

# JOHN RANEY



## The State of Texas House of Representatives

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### Texas House to Focus on Community College Funding and Governance

**Austin, TX** - Today, House Speaker Joe Straus (R-San Antonio) released the Interim Committee Charges for the 84th Legislative Session. Each committee receives charges to study over the course of the interim period between legislative sessions with a report on findings and recommendations due to the full house at the end of that period.

During the 84th Legislative Session, State Representative John Raney (R-Bryan/College Station) filed several bills concerning the way state-supported community colleges are funded, how they distribute state funds, and how students are represented in those systems.

"By now, I think everyone is aware of the difficulties our Blinn College students at the Bryan campus face which include inadequate facilities, overcrowded classrooms, etc.," Representative Raney said. "Because of our research into the issues in Brazos County, we now know that this is not just a local issue, but an issue statewide."

The Texas House Committee on Higher Education will be taking on seven charges, two of which came as a direct result of Representative Raney raising awareness on community college funding equity.

Those charges are:

1. Conduct a review of current funding formulas for community colleges. Specifically, focus on the elements of the instructional funding structure created by the 83rd Legislature: core operations, student success points, and contact hour funding and also the adequacy of state funding to sustain community colleges in light of the variance in resources available to individual colleges. Make recommendations for possible changes to the funding structure of community colleges or changes in the levels of current funding given the future workforce and higher educational needs of the state. (*Joint charge with the House Committee on Appropriations*)



2. Review the state's community college system, including a discussion of taxing districts, service areas and any barriers to access. Examine the governance structure to ensure that campuses in multi campus districts that are outside of a college taxing district receive fair and equitable treatment. Review the accounting and reporting requirements of community college districts to ensure open government and transparency. Study ways community colleges could offer accessible and affordable baccalaureate degree programs in areas where the state has a significant workforce shortage without compromising quality of education and training. Make recommendations to maximize efficient student pathways and to offer more affordable educational opportunities such as through dual credit and early college start programs.

A full list of all the committee charges is available online:

<http://www.house.state.tx.us/committees/reports/>

"This is another important step in the fight to ensure students are getting the education they are paying for, and that institutions that receive tax dollars are being accountable to the taxpayers," Representative Raney said. "This is an area that has escaped accountability for a long time. I know that many community colleges are properly using the tax and tuition dollars they receive, but this process will shed light on the ones that are playing a shell game with these kids' futures."

*Representative Raney represents District 14 in the Texas House of Representatives, which includes the cities of Bryan and College Station. He serves on the Committees on Appropriations, the Appropriations Subcommittee on Article III, Higher Education, and House Administration.*

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