

State Representative Mike Krusee Files Bill for East Williamson County Higher Education

February 28, 2007

State Representative Mike Krusee filed a legislation today relating to the operation of Texas A&M University--Central Texas East Williamson County. Texas A&M University--Central Texas East Williamson County will be a Multiple Institutional Teaching Center with facilities located in Bell County and Williamson County. The Center will be a component institution of the Texas A&M University System

The vision for Texas A&M--Central Texas East Williamson County campus will be an extension of the educational successes of Temple College at Taylor and will provide a portfolio of educational and workforce opportunities for the citizens of rural East Williamson County. Part of the goal for the Center is to create quick and flexible responses to employer needs. An additional goal of the Center is to create strategic partnerships with area school districts, the Texas Bioscience Institute, Temple College, Texas State Technical College, and various major universities. The Center's collaborative technology training model will allow it to leverage the strengths and successes of member partners while providing it the autonomy that is required to build a truly unique regional educational center for the 21st century.

The Texas A & M-- Central Texas East Williamson County campus will be a Multiple Institution Teaching Center (MITC) located in East Williamson County designed to meet the academic and workforce needs of all East Williamson County residents. Memorandums of Agreement have been created and signed that will bring not only academic and technical colleges to the campus but a university as well. This kind of institution will be the backbone of Texas' workforce and development and can help the citizens of East Williamson County gain skills and knowledge needed to help with research and development, product design, and lights-out manufacturing. It is through innovative processes that concepts become creations. Whether students will want to work in design, testing, or repair, the high skill, high wage programs will help the current and future workforce of East Williamson County.

Representative Krusee said, "access to higher education opportunities is critical for both young people and for our current workforce. Accordingly, it has been one of my top priorities. In the 1990s, I worked with the city to bring Temple Junior College to Taylor. In 2003 and 2005, funds were secured to open the Round Rock Higher Education Center. Now, I am working with community leaders to bring a similar facility to East Williamson County. By creating these higher education options, we can ensure a prosperous future for coming generations".

The economic impact could be huge for East Williamson County, according to Dr. S. Chuck McCarter, Executive Director of the project. McCarter says "the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts estimates that for every \$1.00 spent by the state to educate our youth beyond the high school level, return to the Texas economy is about \$5.50. Population growth and the completion of this higher education center could mean millions of dollars for the East Williamson County's economy".

Additionally the creation of a Higher Education Center for East Williamson County supports the state's Closing the Gaps Initiative. This initiative is intended to dramatically increase the number of individuals from traditionally underserved populations who participate (i.e., enroll and are retained) and who succeed in higher education.

Creating partnerships in East Williamson County, an area with a highly diverse population, provides greater access to and more opportunities for success in higher education to under-represented residents of East Williamson County and honors Temple College at Taylor's commitment to the statewide Closing the Gaps initiative.

The East Williamson County partnerships include: Hutto Independent School District, Taylor Independent School District, Hutto Economic Development Corporation, Taylor Economic Development Corporation, Region 13 Education Service Center, Temple College, Central Texas Tech Prep Consortium, City of Taylor, City of Hutto, Tarleton-Central Texas University, Rural Capital Area Workforce Development Board, Texas State Technical College (TSTC), Other Area ISDs: Bartlett, Coupland, Granger, Jarrell, Lexington, McDade, Rockdale, Thorndale, Thrall, and Home Schools