

# THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

## TribWeek: In Case You Missed It

by [Ross Ramsey](#)

2/5/2011

[1 Comment](#)

report features projects in communities like Amarillo, El Paso, Rockport, Texarkana and the tiny, north central Texas town of Clifton, population 3,795. “It’s more than fluff,” says Amy Barbee, the Trust’s executive director. “We want to tell the story that the arts truly are economic development.”

Our TribLive conversation with soon-to-be-ex Railroad Commissioner and declared 2012 U.S. Senate candidate [Michael Williams](#) about why he’s qualified to serve, what he thinks of his potential primary opponents and a range of issues that he’d face if he were in D.C. today.

Texas agencies facing [the budget ax](#) say the only things left to cut are the services they fund. Ben Philpott of KUT News and the Tribune reports on fears that many of the state’s nursing homes could be forced to dramatically cut back or even close as a result.

House and Senate budget writers have proposed closing a little-known state agency that helps prevent and solve automobile theft and burglary. The catch? While they’re planning to kill the agency, they’re [not planning to stop collecting the fee](#) you pay to keep it going.

No secession ball will mark the day. But 150 years ago today, on Feb. 1, 1861, a state convention [voted overwhelmingly to secede](#) from the Union, against the fervent wishes of Gov. Sam Houston. Caught in the mess was one Robert E. Lee, a federal officer in what had become a rebel state.

With Texas public schools facing cuts of as much as \$10 billion in state funding, predictions of the consequences have been dire: teacher layoffs, bigger class sizes, fewer instructional days. One topic [conspicuously absent from the conversation](#): athletics.

At least half a dozen bills have been filed in the Texas House mandating the use of the federal electronic employment verification system known as E-Verify. But is the system so fraught with errors that it actually [hinders employers who use it](#) to check the eligibility of new hires?

What happened this week to cause the [rolling power blackouts](#) across Texas? A chain reaction of problems involving the state’s coal and gas appeared to be the cause — and wind plants were having trouble, too.

“Dear future son,” the North Texas father wrote in a prospective adoption letter. “I am a single dad who adopted a middle school boy in 2008. Now we are looking for one more kid so he will have a brother.” Instead, the father got [shocking news](#): He would not be allowed to adopt again because his son is on a state registry of people who abuse children.

© 2011 The Texas Tribune

Creative industries — from [advertising to dance companies to book publishing](#) — generate \$4.5 billion per year in economic activity for Texas, according to a new report released by the Texas Cultural Trust in association with the Texas Commission on the Arts. The

