



TSTA NEWS

TEXAS STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

316 W. 12th St., Austin, TX 78701 • 877-ASK-TSTA • www.tsta.org • Fax 512-486-7049

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House Appropriations approves devastating budget

The House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday approved a revised version of House Bill 1, the general appropriations bill for 2012-2013, for debate by the full House. Chairman Jim Pitts, R-Waxahachie, said he plans to start that debate next Friday, April 1.

The committee version of HB1 would cut the Foundation School Program by about \$8 billion, based on the funding that is needed to meet an anticipated school enrollment growth of 170,000 over the next two years. That is about \$2 billion less than the almost-\$10 billion cut in the original version of HB1. The main difference is the \$3.2 billion in money from the Rainy Day Fund that the governor and House budget writers agreed to spend. Some \$2 billion of that Rainy Day amount went to public education. Gov. Perry has said he will refuse to spend any more money from the Rainy Day Fund, although it is projected to have a record balance of \$9.4 billion during the upcoming budget period.

This bill still would result in thousands of public school employees losing their jobs and tens of thousands of school kids being crammed into overcrowded classrooms. TSTA will continue to demand that the Legislature spend all \$9.4 billion in the Rainy Day Fund and also find new revenue to minimize the cuts to public education and other critical state services. Health care also would take big hits under this bill.

The Appropriations Committee approved the bill, 18-7. The seven “no” votes came from the Democrats who were present – Sylvester Turner of Houston, Helen Giddings of Dallas, Scott Hochberg of Houston, Eric Johnson of Dallas, Armando “Mando” Martinez of Weslaco, Mike Villarreal of San Antonio and Ruth Jones McClendon of San Antonio.

The committee action makes TSTA’s Day of Action on April 2 even more important. If you have not already done so, please check with your local president or [TSTA’s website](#) to see what pro-education event your local is hosting that day and plan to participate. Public opinion is on our side, and we need to make sure our message continues to reach the Capitol. House debate on HB1 is a key step in the budget-writing process, but it won’t be the last step.