



ROBERT DUNCAN
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 28

The Stimulus Package
Senator Robert Duncan
Feb. 18, 2009

In our previous conversations we have discussed the health of the Texas State budget. As many of you may recall, Texas is in a lot better shape than other states around the country.

However, congress has recently passed a stimulus package that provides significant revenues to all states. You will be surprised that the total estimated allocation for the State of Texas under the stimulus package is 16.9 billion. Now that's a lot of money. Sixteen-point-nine billion in program assistance from many of the services that we provide in Texas, including education.

Texas leaders, I believe, will be very careful in our consideration of the use of these funds. The most important thing that we can do in the appropriations process is to assure that we spend these funds wisely, and that we do not create obligations longer than two years.

There are a lot of funds that are available to provide one time source of projects; infrastructure, water projects, as well as projects in our public school system. I think Texas will be in outstanding shape if we use these funds very wisely.

We will go through each of these programs that are provided in the stimulus package and make specific decisions on whether or not we can use the funds, whether or not those funds will further obligate the state in the out-years beyond the life of the federal subsidy, and then also to make sure that we use these funds in the wisest way to help as many Texans as possible.

Again, Texas is in better state than any other state in the union. That is because Texas has been very fiscally responsible in the way that we have appropriated the taxpayers dollar. You can expect the same thing from us with the stimulus package. We intend to be very wise in the way we use this money to make sure that it strengthens Texas and helps us be more competitive, not only in the country, but in the world.

Some of the money comes with federal strings attached. The Texas Legislature has always been very careful when considering federal programs that have strings attached. This is Texas. We are fairly independent here, and its because of that independence, that we are as healthy as we are today. So, you can rest assured that the Texas Legislature will be careful in going through these programs, to ensure that we will maintain independence in the Texas spirit in the way that these funds are expended.