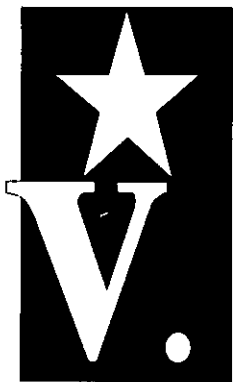


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Project

V.O.T.E.

Voters of Tomorrow through Education

March/April 1995

Vol. 4, No. 1

Meet Secretary Garza



Antonio O. Garza, Jr., 36, was formally sworn in as the new Secretary of State on February 7, 1995. Secretary Garza served as a County Judge for the Cameron County Commissioners Court and attorney for Garza and Garza before his appointment. "I am honored to accept the Governor's appointment and proud to serve the state of Texas," said Garza. "In an effort to increase voter registration and voter participation, we hope to practice what democracy preaches," Garza said.

A Brownsville native, Garza earned his bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from the University of Texas, and his Doctor of Jurisprudence from Southern Methodist University. He received Diplomate training in Guadalajara, Mexico, and at the University of San Diego.

Secretary Garza's civic involvement includes serving as the director of the Parks Advisory Board to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission and as Vice-Chairman for the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Garza has been a member of the Community Development Review committee, the State Job Training Coordinating Council, the Census Complete Count Committee, the U.S. Marshall Selection Committee, and was a conferee at the U.S. Fifth Circuit Judicial Conference.

In addition, Secretary Garza volunteers his time to many community organizations. He has served as the Director for the United Way of Southern Cameron County, the Brownsville Adult Literacy Council, the Private Industry Council of Cameron County, the Brownsville Community Health Center Board, and the Texas Business Hall of Fame Foundation. He has served as the President for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Rio Grande Valley, participated in the H.O.S.T.S. Program for

(continued on page 7)

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Chief
Alabama Coushatta Tribe

Bob Slagle
Chair
Texas Democratic Party



ASK VOTO

Votosaurus Rex

Q How long is the legislature in session?

A The legislature is in session for 140 days. The session convened on January 10th this year and will adjourn May 29th.

Q How is a bill introduced to the House of Representatives/Senate?

A Bills in the House of Representatives are introduced by the Speaker of the House, while bills in the Senate are introduced by the Lieutenant Governor. Each bill must be sponsored by a legislator in order for it to be considered as a possible law. Once it is sponsored by a senator or representative, it is eligible to be heard by the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Q What steps does a bill go through before becoming a law?

A After a bill has been sponsored by a legislator, it is delegated to a committee for approval or rejection. A public hearing is scheduled so that the committee can hear arguments both for and against the bill. If approved, the bill goes to the calendar committee and is passed to a third reading. A 2/3 vote is required at the final reading for passage. Once signed by the speaker of the house and the lieutenant governor, it is up to the governor to make the final decision whether the bill will become a law. The governor then signs the bill into law or vetoes it.

Q What committee hears education bills?

A In the House, the Public Education Committee hears all education-related bills, and the Education Committee hears education bills for the Senate.

Q Who serves on these committees?

A Senate: Ratliff (R)-Chair, Luna (D)-Vice Chair, Barrientos (D), Armbrister (D), Bivins (R), Harris (R), Haywood (R), Montford (D), Nelson (R), Sibley (R), Zaffirini (D)

House: Sadler (D)-Chair, Dear (D)-Vice Chair, Grusendorf (R), Hernandez (D), Hochberg (D), McCoulskey (D), Uher (D), West (R), Williamson (D)

Q How are these committee members selected?

A Lieutenant Governor Bob Bullock appoints the members to the Education Committee (Senate). In addition to Senator Ratliff, Chair of the Committee, there are currently seven other committee chairs assigned to the Education Committee in an effort by Lieutenant Governor Bullock and Governor George W. Bush to give top priority to education. Speaker of the House Pete Laney appoints representatives to the Public Education Committee (House).

For more information regarding how a bill becomes a law, refer to the Enhancements Section of the curriculum for the "How Bill Becomes A Law" story (Enhancements, pages 87 thru 94), and "Basic Steps in the Legislative Process" (Enhancements, pages 81 thru 85).

On-line with Internet

In October 1994, our office joined other state agencies on-line with Internet, the global computer network. Since going on-line with Internet, we have posted election results for the gubernatorial election, and have added a list of county officials, corporation filing information, informational brochures regarding voter registration, and much, much more.

If you haven't had a chance to surf the Internet, here are some ideas for information you can research for use in the classroom, or just for fun.

