

HOUSE JOURNAL
of the
REGULAR SESSION
of the
EIGHTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

January 11, 2011

through

May 30, 2011

HR 100 - ADOPTED
(by Hughes and Hunter)

The following resolution was laid before the house:

HR 100

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the State of Texas, That, in accordance with Sections 9(b) and 11, Article III, Texas Constitution, the House of Representatives of the 82nd Legislature shall receive nominations to elect a speaker of the house from its own membership as follows:

SECTION 1. NOMINATIONS. (a) The secretary of state shall call for nominations from the floor for the election of speaker of the house of representatives and shall recognize every member who desires to make a nomination. The order in which members desiring to make a nomination shall proceed shall be determined by lot.

(b) Each member recognized for this purpose shall immediately advance to the front microphone and make the nomination in a nominating speech not to exceed five minutes in length.

(c) After all nominations have been made, the secretary of state shall declare nominations to be closed.

SECTION 2. SECONDS. (a) A person is not considered a nominee unless the nomination is seconded by at least one member.

(b) One seconding speech shall be allowed for each nomination in the order in which nominations were made, then other seconding speeches shall be allowed in rotation in the same order.

(c) No more than five seconding speeches shall be allowed for each nominee.

(d) A seconding speech may not exceed three minutes in length.

HR 100 was read and was adopted.

ADDRESS BY REPRESENTATIVE PAXTON
ON A MATTER OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

Secretary Andrade recognized Representative Paxton who addressed the house on a matter of personal privilege.

ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Secretary Andrade announced that the next order of business would be the election of the speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Second Legislature of the State of Texas, and stated nominations for speaker would now be in order.

Secretary Andrade recognized the Honorable Rob Eissler of Montgomery County, who placed in nomination for speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Second Legislature of the State of Texas the name of the Honorable Joe Straus of Bexar County, speaking as follows:

First, I would like to congratulate each of you on your election to this distinguished body.

The Texas Legislature is unique. We only convene every odd-numbered year. We are only in session for 140 days. And at the end of the day, we really only have to pass one bill. Trust me, the pay reflects it.

One-hundred-and-fifty men and women, representing every square inch of this state, come to Austin to serve the people and to govern this great state. The Texas House is the people's house, a collegial body in every sense of the word, not a partisan political machine. We debate many issues and we don't always see eye to eye, but at the end of the day, we can agree to disagree. All of us—republican, democrat, and independent; urban, suburban, and rural—we share a common goal: to make Texas better. Now is the time to remember Thomas Paine's wise advice: "If we do not hang together, we shall surely hang separately."

Two years ago, Representative Joe Straus was elected speaker of the house. That was good news for the Texas House; that was good news for Texas. Many words can describe Joe: honorable, fair, trustworthy, but one word especially comes to mind and that is respectful. Joe Straus leads with respect. He respects the members, he respects the process, and he respects the house as an institution. He did not force his agenda on the membership; he allowed members to represent their constituents. He allowed the legislative process to determine the outcome, not simply one person or position. As a member of this body, that alone should resonate with you. Each one of us was elected to serve our district, and the ability to fulfill your duty is called democracy.

Today, I consider it a privilege to call Joe Straus a friend. I trust his judgment and have sought his counsel on more than one occasion. He listens, and politicians are not always known for their listening skills. But Joe is not interested in politics, he is interested in what is best for Texas.

This next session is not without its challenges. We all want economic opportunity, quality jobs, great public schools, and a cleaner environment. And I know that Joe Straus is the right man to lead us where we want to go. For those of you that know me, you know I can't resist taking a quote and putting my particular spin or flavor on it. So, to paraphrase one of our generation's great philosophers, Mick Jagger, we must remember that we can't always get what we want, but working together under the leadership of Joe Straus, we will always get what we need.

Madam Secretary, it is my great honor and privilege to respectfully place into nomination the name of the Honorable Joe Straus for speaker of the Texas House of Representatives.

Representative Eissler moved that the nominations for speaker cease.

The motion prevailed.

Secretary Andrade announced that the nominations for speaker would now be closed.

Secretary Andrade recognized the Honorable Senfronia Thompson of Harris County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Joe Straus, speaking as follows:

Madam Secretary, Mr. Chief Justice, fellow members, and distinguished guests. It is a great honor to be standing here before you all. The opening day of the Texas legislative session has always given me a great sense of pride, honor, and renewed hope. The road here wasn't easy for some of us, and we've all seen some tough battles leading up to this day. More tough days lie ahead.

