker, I submit to you that he will lead us with purpose and with passion like he always has. And that's why it's my honor to nominate him to be the next speaker for the Texas House of Representatives.

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Eddie Lucio III of Cameron County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Dennis Bonnen, speaking as follows:

Good afternoon, members and invited guests. It's an honor to stand before you and give the final second nomination of my friend Dennis Bonnen for Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives. My first session was in 2007. Right before I came to Austin, I attended a family reunion for my mother-in-law's family in Angleton, Texas. As you know, Dennis is from Angleton. I had the pleasure of meeting Dennis's parents at this party and learned that my in-laws were very close to the Bonnen family—like grew up next door close.

As luck will have it, my first committee assignment was to serve as vice-chair of Environmental Regulation, a committee that Dennis chaired. The first thing I learned serving on that committee was that you better come prepared. Whether you were a member laying out a bill or a witness testifying, Chairman Bonnen expected you to come fully informed and prepared to deliver honest testimony. See, Dennis works hard and expects people to deliver the same work ethic and intensity as he does. As a small business owner, I can relate to that.

The perfect example of Dennis's work ethic and commitment to the process can be seen in his work on the border security bill during the 2015 session. That was the key bill of that session and very important to stakeholders in Dennis's party. It would have been easy for him to manage the passage of that bill in a way to maximize the extent to which he appeased only members of his party. Instead, Chairman Bonnen worked tirelessly to craft a piece of legislation that was rooted in stakeholder input. He held countless meetings with members from the border and took seriously all the input they provided. He sought out chiefs of police, sheriffs, and various stakeholders to hear directly from them about the situation

on their border. He used what he learned to invest the money of the people of Texas as effectively and meaningfully as possible. That was when I learned what it takes to work and craft a big, comprehensive bill.

See, people don't go as fast as they can; they go as fast as they are led. And let me tell you, ladies and gentlemen, good luck keeping up with Dennis Bonnen. I can provide many examples like this, but I want to share another side of Dennis, a side that the media doesn't see. I was elected at the tender age of 27. Much of my time becoming husband, father, and professional has occurred while serving in the legislature. Serving in the legislature is tough and can take its toll on you mentally and physically. Without knowing, or maybe he did, Dennis personally mentored me throughout this journey. He immediately took an interest in my family. For example, my wife, Jaime—who is here with me today—and I had a scare with one of our pregnancies during a particularly important week a few sessions back. Dennis found me in the hallway and recognized something was wrong, and immediately told me that the most important thing was family. He walked me to my office and out of the Capitol to ensure I went home. Throughout the years, if Dennis recognizes that the emotion of a legislative day has gotten the better of me, he will seek me out and make sure I am okay. Dennis is the person many of us turn to when things get tough between our parties, asking him to forge compromise and keep the decorum of the house intact. He has embodied for me the true meaning of a mentor and friend.

Dennis takes mentorship seriously and has mentored several young people in his district. As tough as he is in Austin, members, there is no one better than him when it comes to relationships and constituency work back home. Today, we have a special guest from Speaker Bonnen's district. With us, we have Pahola González. She is a graduate of Brazoswood High School. In 2014, Dennis nominated Pahola for the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program. This scholarship enabled her to be the first in her family to attend and graduate college. Shortly after graduation from UTSA, Pahola received her commission into the United States Army. Pahola personifies what we want young Texans to achieve. Please help me congratulate and welcome Pahola to the Texas House.

Chairman Bonnen, thank you for your mentorship for not only myself, but countless young members, and most importantly for mentoring and caring about the future of the people you serve. For these reasons, members, Dennis is the right man, right now, to lead this body. I second the nomination of my good friend Dennis Bonnen.

The Honorable Eddie Lucio III of Cameron County moved that the nominations cease and that the Honorable Dennis Bonnen of Brazoria County be elected speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas by acclamation, with any member being permitted to cast a "present" or "nay" vote by providing such information to the journal clerk.

A record vote was requested.

The question occurring on the election of the Honorable Dennis Bonnen of Brazoria County as speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature, the motion prevailed (Record 3): 147 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Present, not voting.

