

# Session '11: Rep. Jim Pitts

## Panelists discuss House push for extra \$5 billion

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- Josh Hinkle

AUSTIN (KXAN) - On this edition of Session '11, Rep. Jim Pitts , R-Waxahachie, discusses House Appropriations plans and efforts to pump billions back into the budget. Also, Texas Monthly's Paul Burka and Talk Radio 1370 AM's Craig Bushon take part in the onpolitix Panel.

### TRANSCRIPT BELOW:

*"Save Texas Schools, Save Texas Schools."*

*Cissy Sanders, parent: "I expect, as a taxpaying citizen, to make sure that my child as well as all the other children across the state have the appropriate funding invested in their public education."*

*Gov. Rick Perry: "We're going to tighten our belt. To somehow tell people, it's all going to be blue skies and smooth sailing is not appropriate. It's not. We've got tough decisions to make, but I think the vast majority of the people in the state of Texas understand that."*

*Governor Perry is holding tight on his "no new taxes, no Rainy Day Fund" vision for the state's upcoming budget. As protests continue and some lawmakers start to break down on their once firm stances. New revenue sources take shape. As lawmakers dig deep for hidden and innovative funding ideas. With just more than 40 days left, will they be able to solve it all without a special session? It's all ahead, next on Session 11.*

*Announcer: "From KXAN Austin News, this is Session 11. Live interactive breakdowns, insights, interviews, and our weekly roundtable discussion. You're watching Session 11 on KXAN Austin News."*

*Rep. Jim Pitts: "When we get out of this regular session and hopefully we won't have to go into a special session, Texans will look at our budget, will look at this session, and say that's exactly what we wanted."*

*Good morning. I'm Robert Hadlock. Thanks for joining us on Session 11. That was Representative Jim Pitts - the chief budget writer in the House. Today, he speaks with us about a push to find five billion extra dollars. It's a move that could significantly aid an ailing 27 billion dollar shortfall.*

*First, our political reporter, Josh Hinkle, is here to tell you how to interact with us this morning on our program. Josh?*

*Thanks, Robert. This morning, we're talking about finding that extra funding. Our onpolitix Poll asks: What's the best way for the state to gain non-tax revenue? Would you... Speed up the business tax, sell state land, or raise fees on things like professional licenses. Log on to kxan.com and let us know what you think. And while you're there, click on the onpolitix tab at the top. You'll go straight to our special political site, where you can find our latest coverage and blog posts. Plus, click the blue bar at the top to chat with us. This morning, we're talking about this money hunt and the state's financial crisis. Our onpolitix Panel, Robert, and I will field your questions later in the program. Robert?*

*Thanks, Josh. Now, our Newsmaker is one of the most-watched and influential state lawmakers this session. Jim Pitts is serving his 18th year in the Texas House. He chairs the Appropriations Committee - making him the chamber's chief budget writer. Josh sat down with the lawmaker in our studio to talk about the steps left in the financial process and ideas to find more funding.*

**FIVE MILLION DOLLARS MIGHT BE  
ABLE TO BE PUMPED BACK INTO THE  
BUDGET.  
HOW DOES THAT WORK?**

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>> WE HAVE HAD COMMITTEE MEETINGS THE LAST COUPLE WEEKS AND WHAT WE'RE DOING, IS NUMBER ONE, I HAVE A BILL THAT HAS A DEFEDERAL FOR EDUCATION AND OTHER DEFEDERALS, THAT WILL BRING A LITTLE BIT OVER JUST A BILLION DOLLARS.

WE HAVE WHAT THEY CALL A SPEED-UP BILL THAT SPEEDS UP PREPAYING SOME FRANCHISE TAX, MOTOR FUELS TAX, BEVERAGE TAX. THAT WOULD BE OVER A BILLION DOLLARS.

WE HAVE A BILL THAT WE JUST ARE GETTING FROM COUNSEL TODAY, AND OUR COMPTROLLER HAS COVETED IT OUT, THAT WILL BE OVER A BILLION DOLLARS.