I have had the privilege of serving under six speakers. I know the type of leadership it takes to lead this house, and that leader is Joe Straus. I firmly believe that he is the right person to guide us through the difficult challenges we face ahead.

I have served in this august body for 38 years. I have never had a constituent tell me that the Texas Legislature needs to act more like the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C. Here in Texas, we have trusted members to represent their unique constituency. We are 150 individuals elected to represent our own constituents, not just members of a two-party block. Traditionally in this chamber, we are Texans working to solve our common problems first. We do not segregate ourselves by party or labels. That has allowed our state government to run better than the federal government.

Our speaker is not a dictator. He does not rule from on high telling members to make votes that do not best reflect their constituency or their conscience. The speaker's role is to put all members in positions that allows the house to maximize its potential for making Texas an even better place to live. Last session, Joe Straus, a man of action, did just that.

I am the remaining house member of the largest freshman class in Texas history. Our class was the largest influx of republicans and minorities. There were 76 of us—a majority of the Texas House. Despite our party differences, we worked together and ushered in a new era of legislative reform. In one session, we set the standard for transparency in government, open records, open debate, true committee work, and true representation of our constituents. We addressed real issues in a true bipartisan fashion, where elected house members represented their constituents and had a real say in the process. We had meaningful debate, worked out our problems in committee, and sought input from one another. We saw past our differences, we found our common ground, and we built a Texas—and a Texas government—that gave us pride and hope. To listen and effectively work with others is the art and soul of politics.

Joe Straus as speaker will continue the traditions of a Texas Speaker by allowing each member to independently represent the unique group of people that elected them. Joe has the qualities of a great leader, and he has proven that to us time and time again. He is competent. He is fair. His word is impeccable. He is indeed a true Texan and a true statesman. In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.: "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

It is with great and distinct pleasure that I second the nomination of my colleague and my friend, Joe Straus, for speaker of the Texas House of Representatives of the 82nd Legislature.

Secretary Andrade recognized the Honorable Drew Darby of Tom Green County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Joe Straus, speaking as follows:

Madam Secretary, fellow members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. As I stand here, I am in awe of this hallowed chamber and of the men and women who have come before us. On the north side of the Congress Avenue bridge, there is a historical marker that describes the city of Austin during the Civil War. The citizens endured economic hardships and scarcity of resources. Hotels refused room and board unless payment was made in gold, silver, or commodities such as nails and tobacco. As a result, state legislators lived in their wagons and cooked over open fires.

Although we won't have those hardships, the challenges for this session are great and the opportunities are many, but the reality is there is not much gold or silver in the state's pockets to pay for more than essential services. The state cannot afford any extras. Therefore, there will be much negotiation and discussion among the members for the priorities of Texas. But what will we use as our nails and tobacco? What do each of us have to offer?

Members, I submit to you that there are only two commodities that have value in this house: our word and our work ethic. I am speaking of our honor and commitment to each other, this legislative body, and to the people of Texas: to work hard every day; to be committed to finding solutions to the problems facing Texas; and to conduct ourselves in a way that brings honor and respect to this house and the people of the districts we serve. There are those who want to buy your honor, but once sold, you can never buy it back.

A former speaker of this house once said, "There are no degrees of honor. You either have it or you don't." Joe Straus is an honest and honorable man and no one should question his commitment to family values, to his party, to this institution, or to our great state. Joe Straus is a proven leader who stands for fairness, honor, and integrity.

This is the day we need to put Texas first and foremost, not politics. We need to do right by those we humbly serve and not bend to pressure from those with personal agendas. We must come together as a body, for united we stand, but divided we fall, and then we would all fail Texas. We were not elected to make only the easy decisions, we were elected to honor our word and make the right decisions.

My friends and colleagues, that time is now. We need a speaker with experience, that understands the issues of Texas, that will support the legislation that Texas needs, and that will lead us during these difficult days ahead with conviction, commitment, fairness, and honor. We need Joe Straus. So today, it is my humble privilege to stand before you and second the nomination of our friend, the Honorable Joe Straus, as our speaker of the Texas House of Representatives. God bless each and every one of you, and God bless Texas.