Yeas — Allen; Allison; Anchia; Anderson; Ashby; Bailes; Beckley; Bell, C.; Bell, K.; Bernal; Biedermann; Blanco; Bohac; Bonnen, D.; Bonnen, G.; Bowers; Buckley; Bucy; Burns; Burrows; Button; Cain; Calanni; Canales; Capriglione; Clardy; Cole; Coleman; Collier; Cortez; Craddick; Cyrier; Darby; Davis, S.; Davis, Y.; Dean; Deshotel; Dominguez; Dutton; Farrar; Flynn; Frank; Frullo; Geren; Gervin-Hawkins; Goldman; González, J.; González, M.; Goodwin; Guerra; Guillen; Gutierrez; Harless; Harris; Hefner; Hernandez; Herrero; Hinojosa; Holland; Howard; Huberty; Hunter; Israel; Johnson, E.; Johnson, J.D.; Johnson, J.E.; Kacal; King, K.; King, P.; King, T.; Klick; Krause; Kuempel; Lambert; Landgraf; Lang; Larson; Leach; Leman; Longoria; Lozano; Lucio; Martinez; Martinez Fischer; Metcalf; Meyer; Meza; Middleton; Miller; Minjarez; Moody; Morrison; Muñoz; Murphy; Murr; Neave; Nevárez; Noble; Oliverson; Ortega; Pacheco; Paddie; Parker; Patterson; Paul; Perez; Phelan; Price; Ramos; Raney; Raymond; Reynolds; Rodriguez; Romero; Rose; Rosenthal; Sanford; Schaefer; Shaheen; Sheffield; Sherman; Shine; Smith; Smithee; Springer; Stephenson; Stickland; Stucky; Swanson; Talarico; Thierry; Thompson, E.; Thompson, S.; Tinderholt; Toth; Turner, C.; Turner, J.; VanDeaver; Vo; Walle; White; Wilson; Wray; Wu; Zedler; Zerwas; Zwiener.

Secretary Whitley declared the Honorable Dennis Bonnen of Brazoria County to be the duly elected speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas.

COMMITTEE APPOINTED

Secretary Whitley announced the appointment of the following committee to escort Speaker-elect Dennis Bonnen to the speaker's rostrum: the Honorable Tom Craddick of Midland County, chair; the Honorable Rhetta Bowers of Dallas County, the Honorable Angie Chen Button of Dallas County, the Honorable Terry Canales of Hidalgo County, the Honorable Sheryl Cole of Travis County, the Honorable Garnet F. Coleman of Harris County, the Honorable Craig Goldman of Tarrant County, the Honorable Stephanie Klick of Tarrant County, the Honorable Jeff Leach of Collin County, the Honorable Oscar Longoria of Hidalgo County, the Honorable Chris Paddie of Harrison County, and the Honorable Drew Springer of Cooke County.

HOUSE AT EASE

At 12:58 p.m., Secretary Whitley announced that the house would stand at ease.

Secretary Whitley called the house to order at 1:08 p.m.

OATH OF OFFICE TAKEN BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Speaker-elect Bonnen and his party were escorted to the speaker's rostrum.

The Honorable Dennis Bonnen of Brazoria County took the constitutional oath of office as speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas, which was administered by the Honorable John D. Rainey, Senior United States District Court Judge for the Southern District of Texas, as follows:

"I, Dennis Bonnen, do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Sixth Legislature of the State of Texas, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this state. So help me God."

Secretary Whitley recognized the Honorable Craig Goldman of Tarrant County who introduced family members of Speaker Bonnen: Kim Bonnen; Jackson and Gregory Bonnen; Matina Bonnen; Penelope Bonnen; Pax, Luca, and Sebastien Bonnen; Mark Bonnen; David and Jessica Bonnen; Representative Greg Bonnen; Kim Bonnen; Lindsay and Janae Bonnen; Mike and Gail Martin; Jaclyn, Clay, and Jack Madison Abernathy; John Martin; and Clarence and Susan Bonnen.