WE'RE ALSO COUNTING \$830 MILLION THAT WE'RE GETTING FROM WHAT A LOT OF PEOPLE CALL THE DOCKET AMENDMENT THAT WAS FREED UP AT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

AND WE HAVE SOME OTHER THINGS. ROB ORR HAS A BILL THAT WE HEARD WILL BRING ABOUT 500 MILLION. SO WE HAVE THINGS LIKE THAT.

IT'S THIS NONTAX REVENUE THAT WE ARE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF.

>> ARE WE CLOSE TO THAT FIVE BILLION YOU WANT TO GET TO?

>> WE'RE FOUR-THREE, FOUR-FIVE.

AND FRANKLY, I THINK THAT'S PROBABLY AS FAR AS THE HOUSE IS WILLING TO GO.

I KNOW THE SENATE IS FURTHER THAN THAT, BUT I HAVE MET WITH SOME PEOPLE IN A CONCERTED COALITION, THE REPUBLICAN 4 CAUCUS, AND NUMBER ONE, THEY DON'T WANT TO HAVE FEES, THERE ARE FEES WE HAVE BUILT IN, BUT NOTHING LIKE THOSE, AND OVER A BILLION DOLLARS PUT ON THAT BILL.

I INTRODUCED ABOUT 100 MILLION DOLLARS OF FEES.

IF THE INDUSTRY HAD COME TO US TO HELP US MARKET, OH, WE NEED TO DO SUCH AND SUCH, BUT WE'LL PA PAY FOR IT BECAUSE WE'LL GET THAT BACK IN RETURN.

SO MARKET ALL OVER WORLD.

THINGS LIKE THAT.

I HOPE THAT WE CAN GET FULL-FLEDGED CASINO GAMBLING IN TEXAS.

THAT WOULD INCLUDE THE RACETRACK.

THE SLOT MACHINES AT RACETRACKS. THAT WILL SAVE THAT

INDUSTRY.

AND RESORT TYPE CASINOS, DESTINATION TYPE FOR CASINO

GAMBLING.

I THINK IT'S A HUGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR TEXAS, AND WE WON'T HAVE IT IN EVERY CORNER. WE WON'T HAVE IT, BUT FOR AUSTIN, IT COULD BE A HUGE ECONOMIC BENEFIT.

>> HOUSE FLERN, WHAT IS THEIR TAKE ON EVERYTHING RIGHT NOW? ARE YOU SEEING A DIFFERENT OPINION THAN WHEN WE STARTED OUT?

>> WELL, YOU KNOW, I THINK THE REALITY IS BEGINNING TO BECOME REAL, PEOPLE ARE REALIZING THAT WE'RE CUTTING OUR SCHOOLS, WE'RE CUTTING OUR NURSING HOMES. WE'RE CUTTING PEOPLE THAT WANT TO GO TO COLLEGE. WE'RE CUTTING THEIR ABILITY TO GO.

I THINK THAT'S BEGINNING TO BE REALIZED BY A LOT OF MEMBERS. I'M NOT GOING TO SAY THAT ALL OUR MEMBERS FEEL THAT WAY, ALL THE FRESHMAN MEMBERS. 5 BUT I THINK IN A WHOLE, AS A WHOLE, THAT THEY WILL BE COMING AROUND AND SAYING THAT, YOU KNOW, WE NEED TO DO THESE THINGS.

WE ARE MAKING MAJOR CUTS. PHILIPPINE WE CAN BRING IN FOUR TO FIVE BILLION DOLLARS OF NEW REVENUE, NEW NONTAX REVENUE, WE'LL STILL BE MAKING MAJOR CUTS, WE'LL BE STILL MAKING 17, 20 BILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF CUTS.

THE HOUSE DOES NOT HAVE TO USE ANY ADDITIONAL MONEY OUT OF THE RAINY DAY FUND.

>> IS THAT FOR ONGOING EXPENSES OR FOR ALL EXPENSES?

>> I'M SAYING TO BALANCE OUR BUDGET FOR 12 AND 13.

I DO NOT SEE THE HOUSE VOTING TO USE ANY OF THE RAINY DAY FUND.

>> WHEN WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE GOVERNOR AND KIND OF HIS, YOU KNOW, WARNING TO LAWMAKERS ABOUT USING THE RAINY DAY FUND, LAST WEEK WE HAD THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ON THE SHOW, AND HE SAID HE FEELS MAYBE THE GOVERNOR HAS GREATER PRESSURE OR INFLUENCE ON HOUSE REVISIONS WHEN IT COMES TO THE RAINY DAY FUND.