Secretary Andrade recognized the Honorable Pete Gallego of Brewster County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Joe Straus, speaking as follows:

Madam Secretary, members of the house, I rise today to second the nomination of our colleague, Joe Straus, to be speaker of the Texas House during this 82nd Session of the Texas Legislature.

Those of you who know me know that my life changed dramatically some six years ago when I became a parent. Those of you who are parents or grandparents know exactly what I mean. Nicolas has become the center of my universe, the focus of all of my energy and attention.

As you watch your first—and for me only—child grow up, you struggle with a critical question: What is it I want to teach him? What core values do I want my son to learn? If we complain that modern society has lost its old-fashioned values, what are those old-fashioned values that we should try so hard to preserve?

As I pondered those values, I've come to realize that Joe Straus exemplifies many of the values we want in our kids and should look for in our leaders. Think of it this way: Stick to your principles. Do what you think is right, unless it gets too difficult or you get a lot of pressure to do something else. Then it's okay to surrender your principles and go along with the crowd. Is that what we teach? No. Convenience is not exactly the core value we want our kids to learn.

Though not many of us, except perhaps my friend Edmund Kuempel, knew Joe Straus that well when he was first elected speaker, we have all learned a lot about him over the last two years, and even more over the past few weeks. We know now that he is a man of principle and, instead of convenience, he is guided by the courage of his convictions. He handles extreme pressure gracefully and, whatever the circumstances, is unfailingly polite. Good manners—the kind our parents and grandparents tried so hard to instill in us—are extremely rare, especially in the rough-and-tumble world of politics.

Whatever the argument, whatever the debate, Joe Straus is nothing if not considerate and fair. Which of us—who among us would teach our children to be otherwise? His sense of fairness permeates all he does. Joe Straus's demeanor and sense of fairness brought this institution so many of us love back from the brink of self-destruction and restored its dignity. History will judge him kindly for that.

We all have our own views and our own opinions. We all want our views and opinions to matter. Joe Straus has empowered us all. Under his leadership, every vote counts, because you and 75 other votes can chart the course of the state. You see, Joe Straus is the conductor, but he allows us as members to choose our own music.

In my part of the world, we know the difference between work horses and show horses. With the major challenges facing this state, with the hard-core decisions that must be made, we need someone like Joe Straus. He works hard. He has a calm and steady hand. He is fair in his approach. These are qualities every Texan should admire. Who could ask for more?

Madam Secretary, I'm proud to second the nomination of Joe Straus to be speaker of the Texas House.

Secretary Andrade recognized the Honorable Beverly Woolley of Harris County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Joe Straus, speaking as follows:

Madam Secretary, distinguished guests, fellow members. We have achieved an incredible feat. For the first time in history, there are 101 republican members of the Texas House. When I was elected in 1994, there were 63 republican members. I am proud to see 101 republican members today. We all worked hard to get here and have many challenges ahead of us as we serve Texas. We are here, not because of one group or one incident, we are here because independents come to the republican point of view.

Do all 101 members agree on every issue? No, nor should we. We all have differences that should be respected. Each of us represent individual districts with individual needs. Each of us should be true to our constituents and our districts. While we do not all agree on every issue, we do agree on core issues. We were elected to solve Texas' problems, and we must come together to do that.

In 2005, I stood before this body and nominated my friend, Tom Craddick. I did so because I believed in his values. I still do. Today, I stand before you to nominate, Joe Straus because I believe in Joe's values. Joe Straus is a life-long republican and strong fiscal conservative. He served in both President Reagan's and President George H. W. Bush's administrations.

Did I agree with Tom Craddick 100 percent of the time? Absolutely not. Do I agree with Joe Straus 100 percent of the time? Same answer, absolutely not. Truth be told, I hope that I can get an 80 percent agreement rating with my husband of 50 years.

In 2008, the Americans for Prosperity, well known for their conservative values, awarded Speaker Straus an "A" rating—the best rating you can get, an honor shared with only 16 other legislators. Joe Straus is a fine man. He and I share the same core values: belief in limited government, low taxes, and a tight hold on spending. I am firmly convinced that Speaker Straus will lead this house forward with the dignity and respect it should have.

Madam Secretary, I second the nomination of Joe Straus for speaker of the Texas House of Representatives.