ADDRESS BY THE SPEAKER

The Honorable Craig Goldman of Tarrant County introduced the Honorable Dennis Bonnen, speaker of the House of Representatives, who addressed the house, speaking as follows:

I'm humbled by the opportunity to serve as your speaker. I have so many people to thank today, starting with my wife, Kim. People who spend just a little bit of time with me figure out very quickly that Kim is destined for sainthood. You, Jackson, and Gregory are the center of everything I do. I also want to say hello to my namesake, Uncle Dennis Psoras, who is watching online at his home in Baltimore, Maryland. Thank you, Uncle Denny. Mom, you and Dad have given us everything—thank you. Elected leaders and distinguished guests, thank you for being here today. Your presence speaks volumes about the opportunities we have before us. I look forward to working with each one of you. I want to thank my good friend Brian McCall, who has mentored me through this transition. Brian honorably served as a member of the Texas House for almost 20 years and is one of the most honest and upstanding individuals I've ever had the privilege of working with. Thank you, Chancellor McCall.

I also want to thank Speaker Straus for his leadership in this chamber and his friendship during his tenure and during this transition. And I want to thank Speaker Tom Craddick for his continued service to the State of Texas. He's represented his district for the last 50 years and is the longest-serving member of the Texas House of Representatives in our state's history. He was entering public service just when I was entering the world. Thank you, Speaker Craddick. When I was first elected to the Texas House, Pete Laney led this chamber. He did so

with a spirit of bipartisanship and fairness. Thank you, Speaker Laney, for honoring all of us with your presence here today. We're also blessed with another former speaker with us today, Speaker Gib Lewis. He was the first speaker to be elected to the post five times, and I am grateful that he joined us here today. Thank you, Speaker Lewis. It is their leadership of this body that is the foundation on which we stand and from which we will build. I am humbled to have my name mentioned with yours, and I hope to uphold your legacies of leadership. Truthfully, one of my greatest personal moments was being speaker pro tempore and serving in that role as my mentor and great friend did, Tom Uher. I wanted and still want to be just as good a member as Tom was. Through his example, he showed me how to be a good member of the Texas House and how to be a good representative for my constituents. Tom, to say I'm honored doesn't even get there, to have you here with us today. Thank you for all you have done for me, for my family, and thank you for your friendship. You truly are a great American.

To be very honest, this is a little bit of a weird experience for me. I never dreamed or planned to be in this position. Truthfully, at this point in the ceremony, I'm usually thinking, "Man, I hope he doesn't talk too long. Kim was right; I should've eaten before coming to the floor." Every opening day brings with it feelings of excitement to be back with some of my closest friends, fired up at the chance to do something meaningful. Nobody really knows what that feels like except for those of us who were chosen by our communities to serve and sit here today. So right now, I am plenty excited to get rolling. I'm almost as excited as Linda Winder, my high school journalism teacher, neighbor, and former district director. She was the first person to RSVP for today's ceremony, probably because she had to see it to believe it. During her 36 years of teaching, she taught thousands of students. Yet there was just one who got her so wound up that she hit him. I don't know why you assume it was Greg. I think that's a little unfair to Greg. Truthfully, yes, it was me. No laws were broken. It was really just a tap on the arm, but still she was worried she might get in trouble with the school, so she called my mother to explain. My mother's response? Without hesitation, "Hit him again." My mother was probably just glad she had someone to help keep me in line. Just as Kim, these women figured out early on that I can be somewhat challenging. As my friends expressed earlier, I do have a bit of a reputation. However, I come by it very honestly. I'm Greek. When people call me "challenging," believe me, my dad is nodding his head in agreement from above. My dad always told us, say what you mean and do what you say. So I've never seen the point in sugarcoating things, especially when that might confuse the issue or slow down progress toward a meaningful result. Those of you who know me know that I operate with an efficiency and honesty that can leave a mark. I am direct, and I am a problem solver. These are both traits that I inherited from my father.

Right now, Texas has a number of problems to resolve, and it's our duty to produce meaningful solutions for all Texans. As we all know, a Texas legislative session is way too short to get caught up in things that don't lead to real results. In a state as big and diverse as Texas, there are plenty of ideas about how we should

do any one of these issues, and these ideas often point in a different direction. It's our job to reconcile the differences. This chamber is the perfect place for those ideas to be heard. We must do that with mutual respect and understanding for one another. And in doing so, we will justify the trust that our constituents have placed in us to represent them in this great chamber. I remember a time when we celebrated legislators who were willing to come to the table and find agreement that led to workable solutions. I can admit that I'm a very, very competitive person—just ask Jackson or Gregory how much mercy I show them on a family game night. But the work in this chamber cannot be a zero-sum game. Instead, it's a proven system for finding solutions to the challenges that face our state and our constituents daily but only when we work together.

