

Representative Drew Darby - November 26, 2014
Proposal Will Extend, Expand Border Surge

As a member of the Legislative Budget Board, I'm looking forward to voting Monday to extend and expand the state's law enforcement surge in the border region. The proposal agreed to by the state's leadership continues this state's strong commitment to border security.

The proposal from Governor Perry, Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst and Speaker Straus significantly increases the presence of Department of Public Safety (DPS) troopers along the Texas-Mexico border. This plan provides \$65 million to continue increased DPS activity through August 31, the vast majority of which will provide needed overtime pay for state troopers. Using those resources for overtime provides the equivalent coverage of hiring an additional 650 troopers to patrol the border region – but at about half the cost. This is a smart investment of our resources that will build on the success of Operation Strong Safety II that was launched this past fall.

In addition to allowing more patrol hours, it will also fund additional equipment and technology, as well as more aircraft flight time. Each of these is an important component of our fight against criminal elements along the border.

The Department of Public Safety has historically taken the lead on providing security along the Texas-Mexico border. This agreement ensures that DPS will continue to do so. DPS, unlike the National Guard, is a law enforcement agency, and this proposal increases funding for DPS in order to maximize the use of our border-security resources. Simply put, investing in additional DPS patrol hours is the most effective and efficient use of our border-security resources.

The Legislature has proven its commitment to public safety in the border region over the last several years. I'm going to vote for this plan because I want to extend and enhance that commitment. This investment in public safety will show that the state is not going to let up in its efforts to fight the cartels and protect the people of this state. At the same time, it will allow the 84th Legislature, as well as Governor-Elect Abbott, to set our border-security strategies going forward.

Border security will be a key priority in the legislative session that begins in January, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in that session to address it. Until then, the proposal before the Legislative Budget Board on Monday will provide continuity and clarity in our border-security efforts. I'm grateful that our two outgoing state leaders worked with Speaker Straus on a plan to continue our border surge. It will be my honor to vote for this plan.

[\[Please see Governor Perry's Border Budget Explanation - go to LATEST NEWS tab and click on listing on December 1, 2014\]](#)