Secretary Andrade recognized the Honorable Byron Cook of Navarro County, who seconded the nomination of the Honorable Joe Straus, speaking as follows:

In closing the nomination of Speaker Joe Straus, I think it's important to note that one can tell a lot about a person by their family, their commitment to their word, and how they handle themselves under difficult circumstances. Joe Straus has shown great integrity and leadership in all these areas.

For those who have marveled at how Joe Straus, with less than two legislative terms under his belt, emerged as the republican elected choice for Texas House Speaker, must only look to the Straus family's bedrock of unwavering conservative values, with ties to the Republican Party that overlap over three centuries of our great state's existence. In 1898, Teddy Roosevelt brought his Rough Riders to San Antonio to outfit the U.S. Cavalry with saddles

and other equipment made by the Straus family business. The same trust that Roosevelt placed with Joe's family back then is the same trust conservatives have overwhelmingly now placed in Texas House Speaker Joe Straus.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Joe's family, against incredible odds, joined with other early Republican Party pioneers and began building the foundation of our modern Texas Republican Party. Joe continued the journey to strengthen and grow the Grand Old Party through serving in the republican presidential administrations of Ronald Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush.

In 2005, he was elected as a Republican State Representative to the Texas House of Representatives. Today, Joe is uniquely prepared to lead what will likely be a very difficult session.

In 1907, President Roosevelt offered wisdom and guidance for state legislative governance. I paraphrase: Let the public servant be extremely careful to make no promise that they cannot keep. It is not those who promise most freely who can be trusted to perform most accurately. Instead, it is the public servant who honestly and humbly faces each problem, seeking solutions with the resolute determination without being daunted or misled by foolish reactionaries.

I believe that the majority of this body and most all Texans would agree with Joe Straus, that we do not want to poison Texas with Washington-style politics. Principled and fair, Joe Straus has fought to successfully restore and protect the civility of the Texas House. His unyielding conservative leadership will prove invaluable as this body addresses the many challenges facing us this legislative session. I am confident that Joe will continue to lead with honesty, integrity, and commitment to this great state.

Representative Cook moved that the Honorable Joe Straus be elected speaker of the Texas House of Representatives of the Eighty-Second Legislature by acclamation.

There being an objection, a record vote was requested.

The Honorable Joe Straus of Bexar County was elected speaker of the Texas House of Representatives of the Eighty-Second Legislature by (Record 1): 132 Yeas, 15 Nays, 2 Present, not voting.

Yeas — Mr. Speaker; Aliseda; Allen; Alonzo; Alvarado; Anchia; Anderson, C.; Anderson, R.; Aycock; Beck; Bohac; Bonnen; Branch; Brown; Burnam; Button; Callegari; Carter; Castro; Chisum; Coleman; Cook; Craddick; Creighton; Crownover; Darby; Davis, J.; Davis, S.; Deshotel; Driver; Dukes; Dutton; Eiland; Eissler; Elkins; Farias; Farrar; Fletcher; Frullo; Gallego; Garza; Geren; Giddings; Gonzales, L.; Gonzales, V.; Gonzalez; Gooden; Guillen; Gutierrez; Hamilton; Hancock; Hardcastle; Harless; Harper-Brown; Hartnett; Hernandez Luna; Hilderbran; Hochberg; Hopson; Howard, C.; Howard, D.; Huberty; Hunter; Jackson; Johnson; Keffer; King, S.; King, T.; Kleinschmidt; Kolkhorst; Kuempel; Larson; Lavender; Legler; Lewis; Lozano; Lucio; Lyne; Madden; Mallory Caraway; Margo; Marquez; Martinez; Martinez Fischer; McClendon; Menendez; Miles; Miller, D.; Miller, S.; Morrison; Muñoz; Murphy; Naishtat; Nash; Oliveira; Orr; Otto; Patrick; Peña; Phillips; Pickett; Pitts; Price; Quintanilla; Raymond; Reynolds; Riddle; Ritter; Rodriguez; Schwertner; Scott; Sheets;

Sheffield; Shelton; Smith, T.; Smith, W.; Smithee; Solomons; Strama; Taylor, L.; Thompson; Torres; Truitt; Turner; Veasey; Villarreal; Vo; Walle; Weber; Woolley; Workman; Zerwas.

Nays — Berman; Burkett; Cain; Christian; Flynn; King, P.; Landtroop; Laubenberg; Parker; Paxton; Perry; Simpson; Taylor, V.; White; Zedler.

Present, not voting — Hughes; Isaac.