When it became clear that I would have the privilege of standing here today, I made fostering the spirit of collaboration my number one goal. I tried to visit as many of you in your districts as possible—from West Texas to East Texas and from the Panhandle to the Rio Grande Valley—to get up close and look at the issues that matter most to you. In many conversations along the way, I would be asked, what is your agenda for the house? I would laugh, then I would explain that's the beauty of being speaker. The agenda is up to you—you as a body, you as the voices of your constituents. My job is simple—bring passionate people to the table, then keep you in the room until we find a solution. That process is going to require a lot of tough conversations with a little give and take. I can tell you from experience that tough conversations are even tougher when they're between strangers or, even worse, adversaries. That's why I have a charge for all of us. I want us to get to know one another even better. While we know one another, we must go beyond that. It's time that we know each other and every member on this floor. Make new friends. Look beyond differences. Learn what life events shaped one another's perspectives. That'll show us that we are all truly connected.

For instance, you may understand me better when you learn that I grew up in a town of 18,000 people in the district I've represented now for 22 years, well outside of the Houston suburbs, surrounded by rice farms and cattle, among the hardworking people of the Gulf Coast. You will discover that my passion for education centers on the fact that I grew up a dyslexic kid in a small town at a time when there were almost no options available to students like me. My siblings excelled academically; I tried to understand how I fit into the Bonnen gene pool. And you will know that I learned toughness from a mother who fought for me and saw me through my entire education, never taking no for an answer, and finding solutions where people said none existed. That is the root of my tenacity.

Your background and life experiences are a big part of why you are here today. I encourage each of us to be intentional about getting to know one another better; to bridge partisan, geographical, and social divides; and to learn about the passions that inspired each of us to pursue public service in the first place. I encourage our more senior members to invest in the new members of this body, to mentor them so that they can be more effective and efficient, like Tom Uher has done for me and still does today. When we invest in our relationships and

mentor one another, we better prepare ourselves to face the challenges before us. Because we have big issues to tackle like school finance and property taxes. These are complicated issues that can no longer wait, pressing issues that deserve a very meaningful result. You might even call them intimidating, but we can advance on them together if we change our perspective and our language. Let's try doing that by applying the words of a sermon I once heard with my sister in college: Replace the words "problem" or "challenge" with "opportunity."

In our conversations over the past few months, we shared your passion for a range of opportunities. We have an opportunity to tackle our number one priority, to fix the state's broken school finance system and of course to strive to make Texas schools the best in the country. That also gives us the opportunity to show teachers and retired teachers from Amarillo to Anahuac that we appreciate their years of service and investment in the lives of our children. We have the opportunity to improve the lives of Texas children, from prioritizing early education and improving the CPS system to addressing school safety and mental health issues that underlie the tragic episodes that have shattered Texas communities and families. We have an opportunity to intensify our fight against the despicable crime of human trafficking. When it comes to property taxes, we have an opportunity to reform a broken system that is taxing Texans out of their homes. Opportunities abound in health care, whether we're finding a better way to support trauma care in rapid growth areas like the Rio Grande Valley or educating future medical professionals to fill shortages in our rural communities. The road ahead presents endless opportunities to improve the lives of our constituents, from our state's continued recovery from Hurricane Harvey to the frustrations people feel when they visit one of our state's driver's license offices. I'm convinced we can move the needle on these opportunities if we treat one another with mutual respect and understanding and stay focused on the lives we affect with every vote we take on this floor.

Growing up, whenever Greg, Mark, Eleni or I set out on a new endeavor, my father always told us, leave it better than you found it. That was my dad's advice to me the day I was sworn into this house, and it would be his advice today. So let's be sure that when we adjourn sine die, we leave this house and our state better than we found them. There's a saying we have here in Texas: "As Texas goes, so goes the nation." That statement has never rung more true than it does today. Our federal government is steeped in gridlock and partisanship. For Washington, politics has become more important than people. But unlike Washington, Texas stands apart. We lead the nation by doing things our way, and we do it with strength, unity, and resolve. And we will once again rise to the occasion and serve as the nation's model for effective governance. That's what this body has done for over 130 years. We represent the will of the people come hell or high water.