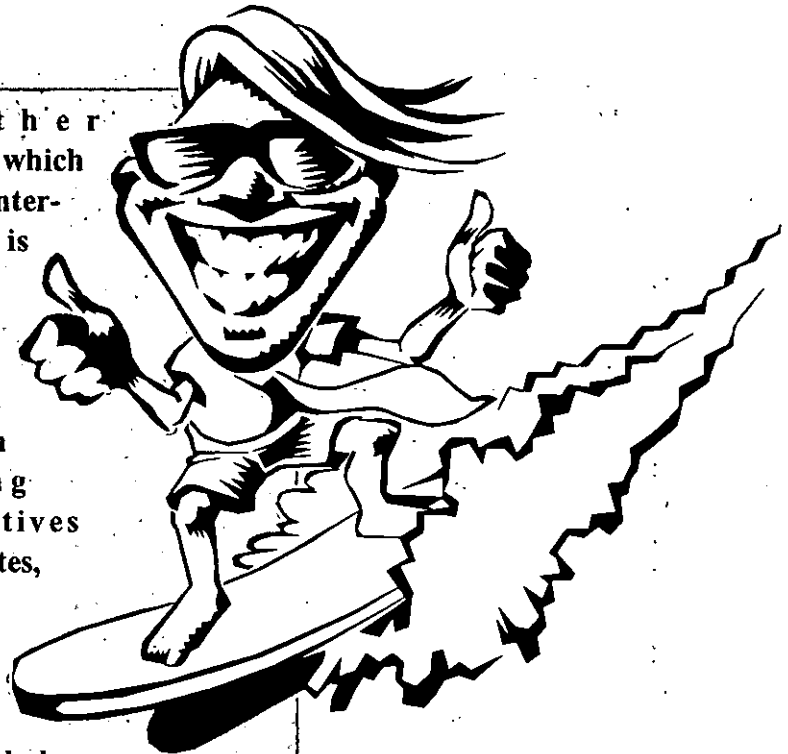
The Texas Legislative Council offers computer users the ability to read bills, as well as track their progress during the 74th legislative session. Other interesting information made available is "How a Bill Becomes a Law," a legislative glossary, the Texas Constitution, legislative districts, and a history of the state capitol.

While visiting the Texas Legislative Council's gopher, you can explore the C-SPAN gopher which has the GOP Contract with America and a list of the Supreme Court Justices along with their personal biographies. There is also a CIA World Factbook which includes economy, geography, communications, government, and defense forces information for all of the countries in the world.

Another Internet site which may be of interest to you is Project Vote Smart. You can access information regarding representatives and candidates, including their voting record, biographical details of their service in Congress, telephone numbers and mailing addresses. In addition to the Congressional database, there is also a Governor's database.

All work and no play? Try exploring Gopher Jewels' (Texas Legislative Council's gopher) Personal Development and Recreation database which lists travel, museums, exhibits and special collections, and multi-media information.

If you have an Internet address that you would like to share with our office, please e-mail the information to Kim Sutton or Kandice Joiner (e-mail and other internet addresses are listed to the right).



INTERNET SITES

Secretary of State
gopher://198.213.44.16.1500/
http://register.sos.texas.gov/
E-mail: ksutton@sos.texas.gov
E-mail: kjoiner@sos.texas.gov

Project Vote Smart
gopher://gopher.neu.edu/

Texas Legislative Council
gopher://capitol.tlc.texas.gov/
telnet://capitol.tls.texas.gov/

Window on State Government
(Comptroller's Office)
telnet://window.texas.gov/
http://www.window.texas.gov/

Texas State Library
gopher://link.tsl.texas.gov/
telnet://gabi.tsl.texas.gov/

Texas Information Highway
(DIR)
gopher://ocs.dir.texas.gov/
http://www.texas.gov/

Legislative Watch '95

Listed below is a partial listing of bills that have been introduced during the 74th regular legislative session pertaining to education. The bill number is posted first, followed by a description of the bill. For bill status information, you should access the Texas Legislative Council's gopher (see page 3) or you may call bill status at 1-800-253-9693.