Absent — Davis, Y.

COMMITTEE APPOINTED

Secretary Andrade announced the appointment of the following committee to escort Speaker-elect Straus to the speaker's rostrum: Keffer, Lucio, Larson, Johnson, Gonzalez, Beck, Menendez, Garza, S. King, Torres, Scott, Nash, Hochberg, Price, Schwertner, S. Miller, Coleman, Frullo, J. Davis, and Alvarado.

HOUSE AT EASE

At 1:17 p.m., Secretary Andrade announced that the house would stand at ease.

Secretary Andrade called the house to order at 1:26 p.m.

OATH OF OFFICE TAKEN BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Speaker-elect Straus and his party were escorted to the speaker's rostrum.

The Honorable Joe Straus of Bexar County took the constitutional oath of office as speaker of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Second Legislature of the State of Texas, which was administered by the Honorable Wallace Jefferson, chief justice of the Texas Supreme Court, as follows:

"I, Joe Straus, do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of speaker of the Texas House of Representatives of the Eighty-Second Legislature of the State of Texas, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this state. So help me God."

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Secretary Andrade introduced Representative Harless who introduced the Speaker Straus and the following members of his family: Joe, Jr. and Jocelyn Straus, Julie Brink Straus, and Robyn and Sara Straus.

ADDRESS BY THE SPEAKER

Speaker Straus addressed the house, speaking as follows:

Thank you all very much. Thank you, Patricia. I have some eyeglasses here you can borrow anytime. Thank you, Chief Justice Jefferson. Thank you for being here to administer this oath, and Madam Secretary. Hope, thank you for chairing our proceedings today. Both are proud San Antonians like me and dear

friends. Welcome to all state and federal officials, families, and our fellow Texans who have joined us here today. You honor the house of representatives with your presence.

Governor Perry is expected to arrive shortly. We look forward to your arrival, and thank you for your service starting in the house, then as presiding officer of the senate, and now, as the longest-tenured governor in our state's history.

The Texas House of Representatives looks forward to working with you, Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst, and the members of the Texas Senate to achieve our shared goals for the best interests of the people we all represent. Together, we will keep Texas strong, secure, and a great place to do business, live, and raise a family.

To my colleagues in the Texas House, thank you from the bottom of my heart for your friendship and trust. I am truly humbled by your overwhelming support for my re-election as your speaker. Together, we can and we will faithfully fulfill the solemn oaths of office we have all taken today. To Rob, Senfronia, Drew, Pete, Beverly, and Byron, thank you for your extraordinarily kind words. I will do my very best to live up to them, and I promise that I will once again exercise the responsibilities of this office fairly, judiciously, and with respect.

The value of respect is a lesson I learned at an early age and for that, I want to thank my parents. For my sisters and me, our mother and dad identified fundamental values of faith, respect, responsibility, honesty, and through their lives and example, an unwavering commitment of service to others. I thank them today for that and for their love and support.

My wife, Julie, is the greatest blessing in my life. When we met, she was working for Secretary James Baker as an assistant in the Reagan Administration. She outranked me then and she still outranks me now at our house, where she is the powerful chairman of all of our committees. Julie and I have been given two great gifts, our wonderful daughters. Robyn and Sara, I'm very proud of you, and I love you.

I know all the members of the house join me in thanking the people of Texas for giving us the privilege and the opportunity to serve. We thank all our families for making sacrifices that allow us to be here. We appreciate your love, support, encouragement, and counsel. Legislative spouses are often left alone to keep our households running while we serve in this house. It's not an easy task. Though I have heard from several legislative wives who shall go unnamed that sometimes more gets done when we are not around. For so many of us, our families inspire our service. We want to leave a better Texas for our children and their children.

This is a day of great purpose and meaning for each of us. To those members who have just taken the oath of office for the first time, you have become part of a great institution where ordinary Texans do extraordinary things by serving causes greater than self. You have become part of a grand tradition of public service, and we all share in the responsibility of upholding it.

I regret that one of our greatest role models and a fine servant of this institution is no longer with us. This house will not be the same without our friend, the late Representative Edmund Kuempel. To Birdie, Margaret, Michelle, and the rest of the Kuempel family, including our newest colleague, his son John, we embrace you and mourn the passing of a great man. No one did more to bring a spirit of civility and unity and a great sense of humor to this house. He was a sterling example of how enjoying the work we do here leads us to do a better job for the people of Texas. Edmund believed the members who served with him were colleagues, not enemy combatants.