John Steinbeck nailed it when he described what sets Texas apart. He wrote: "For all its enormous range of space, climate, and physical appearance, and for all the internal squabbles, contentions, and strivings, Texas has a tight cohesiveness perhaps stronger than any other section of America. Rich, poor, Panhandle, Gulf, city, country, Texas is the obsession . . . and the passionate possession of all

Texans." This house is the possession of all Texans, and it is our privilege to serve all of them with passion, pride, and a willingness to put the common good above all else. Thank you all, and God bless Texas.

**MOTION IN WRITING
AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES**

The Honorable Diego Bernal of Bexar County offered the following motion in writing:

Mr. Speaker:

I move to authorize the speaker to appoint two committees of five members each, one to notify the senate, and one to notify the governor that the house is organized and prepared to transact business.

Bernal

The motion was read and prevailed.

COMMITTEES APPOINTED

The speaker announced the appointment of the following committee to notify the senate that the house is organized and ready to transact business: the Honorable Tracy King of Zavala County, chair; the Honorable Alma Allen of Harris County, the Honorable DeWayne Burns of Johnson County, the Honorable Ben Leman of Grimes County, and the Honorable Poncho Nevárez of Maverick County.

The speaker announced the appointment of the following committee to notify the governor that the house is organized and ready to transact business: the Honorable Brooks Landgraf of Ector County, chair; the Honorable Nicole Collier of Tarrant County, the Honorable Justin Holland of Rockwall County, the Honorable Geanie W. Morrison of Victoria County, and the Honorable Leo Pacheco of Bexar County.

HOUSE AT EASE

At 1:35 p.m., the speaker announced that the house would stand at ease.

The speaker called the house to order at 1:42 p.m.

HOUSE NOTIFIED

A committee from the senate was announced at the door of the house and, being admitted, notified the house that the senate is organized and ready to transact business.

GOVERNOR NOTIFIED

The committee appointed to notify the governor that the house is organized and ready to transact business reported that they had performed the duty assigned to them.

ADDRESS BY THE GOVERNOR

Speaker Bonnen introduced the Honorable Greg Abbott, governor of the State of Texas, who addressed the house, speaking as follows:

Let me start off by congratulating Dennis Bonnen on becoming the speaker of this house. Dennis is a good friend of mine. And I can tell you from personal experience, I know for a fact he's going to be an outstanding speaker not just for this house but for the entire state of Texas. Some people know, but others do not know, over the past two sessions, the amount of time that Dennis and I spent together hashing out all the sometimes minute details, sometimes the big picture issues about what was going to be happening in the closing moments of the legislature. And I can tell you there has been no more passionate advocate for the Texas House than Dennis Bonnen. He used a word moments ago in his own remarks, the word "tenacity." The word "tenacity" is synonymous with Dennis Bonnen. He has an agenda, you have an agenda, and I know working together you and the house will achieve that agenda.

Now, let me take a moment and congratulate every member of the house on your election. I know some of you are reelected. Some like Tom Craddick—was this your 25th election now? Some of you've been elected 25 times, some of you've been elected 25 years, some of you've been elected 25 days. All of you have the opportunity to serve your fellow Texans. I'm proud of you. I'm grateful for you and your service and for the family members and friends who are by your side and circling around this chamber here today.

But more importantly, I want to talk just one moment about this moment in time, if you look through the stretch of Texas history, that you stand on the threshold of. Because if you were to go to Tom Craddick's desk over those past 50 years and try to remember and recount the history of the votes that were taken and the impact they had, it would be astounding. And as the members sit in front of your desk today, you can think about the history that was etched in time for whomever it was that sat in that desk. That said, the moment in time is for you to make history. And you'll see, by what I'm about to say, there is almost complete alignment with what I believe is important for the State of Texas, with what the speaker believes is important for the State of Texas, which is what your constituents believe is important for the State of Texas. Because in this moment in time, we have an opportunity to make sure we address the needs of our fellow Texans, including making our schools more resilient to violence and guns and keeping our students and schools safe during the course of school. And that means addressing the mental health challenges that too many students suffer from. And we have the opportunity to make the entire Gulf Coast region more resilient to horrific storms like what struck this past year. But when you really think about the opportunity that lies ahead over the next 140 days, you have the ability to alter the arc of the future of Texas—something that's going to be far more lasting than just over the course of the next session or next few years. You're going to have the ability to grapple with and solve issues that have plagued this state for decades, stretching way back into the last century. You have

the ability—and we will achieve it—that we are going to reform school finance in the State of Texas this session. And we are going to reform property taxes in Texas this session.