House Bills

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25 | relating to prohibiting school district employees from administering or authorizing the administration of corporal punishment to students. | 138 | relating to the detention of a child alleged to have committed an offense. |
| 28 | relating to an alternative graduation certificate for a student who has not performed satisfactorily on the secondary exit-level assessment instrument. | 143 | relating to participation in University Interscholastic League sponsored activities by home school students. |
| 49 | relating to the authority of a school district to permit certain persons to perform services for the district in lieu of paying ad valorem taxes owed to the district. | 147 | relating to abolishing the school district property tax and dedicating all lottery revenue, some sales taxes, and certain other statewide taxes to education. |
| 58 | relating to the suspension of a student from participation in extracurricular activities. | 157 | relating to the punishment for the offense of assault of certain employees of a primary or secondary school. |
| 64 | relating to human rights instruction in public school classes. | 162 | relating to instruction in human sexuality in public school classrooms. |
| 69 | relating to a period of quiet reflection in public schools. | 163 | relating to the distribution or sale of condoms in public schools or on public school property. |
| 78 | relating to the minimum salary of a public school teacher who was eligible for assignment to the career ladder. | 254 | relating to the requirement that a student perform satisfactorily on a secondary exit-level assessment instrument to receive a high school diploma. |
| 79 | relating to the minimum salary of a public school teacher formerly on the career ladder. | 268 | relating to school district grievance procedures and to appeal of district and Central Education Agency decisions. |
| 90 | relating to a period of silence in public schools. | 275 | relating to criminal background checks of public school employees and applicants for employment. |
| 131 | relating to the punishment for certain assaults committed on employees of certain primary or secondary schools. | 286 | relating to the dismissal of certain school employees. |
| 133 | relating to a requirement that a student enrolled in a general academic teaching institution serve as an assistant to a public school teacher. | 290 | relating to the cost of purchasing attendance credits for the purpose of equalizing wealth among school districts. |

House Bills (continued)

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|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 301 | relating to the right of parents to choose the school their child attends through the use of education scholarships. | 404 | relating to a requirement that school districts open school buildings after school hours for recreational purposes and tutoring. |
| 315 | relating to access to a student's educational records. | 412 | relating to counseling for parents of certain public school students who are at risk of dropping out of school; providing penalties. |
| 321 | relating to a speed limit for school buses. | 416 | relating to the inclusion of Social Security taxes paid by a school district in funding formulas under the foundation school program. |
| 324 | relating to employment contracts of school district personnel. | 417 | relating to the delay of state contribution payments to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas and the Employees Retirement System of Texas for the last quarter of the fiscal year ending August 31, 1995. |
| 332 | relating to the inclusion of tax abatements in the determination of the taxable property value of a school district. | 439 | relating to drug-free and weapon-free zones and to the imposition of penalties for the possession, delivery, or manufacture of a controlled substance in drug-free zones or on school buses and penalties for certain offenses involving weapons committed in weapon-free zones. |
| 351 | relating to an establishment by two or more school districts in a county of an alternative school for students expelled from regular class. | 470 | relating to preventing children from standing on a school bus that is in motion. |
| 362 | relating to pilot projects in public schools to implement a mentor program for at-risk students at certain grade levels. | 488 | relating to financing public schools. |
| 373 | relating to parental access to certain assessment instruments administered by a school district. | 531 | relating to community education and community education development projects. |
| 381 | relating to the minimum number of days of attendance required for class credit in public schools. | 533 | relating to statewide testing of public school students. |
| 392 | relating to a period of silent reflection or meditation in public schools. | 547 | relating to the consent required before certain psychiatric or psychological examination, testing, or treatment of public school students. |
| 393 | relating to equal access for student religious groups to public school premises for meetings during noninstructional time. | 548 | relating to assistance to school districts in fighting violence in schools and the creation of the school violence prevention assistance account. |
| 394 | relating to a period of silence in public schools. | | |
| 397 | relating to course materials and instruction in human sexuality. | | |
| 400 | relating to reporting violent conduct on public school campuses or during public school activities. | | |
| 401 | relating to required instruction of public school students in basic values of the United States. | | |

House Bills (continued)

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|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 559 | relating to the acceptance of Goals 2000 federal public education funds. | 651 | relating to eligibility for service retirement from the Teacher Retirement System of Texas. |
| 579 | relating to the creation of an offense for the possession of certain weapons in a school zone. | 653 | relating to sales of alcoholic beverages near a church, school, hospital, or residential neighborhood. |
| 580 | relating to court costs for certain traffic convictions resulting from offenses committed in school crossing zones. | 658 | relating to alternative education programs in public schools. |
| 587 | relating to payments to school districts from the foundation school fund. | 661 | relating to parental rights concerning children attending public schools; providing criminal penalties. |
| 599 | relating to the distribution of certain state funds appropriated for education and certain statewide retirement systems. | 687 | relating to parental consent for certain public school district actions taken toward a student. |
| 633 | relating to the admission of a child to first grade. | 689 | relating to parental involvement and rights in public education. |
| 643 | relating to student discipline and certain offenses against school employees. | 696 | relating to a waiver from statutes and rules for a school district or campus regarding textbook selection. |
| 646 | relating to computation of the standard service retirement annuity under the Teacher Retirement System. | 697 | relating to textbooks used in public schools. |

