

Senator Eliot Shapleigh

CAPITOL REVIEW

Fall 2004

‘Our best session ever’

– Senator Eliot Shapleigh



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Dear friend:

As we prepare for our fifth Session of the Texas Legislature, we are happy to report to you that last session was our best ever. Even though Texas faced a \$10 billion budget deficit, we passed the legislation to create the first U.S. medical school in the last 30 years: the El Paso Medical School at Texas Tech.

Since 1997, our number one goal has been to secure a unified medical campus anchored by a four year medical school. With broad community support, a unified delegation, and much hard work, we passed budget riders and legislation to authorize the El Paso Medical School, fund the first \$2 million of faculty and built a \$45 million research tower and \$40 million medical school building to launch this great initiative.

In addition, we passed 48 other bills, launched a laptop program for all Texas schools, the Border Health Foundation and the \$250 million Texas Military Value Fund to help Fort Bliss. As we prepare for the 79th Texas Legislature, we will file bills to fund \$60 million of new faculty, secure research labs and equipment at the medical school. We can say to you that “El Paso’s Future Starts Now!” Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve.



Senator Shapleigh visits the computer lab and talks with students at Alicia Chacon School.

El Paso Projects

El Paso Pride

Over the last five years, my office has embarked on an ambitious project called *El Paso Pride*. Under this program, we address key environmental concerns in El Paso by conducting community discussion summits and initiating large clean up efforts. As manifested by the thousands of participants each year, our summits and clean ups have been very successful. We have shown El Pasoans how to organize neighborhood clean-ups and take pride in the environmental condition of their city.

Camino Real Soccer Council

Soccer is El Paso's fastest growing youth sport. My office has been working for a couple of years on several initiatives to increase El Paso's participation in soccer, and increase the availability of soccer facilities. Through the efforts of this project, soccer in El Paso will greatly increase, giving El Paso the reputation as the soccer capital of the U.S. The project has four goals: a) Sun Bowl soccer tournament; b) quality soccer complexes; c) South-Central Youth Soccer league; d) establish a select club.

Historical Markers Project

The Paso del Norte Historical Marker Project has set out to document and place at least 100 historical markers within five years. Some of the markers will be approved through the Texas Historical Commission, others will be local historical markers. The markers will come in a variety of styles depicting the history of the site, some will even contain historical pictures, such as Pancho Villa enjoying a bowl of ice cream at the Elite Confectionary in Downtown El Paso. Markers will be in English and Spanish.

Frontier of the Americas

Provides public access to computers and the Internet by putting laptops in different elementary schools throughout the county and the parents are allowed to take the laptops home. This will help families advance

economically, as well as provide them the technical skills to compete competitively in today's digital economy. It is not only our interest regionally that we provide these skills. As we enter the Information Age, access to computers and the Internet is becoming increasingly vital. It is in everyone's interest to ensure that no person in our region is left behind.

Franklin Mountains State Park

The project consists of creating a strategic plan for the Franklin Mountains State Park. The plan includes land acquisitions for the park, a master trail program, additions to the tramway, and expanding access to the park. To address these opportunities will be the Franklin Mountains State Park Steering Committee, consisting of interested stakeholders, to develop the plan.

Community Scholars

Community Scholars is a youth leadership development internship program that provides public policy and economic development research opportunities for high school sophomores, juniors and seniors and college students. The summer program began in 1998 and operates under Community Scholars, Inc., a non-profit corporation. The vision is to develop regional community leaders.

"Adelante Con Ganas" Award

This is the highest award that Senator Shapleigh gives to constituents. It is a monthly honor bestowed upon ordinary people who are doing extraordinary deeds. The winner is usually nominated by his friends and family and must be someone who is not a public official or in the public limelight.

Medical school tops eight years of hard work

- Four-year Medical School at Texas Tech's El Paso campus, including \$45 million research building and a new classroom building;
- \$250 million Texas Military Value Fund to be used by cities to enhance existing military bases;
- Fought to increase El Paso's highway funding from \$26 million in 1994 to \$140 million in 2003;
- \$12.2 million, 160 bed State Veteran's Home for El Paso;
- Co-authored the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) bill that now covers more than 40,000 children in El Paso with health insurance;
- Founded Border Health Foundation;
- Co-authored S.B. 441 which created Border Job Creation Tax Credits for research and development;
- Strengthen the tax abatement laws;
- Worked to create a business incubator at UTEP;
- Organized with the Greater Chamber a series of block walks to notify small business throughout El Paso about the chamber's one-stop shop;
- Secured a \$45 million BioSciences Building for Medical Research at UTEP;
- Worked with Boeing to bring 800 employees to El Paso;
- Author of bill that required major revisions in Texas Business incentives policy to extract maximum value;
- Author of key amendment to extend HB 1200 (business incentives bill) to 43 Border Counties, worth of hundreds of millions of dollars in incentives in next 10 years;
- Passed the nation's first international air emissions; trading bill to clean up El Paso air and make us more attractive to business;
- Lead organizer of Economic Development, Access to Capital and Education summits;
- Author of bill to create Border Commerce Czar in Texas Secretary of State's office;
- Increased funding at the University of Texas at El Paso, especially formula funding in the Research and Excellence Fund;
- Created one-stop Border inspection stations to move commercial traffic across ports-of-entry faster and safer;
- Founded Frontier of the Americas Technology Program that provides laptops to elementary schools;
- Created El Paso Pride program to improve the city's highways and neighborhoods;
- Wrote Sun Bowl legislation that creates a rental tax used to fund, in part, the annual game;
- Fought for funding and construction of the first state office building in El Paso;
- Passed legislation to refurbish and open the Wyler Aerial Tramway;



Alone sign stands at the site of the new \$45 million Texas Tech Research, the first step building block of El Paso's new medical school.

- Authored Senate Bill 396 to put laptops in all Texas schools;
- Founded Mission Valley Steering Committee to put more investment in Historic Mission Valley;
- Raised \$2 million for restoration of Socorro Mission; Historic Mission License Plates program;
- Co-founded Community Scholars Program, El Paso's nationally recognized youth leadership program;
- Organized BLC Economic Development Committee and launched Secure, Fast, Smart Border 2020;
- Worked with lenders to pass home equity lending bill, 75th Session;
- Enacted first U.S. emissions' trading bill to permit Texas SEP funds to be used on Juarez projects to clean air quality;
- Created a Taskforce to study the creation of a Camino Real Port Authority;
- Passed bill and work with Texas Transportation Institute and UT Center for Transportation Research on Model Border Crossings;
- Established Sun Bowl International Youth Soccer Tournament;
- Worked with Raytheon to Grow El Paso Just in Time Defense Manufacturing Center;
- Spearheaded Westside Soccer Complex construction;
- Formed partnership to build Fort Bliss Soccer Complex;
- Fought against new air emissions permit from Asarco;
- Published El Paso Factbook to provide grant writers with tools necessary to write grants;
- Organized the Get the Lead Out march;
- Legislator of the Year (American School Health Association);
- Government Technology magazine's Top 25 Doers, Dreamers and Drivers of Information Technology in the USA;
- Texas Legislator of the Year (Mexican American Bar Association);
- Texas Legislative Champion for School Children (Texas Equity Center);



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