



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Texas AFT President Zeph Capo commented today on Rep. John Bryant and House Democrats' alternate property tax relief plan that would boost public school funding and educator pay:

"The 88th Legislature, in many ways, has made clear to Texas educators who their friends are. We know Rep. Bryant is one of those friends, as he has fiercely fought for increased public school funding, increased school employee pay, and a secure retirement for all educators.

Now, I thank him, along with Rep. Ana-Maria Ramos, Rep. Donna Howard, Rep. Vikki Goodwin, Rep. Christina Morales, and Rep. Mihaela Plesa for once again showing true respect for public education in Texas. Our schools desperately need that \$1,000 per-student increase in funding — something the Legislature roundly ignored in the regular session.

Likewise, I thank Sen. Roland Gutierrez for raising the issue of educator pay in the Senate's property tax proposal. I would encourage the Legislature to pass both the specific bonuses proposed by the Senate and the long-term financial security for our neighborhood schools offered by the House Democrats' plan.

I am grateful to see this issue addressed in a special session on property taxes as there should be no tension between property tax relief for homeowners and renters and adequate funding for their community schools. This state has enough money in the bank to do both. It merely lacks the political will.

Whatever is decided in this special session and those to come, we will remember."

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The Texas American Federation of Teachers represents 66,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, support personnel, and higher-education employees across the state. Texas AFT is affiliated with the 1.7-million-member American Federation of Teachers and the AFL-CIO.