Senate Bills

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|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8 | relating to the distribution of certain state funds appropriated for education and certain statewide retirement systems. | 193 | relating to reporting public school dropout rates. |
| 56 | relating to corporal punishment in public schools. | 197 | relating to an early high school graduation scholarship program and credit by examination for middle and secondary school students. |
| 92 | relating to a voucher for the tuition of a student at a private or parochial school. | 220 | relating to the grounds for expulsion from school. |
| 104 | relating to the punishment for certain assaults committed on employees of certain primary or secondary schools. | 221 | relating to the waiver of tuition and fees for teachers attending federally funded teacher enhancement programs. |
| 159 | relating to requiring instruction in public schools in the skills required in parenting. | 227 | relating to the educational rights of students who are deaf or hard of hearing. |
| 160 | relating to requiring instruction in violence prevention and conflict resolution procedures in public schools. | | |

(Message from Secretary Garza continued from page 1)

Brownsville ISD, and has volunteered in his community for years as a soccer and basketball coach.

Among his many recognitions and awards, Garza was a member of an eight-person delegation to Poland/Hungary in 1993 sponsored by the American Council of Young Political Leaders. He was named one of the Five Outstanding Young Texans in 1990 by the Texas Jaycees, and one of the Five Outstanding Young Texas Exes in 1989 by the Ex-Students Association of the University of Texas.

Garza was appointed by President George Bush as a member of the official twelve-person Presidential Delegation to observe the 1991 Federal Elections in El Salvador, and was invited by President Bush to be part of the Official Receiving Delegation and an attendee at State dinner upon the first official visit of Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortary to the U.S. in October 1989.

Garza replaces Ronald Kirk, who aspires to be the next Mayor of Dallas.



Assisting Garza is Clark Kent Ervin. Before his appointment, Ervin practiced law with Liddell, Sapp, Zivley, Hill & LaBoon, L.L.P. of Houston. He graduated cum laude from Harvard College with a Bachelor of Arts in Government. A Rhodes Scholar, Ervin received a Master of Arts in Poli-

tics, Philosophy and Economics from Oxford University, and graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School with a Juris Doctorate.

Assistant Secretary Ervin was a candidate for U.S. Congress (District 29) in 1992, and previously worked as the Associate Director of the Office of National Service in the Bush White House, and at Vinson & Elkins, L.L.P. of Houston.

Ervin has served as Director of the Houston Committee on Foreign Relations, The Houston Symphony, The Alley Theatre, and the Foundation for Interfaith Research & Ministry.

General Task Force Meeting Dates for 1995

March — March 14

April — April 11

May — May 9

JULY — July 11

September — September 12

October — October 10

November — November 14

December — December 12

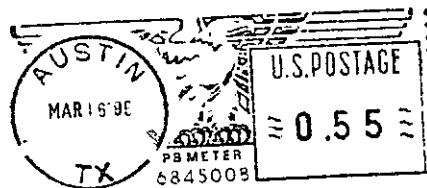
There are no meetings scheduled for June and August. All General Task Force meetings are held from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. in the 4th floor conference room of the James Earl Rudder Building, located at 1019 Brazos Street in Austin. Metered parking is available around the building. Everyone is welcome, please come!

WANTED!!

Education specialists in the areas of Pre-K and/or Gifted and Talented coursework. Duties include assisting with the development of materials for the Project V.O.T.E. curriculum. No prior experience necessary, flexible hours, and great benefits (you will be acknowledged for your contributions in the curriculum). If interested, please contact Kim Sutton, Director of Special Projects, toll-free at 1-800-252-VOTE(8683), direct at (512) 463-9873, or by fax at (512) 475-2811.

Things to look for in the next issue:

- School districts that will be implementing Project V.O.T.E. in the 1995-96 school year.
- A list of enhancements that will be made for the 1995-96 edition of the curriculum.
- Profile of Marion Clayton Sylestine, Chief of the Alabama Coushatta Tribe.
- Internet update.
- Legislative Watch '95 update.



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