IS THAT SO?

>> OH, THANK SOME OF THE HOUSE MEMBERS, I KNOW I DID NOT WANT TO PUT HOUSE MEMBERS, MAKE THAT TOUGH DECISION TO USE THE RAINY DAY FUND WITHOUT THE GOVERNOR SAYING IT WAS OKAY.

AND THAT'S WHY I WORKTD REAL HARD OVER A WEEKEND TO GET SOME TYPE OF AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNOR ON USING THE RAINY DAY FUND TO PAY OUR BILLS.

I'M JUST GOING TO SAY THAT I THINK IT'S THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE LARGE MAJORITY OF THE HOUSE TO NOT USE ANY OF THE ADDITIONAL RAINY DAY FUNDS OR THE BIEN YUM, 6 FOR THE BUDGET.

THAT'S COMING IN PROBABLY THE NEXT REGULAR SESSION WITH PROBABLY A LARGE SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENT FOR OUR BUDGET. MEDICAID, FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS, WE NEED TO SEE THESE LARGE PARTS OF THE RAINY DAY FUND TAKE CARE OF THOSE. WE'RE GOING TO PROBABLY HAVE A NEED TO PAY OUR CURRENT BILLS THE NEXT THING.

>> IF FOR SOME REASON WE DID USE THE RAINY DAY FUND FOR THE UPCOMING BUDGET, WHERE COULD YOU SEE HOUSE MEMBERS MOST LIKELY ABLE TO THINK WE CAN MAYBE PASS THIS YORE?

>> I CANNOT EVEN IN MY WILDEST DREAM OR NIGHTMARES SEE HOW THE HOUSE WILL EVER VOTE TO USE ADDITIONAL MONEY IN THE RAINY DAY FUND, AND I WILL NOT CARRY ANY LEGISLATION TO DO THAT. AND I HEAR THAT.

WE NEED TO USE THE RAINY DAY FUND, AND I AM THE FIRST TO SAY, DID YOU FILE A BILL?

I FILED A BILL TO TAKE CARE OF IT FOR THIS CURRENT TIME. THERE HAS NOT BEEN A BILL FILED AND CANNOT NOW, BECAUSE THE DEADLINE IS OVER AS FAR AS FILING LEGISLATION, UNLESS IT'S TACKED ONTO A PIECE OF LEGISLATION AS AN AMENDMENT. BUT THERE IS NO BILL FILED TO USE ANY ADDITIONAL MONEY OF THE RAINY DAY FUND FOR THE NEXT BIENNIUM.

*Their conversation continues for nearly another 30 minutes, we have the entire thing streamed on our websites [kxan.com](http://kxan.com) and [onpolitix.com](http://onpolitix.com). Pitts talks about his behind-the-scene efforts to save nursing homes. And the emotional toll so many tough decisions create. Our Newsmaker returns next here on Session 11. Stay with us.*

*Welcome back to Session 11. Before the break, the House Appropriations Chair spoke about his chamber's efforts to add five billion dollars to the budget. But, he's also hinting at another way to help nursing homes. Our Josh Hinkle continues our Newsmaker interview with Representative Jim Pitts.*

I HAVE TALKED TO LOCAL PEOPLE, MY LOCAL NURSING HOMES, I TALKED TO INDUSTRY GROUPS ABOUT NURSING HOMES.

WE'RE GOING TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP FIX THE NURSING HOME

PROBLEM.

>> YOU SAID YOU TALKED TO HAVE I LEADERS AND SAID YOU AIM TO FIX THINGS WITH MEDICAID AND NURSING HOMES.

HOW SPECIFICALLY DO YOU SEE US HELPING NURSING HOMES?

>> WELL, IF I TELL YOU I'D HAVE TO KILL U. NO, WE'VE GOT SEVERAL IDEAS THAT WE'RE FLOATING AROUND WITH THE INDUSTRY, AND I THINK THAT WE WILL COME UP WITH A SOLUTION.

>> NOTHING SPECIFIC YOU CAN TELL US RIGHT NOW?

>> NO.