Here is what I know: It could be 10 years; it could be 20 years; Tom Craddick, it could be 50 years—someone else is going to be sitting at the desk that you are now sitting at. They will know when they come here they are sitting at the desk of someone who altered the course of Texas. Because of what you do this session, you will inspire the next generation of house members. They, too, are going to have the ability to come in here and do exactly what you were able to do this session and that is to make a difference for the State of Texas.

So as we begin today, I applaud you as we start a session that will be like no other. That people will look back upon it decades from now and say, that 86th Session was the best ever and elevated Texas higher than ever before. I look forward to working with you as we make Texas the best state in the United States of America. God bless you all, and God bless Texas.

The Honorable Charlie Geren of Tarrant County moved that staff members employed by house committees at the end of the Eighty-Fifth Legislature continue to be employed by the house subject to available funding until all committee assignments have been made for the Eighty-Sixth Legislature.

The motion prevailed.

INTERPRETER FOR THE DEAF

The interpretation of the proceedings of the house was provided today by Billy Collins and Beverly Young.

SENATE NOTIFIED

The committee appointed to notify the senate that the house is organized and ready to transact business reported that they had performed the duty assigned to them.

The speaker recognized the quartet from the Butler School of Music at The University of Texas who sang the state song.

The speaker recognized the Honorable Phil King of Parker County who introduced Scott McKay, pastor, Willow Drive Baptist Church of Lake Jackson, who pronounced the benediction as follows:

Heavenly Father, your word says that where there is unity, you command a blessing. So I'm asking that you command a blessing over this house and over this legislative session. We are gathered here united in our love for this state and our love for its people. I ask that you bless its citizens with abundance, with prosperity, with peace at every level. I ask that you bless this house with much wisdom and discernment as they deal with issues; patience and grace as they work with each other; honor and servanthood among these as well. I ask that you bless this legislative session with harmony, with equity, and with productivity. And above all these things, Father, I ask this, that your kingdom would come, that your will would be done, that it will be in this state as it is in heaven. And I pray all of these things in your most holy name. Amen.

ADJOURNMENT

The Honorable Cole Hefner of Titus County moved that the house adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow in memory of President George H.W. Bush and Barbara Bush, Richard Overton, and the Honorable Otha Birkner, Honorable Roy Blake Sr., the Honorable Neil Caldwell, the Honorable Bill Carter, the Honorable Reby Cary, the Honorable Tom Christian, the Honorable Jack Connell, the Honorable Lauro Cruz, the Honorable Eligio de la Garza, the Honorable Homer Dear, the Honorable Maurice Doke, the Honorable LaFayette Duckett, the Honorable Paul Elizondo, the Honorable Bill Finck, the Honorable Curtis Ford Jr., the Honorable Don Garrison, the Honorable L. DeWitt Hale, the Honorable Jack Harris, the Honorable Joe Hernandez, the Honorable Charlie Howard, the Honorable Robert Hughes, the Honorable Ben Jarvis, the Honorable Delwin Jones, the Honorable Yale Lary, the Honorable Tom C. Massey, the Honorable Ruth Jones McClendon, the Honorable Walter Mengden, the Honorable Tom Moore Jr., the Honorable Paul Moreno, the Honorable John E. Morrison Jr., the Honorable Anna Mowery, the Honorable Jack Ogg, the Honorable Pete Patterson, the Honorable James K. Presnal, the Honorable Cread L. Ray Jr., the Honorable Bob Richardson, the Honorable Jack Ritter, the Honorable Sanford Schmid, the Honorable A.R. "Babe" Schwartz, the Honorable Richard S. Stark, the Honorable Gary Thompson, the Honorable George Murat Thurmond, the Honorable Jim Wallace, the Honorable Murray Watson Jr., and the Honorable Clyde Emerson Whiteside.

The motion prevailed.

The house accordingly, at 2:05 p.m., adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

