

Senator Eliot Shapleigh

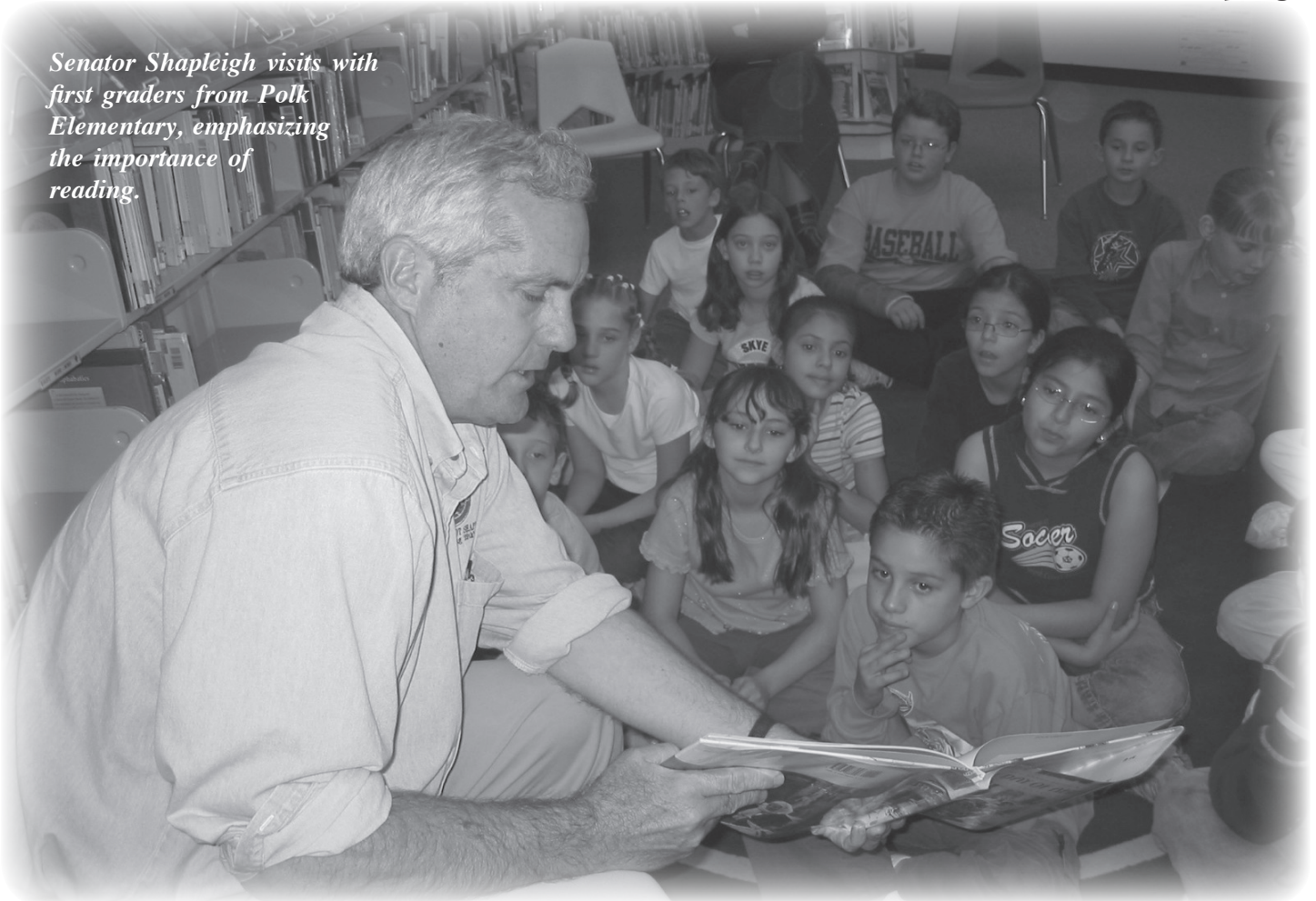
CAPITOL REVIEW

Fall 2005

*“Let’s give thanks for all
the great things we have going.”*

– Senator Eliot Shapleigh

*Senator Shapleigh visits with
first graders from Polk
Elementary, emphasizing
the importance of
reading.*



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moves forward and
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Dear friend:

As the long Summer nights give way to crisp Autumn evenings and the holiday spirit is with us, I write with reflections on the many blessings our community has experienced over the past year.

This past Spring, the 79th Legislative Session was full of great success as well as challenges. Our office filed a bill to restore CHIP and Medicaid funding cuts, a bill to establish several financial literacy programs, a bill to create a fully bi-lingual workforce training program and a bill to provide local governmental entities the authority to create environmental clean-up funds, among other bills. Moreover, we fought to ensure that El Paso’s teachers, taxpayers and school children were treated fairly in any school finance proposals.

Also, we are moving forward on creating the first new medical school in the United States since 1983. In 2003, we received the legislative authority to expand the two-year Texas Tech medical school program in El Paso into a four-year program and we began construction on classroom and research buildings, and this year, with the support of the entire delegation and certain State leaders, we secured the promise of \$38 million dollars to hire faculty and get accreditation.

As we review the past year’s successes and challenges, we are thankful that you have supported us to represent the voices of El Paso and the Texas Border Region and we thank you for the opportunity. May your holiday season be filled with joy and may the new year bring us all prosperity, hope y ganas!