WE'RE WORKING, WE'RE NEGOTIATING, AND I KNOW THAT THE NURSING HOME INDUSTRY REALLY WANTS TO HELP US FIND A SOLUTION.

AND WE WILL FIND A SOLUTION.

>> IT BROUGHT SOME KIND OF EMOTION IN YOU, WHAT'S THAT LIKE?

>> WELL, IT'S HARD.

IT'S HARD WHEN, I WAS ON THE FLOOR THE OTHER NIGHT, AND KNOWING THAT IF THIS BILL BECAME THE FINAL LAW, THAT WE'RE GOING TO CLOSE A BUNCH OF NURSING 8 HOMES.

AND I KNOW IT WILL.

YOU CANNOT CUT AN INDUSTRY BY 33% OF THEIR RATES AND

MAKE A

PROFIT, I KNOW THAT.

BUT I HAD TO GET, I HAD TO TRY TO SELL THIS BILL TO THE TEXAS HOUSE SO WE COULD, YOU KNOW, I ALWAYS SAY THIS, MOVE THE PROCESS ALONG, SO WE COULD GET THIS BILL TO THE SENATE FOR US TO GET TIME TO BE WORKING ON IDEAS TO RAISE MONEY, AND I'VE BEEN WORKING WITH REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS TO SEE IF WE DO THIS, CAN I GET THE VOTES TO PASS THIS BILL?

IF I BRING IN THE DEFERRAL, AND GIVE IT TO OUR SCHOOLS, WILL YOU VOTE FOR THIS BILL, WILL YOU VOTE FOR THE DEFERRALS?

AND I'M GETTING A LOT OF SUPPORT, BECAUSE PEOPLE KNOW I'M REALLY TRYING TO SOLVE, YOU KNOW, OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND MEDICAID WOES AND OUR NURSING HOME PROBLEMS.

THEY KNOW I'M TRYING TO DO THAT.

*If you have something to say about that or the state budget crisis, let us know. Josh is standing by with our onpolitix Panel to field your questions. Just go to our special political site, [onpolitix.com](http://onpolitix.com) and chat with us. Our budget breakdown continues... when Session 11 returns.*

Welcome back to Session 11. For an inside look at what's happening at the Capitol, we turn to our onpolitix Panel this morning. Paul Burka writes for Texas Monthly and also brings us an in-depth view of politics with his online Burka Blog. And Craig Bushon is host of the Craig Bushon Show on Austin's Talk Radio 1370 AM. Our "Josh Hinkle" also joins the panel to field your online chat questions. Welcome.

JIM PITTS INDICATED THE HOUSE IS MAKING SOME PROGRESS, AND GETTING THAT FIVE BILLION, UP TO THE FIVE BILLION DOLLARS.

SHOULD WE BE ENCOURAGED?

>> WELL, IT WOULD BE NICE TO KNOW WHERE IT COMES FROM.

THE SENATE ADDED FIVE BILLION TO EDUCATION, BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM.

IT CAN ONLY COME FROM ONE SOURCE, AND THAT'S THE CONTROLLER HAS TO SAY, OKAY, YES, THAT'S REAL MONEY, AND YOU CAN USE IT.

AND SO FAR, THERE'S BEEN SOME NONTAX REVENUE, THEY TALKED ABOUT SELLING PARKING LOTS AND ACTUALLY VOTED TO DO AWAY WITH THE ISSUE AT THE MEDICAL SCHOOLS.

BUT IN GENERAL, I DON'T KNOW WHERE THAT FIVE BILLION DOLLARS COMES FROM.

IT SEEMS TO ME TO BE VERY MONEY.

>> HOLDING TAXES?

>> PEOPLE ARE STRESSED ABOUT THINKING HAVING MORE MONEY OUT OF THEIR POCKET, THAT'S A HUGE ISSUE.

THE STATE OF TEXAS IS DOING THEIR VERSE OF A GARAGE SALE, THEY WANT TO FIGURE OUT WHAT CAN WE GO THROUGH, WE HAVE TO SIFT THROUGH THE GARAGE AND BACKYARD WHAT CAN WE SELL, WHAT'S WORTH SOMETHING?

IT'S DIFFICULT TIMES.