We have differences of philosophy, and party, but we are all Texans first. With that always in mind, as I promised when I first became speaker two years ago, I'll do my best to empower members so that they can do what is right for their constituents and for the people of Texas.

I know that in recent weeks members of the house have withstood threats, harassment, and attempts at intimidation because of the fair and respectful way in which you want this house to operate. Division, threats of retribution, attacks on people's religious beliefs, and distortions of people's records have no place in this house. Members, I hope you will work with me to make the Texas House a place where decent and honorable people want to come and serve our state, a place where we can learn from the differences that make up our great state without letting them divide us.

I want Texans to look at the house and see leaders who can debate the most contentious issues of the day in a spirit of respect and civility. I want our citizens to know that the rules of the people's house are not subject to the whims of the chair or the pressure of powerful special interests. This house is where truth rules and where reason prevails. The will of the house should guide this house. And the will of the house does not begin in the speaker's office. It begins in the homes and office buildings, on the farms and in the cities, in the suburbs and in the high tech centers. It begins with the 25 million people who are proud to call themselves Texans. These are the people who sent us here and if we fail to respect each other, we fail to respect them.

Every member of this house deserves to be heard and have a voice, to contribute his or her best because every member was sent here by the people of Texas. In the months ahead, we will face tough issues, from balancing the budget, to the always difficult job of redistricting. Yet we also face a challenge as great as improving education, securing our border, and creating jobs: the challenge to restore people's confidence in public service.

A recent study from the Pew Center found that "just 22 percent say they can trust the government in Washington, among the lowest measures in half a century." That same study indicated that "rising criticism was not limited to the federal government." We can rebuild trust by the way we conduct ourselves and the way we treat others. We will disagree at times, because we are passionate about the principles we hold dear, but we can choose to make our arguments constructive rather than destructive. We can rebuild trust by setting high ethical standards, by being transparent, and always making government accountable to the people it serves. We can rebuild trust by making Texas' state government live

within its means. In November's election, the people of Texas made it clear: they want a more conservative government that is limited and fiscally responsible. We can rebuild trust by conducting ourselves in ways that Washington might learn from.

Our state faces many challenges, but is blessed with even more opportunities. None of us here would want to trade places with legislators in any other state. Texas continues to be the place where businesses want to locate and expand, where people want to raise their families and realize their dreams. Great challenges require great leaders. Together, we will work for a Texas that continues to be America's frontier of innovation and opportunity. My favorite Texas historian happens to also be my constituent, T. R. Fehrenbach, and he wrote in his epic book *Lone Star*, "Men who exist get overrun by men who act." Men and women of the Texas House, we were sent here to act and to act on behalf of the people. We may not all share the same ideology, but we share a common identity: we are all Texans. We have inherited a birthright of independence, a spirit of boldness, a vision of what is possible. The great promise of this state is inclusive. It belongs to all who work hard, respect the rules, and persevere. The men and women who are remembered beyond their years are not those who sow the seeds of discord, but those who plant for a future they may never see. May the laws we write reflect an understanding of the best that Texas can be, not only today, but tomorrow and for decades to come. I am grateful to start this new session with each of you. May God bless the great State of Texas, and always keep her brave and strong.

ADDRESS BY THE GOVERNOR

Speaker Straus recognized Representative Kolkhorst who introduced the Honorable Rick Perry, governor of the State of Texas, who briefly addressed the house.

COMMITTEES APPOINTED

The speaker announced the appointment of the following committee to notify the governor that the house is organized and ready to transact business: Hilderbran, chair; Fletcher, Carter, Giddings, Gooden, Hancock, and Marquez.

The speaker announced the appointment of the following committee to notify the senate that the house is organized and ready to transact business: Dutton, chair; Aliseda, Button, Martinez, Strama, Shelton, and Lavender.

INTERPRETER FOR THE DEAF

The interpretation of the proceedings of the house was provided today by Billy Collins and Beverly Young.

CAPITOL PHYSICIAN

The speaker presented Dr. Melissa Gerdes of Whitehouse, president of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians, as the "Doctor for the Day."

The house welcomed Dr. Gerdes and thanked her for her participation in the Physician of the Day Program sponsored by the Texas Academy of Family Physicians.