Very truly yours,

Eliot Shapleigh

PROJECTS IN EL PASO, PROJECTS FOR EL PASO

Making El Paso the Medical Center of the Americas

Since being elected in 1996, we have been working to bring our great community a state of the art four-year medical school, and we are steps closer. In 2003, we received the legislative authority to expand the two-year Texas Tech medical school program to a four-year program. Since then, we have built buildings, collected private donations, and made plans for the next step. This past year, Governor Perry and Lt. Governor Dewhurst joined the cause and committed state monies to fund the school. \$38 million was promised, and we are on the verge of making El Paso the *Medical Center of the Americas*.



Senator Shapleigh and Governor Rick Perry announce the advancement of plans for El Paso's medical school.

Fostering Emerging Technologies in El Paso

Bringing advanced technology research, development and manufacturing to El Paso has long been a goal of this office. To that end, we worked with State leaders to develop the Emerging Technology Fund, which creates incentives and grants to increase the presence of advanced technology research, development and production in Texas. Upon the creation of that fund, we have organized with local businesses and leaders, including Woody Hunt, to establish and promote the *El Paso/Trans Pecos Regional Center of Innovation and Commercialization (RCIC)*.

Creating a Center for Secure International Intelligent Transportation Research

For a number of years we have been working to address the critical transportation issues affecting El Paso and the Texas-Mexico border. This past Spring, we secured \$1.6 million for the creation of the *Secure International Intelligent Transportation Research Center* in El Paso, the first of its kind in the United States, to

perform world class research on how to move people and product faster, safer, and more efficiently. This center will serve as a location for primary research, testing, and evaluating various transportation challenges, technologies and approaches.

Strengthening El Paso Pride

Over the last six years, my office has embarked on an ambitious project called *El Paso Pride*. Under this program, we address key quality of life concerns in El Paso. Our initiative has created beautiful new medians, great new monuments and the most attractive highway system in the entire state.

Growing the Franklin Mountains State Park

Recently, I convened the Franklin Mountains State Park Strategic Planning Committee in an effort to grow a state park that all of El Paso and the surrounding region can enjoy. The committee has created a strategic plan for the Franklin Mountains State Park that includes land acquisitions, a master trail program, additions to the tramway, and expanding access to the park.

Raising Money and Awareness for El Paso's Mission Valley Trail

For over 300 years, the Ysleta and Socorro Missions and San Elizario Presidio have stood as symbols of culture, heritage and history for the El Paso area. Yet with weather and time, the missions are crumbling. Restoring these symbols of El Paso takes dedicated funds. In 2003, my office authored and passed a bill to create the Mission Valley specialty license plates as a way to fund restoration efforts in El Paso's Mission Valley. The plate, showcasing the Socorro Mission and a Native American doing a ritual dance in an eagle costume, was unveiled this past Spring.



Senator Shapleigh and students involved in the Action for Youth project, a local initiative to enagage students, parents and community members to transform their community into one where youth and families are cared for and supported, take a few minutes to pose for a photo at the Mission Valley Summit.

Working in Austin, Working for You

During the 79th Legislative Session and the two Special Sessions that followed, we filed over 100 bills. Below are some of the highlights of these efforts:

- ☑ Secured \$7 million for debt service on Research I and II, the first two buildings that will anchor our four-year medical school.
- ☑ Worked with Senator Jane Nelson (R-Lewisville) to restore vision, dental, and mental health benefits to the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- ☑ Authored and passed the Texas Financial Literacy Act to ensure that every Texas child receives basic financial education such as how to balance a checkbook, use a credit card responsibly, and plan for buying a home.
- ☑ Authored S.B. 111, a bill which ensures that motivated high school students receive dual college credits for rigorous programs such as the International Baccalaureate Diploma program, the College Board's Advancement Placement Tests, College Level Exam Program tests, and dual credit courses.
- ☑ Passed S.B. 1479, the Texas Soldier's Payday Protection Act, to prevent predatory lending abuses of Texas' military men and women.
- ☑ Wrote legislation to give the Texas Education Agency budget authority to spend up to \$800,000 to develop an Adult Workforce Curriculum to put more El Pasoans to work in good jobs.



Senator Shapleigh debates the merits of a bill on the Senate Floor. The Texas Senate follows strict parliamentary rules where a Member must stand while speaking.



Senator Shapleigh and Senator Kyle Janek (R-Houston) pour over detailed language of a bill before a vote. Senator Shapleigh works with a Members of both parties in an effort to best represent the interests of El Paso and the Texas Border Region.

- ☑ Worked with the Texas Department of Transportation to build and dedicate a statue honoring Cesar Chavez. On Cesar Chavez Day 2005, El Paso celebrated with the unveiling of a nine-foot statue honoring this great leader. The Cesar Chavez Monument is located on the grounds of the Cesar Chavez Academy in east El Paso.
- ☑ Spearheaded a campaign to raise donations to support a youth program that provides at-risk youth hands-on experience in restoration techniques while at the same time moving forward with actual restoration efforts of the historic Socorro Mission.
- ☑ Co-authored the Texas Rail Facility Act to focus rail policy and promote major projects in metropolitan areas. And, co-sponsored and passed a proposed constitutional amendment that would create the Texas rail relocation and improvement fund.
- ☑ Authored the omnibus Adult Protective Services bill included in S.B. 6 - creating the Guardianship Certification Board, tightening procedures by providing more quality assurance of the state guardianship program, ensuring a more thorough review of cases by staff and special task units, and changing the emergency order process to provide a more immediate response.



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