RAISING TAXES IS A NEGATIVE IN MY OPINION TO GROW THE ECONOMY.

>> PEOPLE ARE SAYING IT IS A SAVE THE WORLD, I GUESS, TALKING ABOUT THIS EXTRA MONEY.

WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME. 10 ARE THEY GOING TO BE ABLE TO FIND THIS KIND OF THING, WITH THE LAST MONTH THAT'S LEFT? GO AHEAD.

>> I, AGAIN, THE ONLY WAY THEY CAN FIND THE MONEY IS IF THE COMPTROLLER IS WILLING TO SAY, YOU CAN USE THIS MONEY FOR THE BUDGET.

AND THAT TO ME IS THE PROBLEM, BECAUSE IN GENERAL, THEY'VE HAD MORE SALES TAX REVENUE, AND THAT'S BEEN GOOD NEWS.

BUT THAT'S ABOUT IT.

AND THEN THERE ARE MORE RIG INS OPERATION, SO YOU KNOW, WE MAY BE GETTING THAT MONEY WOULD GO

INTO THE RAINY DAY FUND.  
BUT OTHER THAN THAT, YOU JUST  
CAN'T, UNFORTUNATELY, WE'RE NOT  
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.  
WE DON'T HAVE A PRINTING PRESS.  
>> WELL, THIS IS MONOPOLY MONEY  
THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT.  
>> PART OF THE ISSUE WE HAVE IS  
THAT WE DON'T, YOU KNOW, WE'RE A  
FREE MARKET, WE'RE THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA, A STATE  
WITHIN OBVIOUSLY THE GREATER 48  
HERE.  
WE'RE IN A CAPITALIST SOCIETY.  
WHAT WE NEED TO DO IS START  
CAPITALIZING ON THE THINGS THAT  
WE HAVE.  
IT'S SUPPLY AND DEMAND.  
THERE'S NEVER BEEN A BIGGER  
DEMAND FOR WHAT?  
FOSSIL FUELS FOR PETROLEUM, OIL,  
COAL, YET WE SAY WE'RE NOT GOING  
TO DO IT, THEN WE WONDER WHY WE  
HAVE A BUDGET ISSUE.  
WE WOULDN'T HAVE A BUDGET ISSUE  
IF WE DID THE OBVIOUS, SUPPLY  
WHAT THE DEMAND IS ASKING FOR.  
THAT'S ONE OF THE BIG BIGGEST  
ISSUES WE HAVE NOW.  
SEARCHING FOR MONEY AND OBVIOUS  
BIG ELEPHANT IN THE CORNER  
STARING AT US, LOOK, WHAT WITH A  
WE'VE GOT TO DO IS START USING 11  
OUR ASSETS.  
AND IN THIS STATE WE HAVE A HUGE  
ASSET OF ENERGY.  
>> TALKING ABOUT THE CASINO  
GAMBLING BEING SOMETHING THAT  
EVERYBODY'S FOR, AND WE HEARD  
DEWHURST INDICATE; IT'S KIND OF  
A NONSTARTER.  
WHAT DO YOU THINK?  
>> THERE AREN'T THE VOTES IN THE  
SENATE FOR GAMBLING.  
IT JUST ISN'T FAIR.  
AND EVERY SESSION WE HEAR THE  
STATE'S IN THE DITCH, THIS IS  
THE YEAR FOR GAMBLING, IT'S NOT  
THE YEAR FOR GAMBLING.  
IT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.  
AND IF IT DID HAPPEN, IT  
WOULDN'T BRING IN ENOUGH MONEY  
TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM THIS YEAR.  
BECAUSE YOU HAVE START-UP COSTS,  
AND THEY CAN'T EVEN AGREE ON THE  
GAMBLING GROUP, THE RACETRACKS  
AND CASINOS, THEY CAN'T AGREE ON  
WHAT THEY WANT.  
SO IT'S STILL A LONG WAY FROM  
HAPPENING, I THINK, IN THIS  
STATE.  
IT'S JUST NOT -- THERE'S NOT A  
LOT OF SYMPATHY FOR IT IN THE  
LEGISLATURE.  
>> ONE OF THE PROBLEMS OF  
GAMBLING, IF YOU SEE WHAT'S

HAPPENED OVER THE UNITED STATES,  
GO TO ARIZONA AND SEE WHAT THEY

DID LEGALIZING IT ON  
RESERVATIONS, IS THAT A LOT OF  
PEOPLE FEEL IT TAKES MONEY FROM  
THE MOST VULNERABLE.

