

# **MCALLEN AFT NEWS**

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## **Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. – Senate District 27 Education Town Hall**

The \$27 billion revenue shortfall faced by the Legislature in 2011 was not only the result of the national recession, but also the needs of a growing population. Roughly a third of this gap was due to decisions made five years before, when the Legislature required school districts to cut their property taxes, but failed to create new sources of state revenue to fully replace the foregone revenue, creating a \$10 billion hole or structural deficit. This hole will appear in every state budget until the Legislature fills it with additional revenue.

Our quality of life in Texas depends on our public structures—including public education, child health services, and transportation infrastructure—maintained by Texas tax dollars.

A good tax system would not only provide adequate revenue to maintain these structures, but would also match the share of taxes paid with the share of income earned by each Texas family. The Comptroller's newly released biennial study of the fairness of the Texas state and local tax system, demonstrates conclusively that low-and moderate-income Texas families bear a disproportionate share of state and local taxes. We need a fairer system to fund public structures so we can improve and maintain Texas families' quality of life.

Many Texans are poor, not because they don't work, but because their work pays too little to raise a family out of poverty. To ensure economic prosperity, Texas public policy must support work, make work pay, and help families build their assets.

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## **TIDBITS**

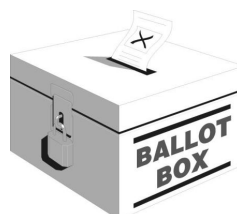
On this Not-So-Super Tuesday, the majority of the nation is hitting the polls to cast their ballot for the 2012 primaries.

But here in Texas, elections have been on hold for several months as the matter of interim redistricting maps was

being deliberated by a U.S. District Court in San Antonio.

Now that maps have been approved, the Hidalgo County Elections Department is resuming the necessary preparations for the 2012 primary elections, will be

held on May 29th.



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## **Education Town Hall (continued)**

The most important thing the state can do to enhance economic opportunity is to invest in public education—from early childhood education all the way through higher education.

Texas faces numerous challenges but also has abundant opportunities to build the middle class and increase prosperity.

Unfortunately, too many Texans are on the sideline, lacking access to opportunities to learn, earn, and save to secure a more prosperous future for themselves

and their families.

To create jobs, increase income, and promote savings, Texas must develop and expand programs and policies to ensure greater prosperity for all Texans.

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau counts every man, woman, and child to track the growth of our national, state, and local populations.

Between 2000 and 2010, Texas' total population grew at twice the national rate to more than 25 million people.

A large part of Texas' growth is due to our child population, which grew by 16 percent to 6.9 million children. This report examines the newest census data and describes how Texas' child population changes are as varied as the state itself, differing depending on whether they live in urban or rural areas and their race/ethnicity. These changes are discussed in the context of our ongoing revenue struggle to find enough money to fund our basic needs now and plan for our future.



**THEIR FUTURE  
OUR FIGHT!**

**Pledge web site (below)**

**[http://act.aflcio.org/c/256/p/dial/  
action3/common/public/?  
action\\_KEY=3422](http://act.aflcio.org/c/256/p/dial/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=3422)**

## **Texas Congressional District Maps**

A three-judge panel in San Antonio has released a new map of Texas' congressional districts to be used for the 2012 elections. Because of Texas' population growth, four new congressional districts will be created statewide. Under the Senate plan, one will be in the Arlington area, one in South Texas, one that stretches from San Antonio to Austin and one that goes east from Houston.

The map is drawn to divide Texas' population of more than 25 million into districts containing 698,488 Texans apiece, as required by law.

This is the second time the court has drawn its own congressional map.

The one it put out last year was challenged by the Texas Attorney General and the Supreme Court blocked the map from being implemented.

The case ended up back in the San Antonio court where judges urged all sides to come up with compromises. While a compromise was recently reached in the Senate map, talks apparently broke down regarding the congressional and state House maps.