IT'S STILL FREEDOM OF CHOICE,  
THOUGH, WE STILL HAVE THE  
ABILITY TO GO THERE OR NOT GO IN  
THERE.

I THINK ONE OF THE WAYS TO MAKE  
IT HAPPEN IS TO MAKE THERE BE A  
BAR WHERE YOU DON'T HAVE NICKEL  
MACHINES, MAYBE EVEN DIME  
MACHINES.

YOU RAISE THAT BAR UP SO THE  
PEOPLE WHO GO IN THERE ARE 12  
PEOPLE WHO HAVE MORE MONEY, I  
GUESS.

THERE'S GOTTA BE A WAY TO WORK  
IT OUT.

THERE'S A HUGE AMOUNT OF MONEY  
THERE BUT IT'S ALSO THAT KIND OF  
SYNTAX THAT PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO  
GET INVOLVED IN, THEY THINK IT  
RUINS COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES.  
THAT'S A TUG OF WAR.

>> ONE OF THE THINGS PEOPLE ARE  
TALKING ABOUT IS FOCUSING SO  
MUCH TIME ON THE BUDGET, WHAT  
ABOUT REDISTRICKT.

IT'S A BIG ISSUE BUT HAS BENITO  
TALKED ABOUT AS MUCH.

>> NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO TALK  
ABOUT IT.

>> I WAS IN THE HOUSE ON THE DAY  
THAT THEY MADE THE ANNOUNCEMENT  
THAT MEMBERS, YOU MIGHT WANT TO  
PAY ATTENTION TO THIS NEXT  
ANNOUNCEMENT, SOMETHING YOU  
MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN.

AND THERE'S ALWAYSING  
CONVERSATION THAT GOES ON IN THE  
HOUSE, BUT THIS TIME THERE WAS  
QUIET.

SILENCE.

SO YES, THEY'RE LOOKING AT IT.  
HARRIS COUNTY, THERE ARE PEOPLE  
WHO ARE AGGRIEVED ABOUT HARRIS  
COUNTY BECAUSE HARRIS COUNTY  
QUALIFIED FOR 24.4,  
MATHEMATICALLY, FANNED THEY HAD  
JUST HAD ONE TENTH MORE THEY  
WOULD HAVE QUAL PIED FOR 5  
SEATS.

INSTEAD, DEMOCRATS PREPARED AND  
THERE'S A LOT OF UNHAPPINESS  
AMONG THE DEMOCRATS, OF COURSE,  
THEY DON'T REALLY HAVE MUCH OF A  
VOICE THIS SESSION, BUT THERE IS  
A LOT OF UNHAPPINESS ABOUT THE  
DEMOCRATS FEELING THAT THE  
LEADERSHIP CUT THEM OUT OF THE  
SEAT.

>> WELL, I LOOK AT IT THIS WAY.

LOOK AT THE CENSUS IN THE STATE OF TEXAS. 13

IT SHOWED US THAT WE HAVE MILLIONS MORE PEOPLE, WE HAVE A GROWING HISPANIC MOVEMENT, IF YOU WILL, GROWTH.

REALLY, ARE THESE REPRESENTATIVES GOING TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK THE LANGUAGE?

NO PUN INTENDED -- ARE THEY ABLE TO GET IN THE MIND OF THE PEOPLE THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT?

I THINK THAT'S A CHALLENGE MOVING FORWARD TO SEE HOW THIS REDISTRICTING, WHAT IT DOES FOR THOSE PEOPLE AND HOW THEY CAN COMMUNICATE TO THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE.

THAT'S A HUGE ISSUE.

>> AND THE REPUBLICANS HAVE A BIG TARGET, AS ALWAYS.

>> YES, AND I THINK THIS TIME, JUSTIFIABLY SO.

I THINK VARGAS' STUBBORNNESS AND ARROGANCE IN WITHHOLDING THOSE FUNDS FROM THE SCHOOLCHILDREN OF TEXAS, THE FEDERAL FUNDS THAT WE FINALLY GOT, AND I UNDERSTAND WHAT I WAS TOLD WAS THAT SOME VERY PROMINENT DEMOCRATS WENT TO WASHINGTON, AND TALKED TO SOME SENATORS, AND LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE HAD BETTER GIVE THOSE FUNDS BACK TO TEXAS.

>> BUT RERKS IT'S \$830 MILLION. MULTIPLY THAT TIMES 10, AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN TO THE COSTS OF THE FOUNDATION SCHOOL PROGRAM.

>> WELL, SCHOOLS ARE JUST TOO EXPENSIVE TO OPERATE, PERIOD.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM'S BROKE, THAT'S A REAL BIG ISSUE.

BUT WE CAN'T FORGET THAT DR. DONNA CAMPBELL PUSHED HIM HARDER THAN ANYONE'S PUSHED HIM THIS LAST ELECTION.

WHAT REDISTRICTING DOES NOW, WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT.

I THINK THERE'S A SENSE THAT PEOPLE ARE JUST TIRED OF POLITICIANS BEING THERE A LONG 14 TIME.

THEY HAVE JUST GOT TO GO.

I THINK THEY HAVE RUN OUT OF GOOD IDEAS.

>> SO I THINK THERE'S THAT PUSH-PULL RIGHT NOW, SOME VERY GOOD PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT THAT HAVE BEEN THERE A LONG TIME THAT STILL DO GREAT THINGS, BUT THERE'S A WHOLE LOT THAT DON'T.

>> WE'VE GOT ABOUT ONE MINUTE LEFT.

THINK WE'LL HAVE A SPECIAL SESSION?

>> I HATE TO SAY THIS, BUT I  
DON'T KNOW.  
USUALLY --  
>> ONE WAY OR ANOTHER?  
>> BUT I THINK NOBODY WANTS A  
SPECIAL SESSION.  
SO THERE'S A BUILT-IN ATTITUDE,  
LET'S DON'T DO THIS.  
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, LET'S BE  
ABLE TO HAVE OUR LIVES BACK AND  
HAVE THE SUMMER.  
BUT THAT SAID, THE SENATE AND  
THE HOUSE ARE SO FAR APART THAT  
IT MAY BE VERY DIFFICULT TO GET  
THIS DONE BY MAY 30.  
>> I THINK I DON'T CARE HOW LONG  
WE HAVE TO BE THERE, WE'VE GOTTA  
GET IT RIGHT, PERIOD.  
>> AMEN TO THAT.  
I THINK EVERYONE'S ON THE PAGE  
WITH THAT ONE.

*Thanks for joining us. Session 11 is back after the break.*

*Josh Hinkle: "Erin Cargile, our education reporter, and I always argue about this. Is is "wax" a hachie or "wox" a hachie."*

*Rep. Jim Pitts: "wox" a hachie. Now, I didn't grow up there, but I got there as quick as I could."*

*Representative Jim Pitts talks about where he's from, the upcoming challenges during redistricting, and more about mapping out our state's budget. We have the entire interview streamed online. And you can check it out right after the program. Just log on to [kxan.com](http://kxan.com) and let us know what you think. And while you're there, click on the onpolitix tab at the top. You'll go straight to our special political site, where you can find our latest coverage, previous Session 11 programs, and blogs. Also, this morning, our onpolitix Poll asks: What's the best way for the state to gain non-tax revenue? Would you...speed up the business*

*tax, sell state land, or raise fees on things like professional licenses. \_\_\_\_\_ of you said \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Thanks, Josh. Finally - This Thursday will mark the 175th Anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto - the final battle of the Texas Revolution. That decisive fight for independence from Mexico is depicted in this painting hanging in the Texas Senate. Against all odds The Texas Army - led by General Sam Houston - routed Mexican forces led by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. About 700 Mexican soldiers were killed - while only 9 Texans died. What was really remarkable - the battle lasted only 18 minutes. It was one of the shortest battles in history that resulted in national independence. If our current lawmakers are looking for inspiration for overcoming great odds - they'd do well to ponder the remarkable events of 1836. Join "David Scott" for our next newscast on KXAN coming up at 5. Meet the Press begins right now. Have a great morning.*