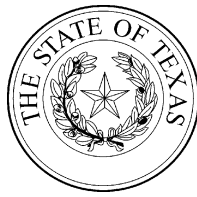


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STATE OF TEXAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Branch Appointed to Select Committee on School Finance

Charged with creating the funding solution prior to a special legislative session

Austin, TX - Speaker Tom Craddick announced today that Rep. Dan Branch will serve on the House Select Committee on School Finance, an interim task force responsible for outlining a new system for funding public schools. Composed of 12 standing committee chairs, 6 vice-chairs, 4 chairs for budget and oversight and one select committee chair, the Select Committee on School Finance is charged with devising a system that promotes success for all Texas children. Rep. Branch currently serves as Chair for Budget and Oversight of the Public Education Committee.

"Dan has proven himself this session to be a very effective legislator," Craddick said. "His dedication to solving the school finance crisis made him a solid choice for this committee."

"Speaker Craddick has bestowed a special honor and a serious charge: create a system that is fair to both the children and taxpayers of Texas," Branch said. "I look forward to getting started; financing our children's education is the great issue of our day. The future of our state hangs in the balance."

The committee will develop a solution that increases the state's share of education costs, relieves the burden on local property taxpayers and maintains the equity standards established in the *Edgewood IV* decision. The state's portion of education funding has decreased dramatically in the past 5 years.

Along with announcing the House Select Committee, Craddick also commissioned a million dollar education pricing study designed to determine the cost of a quality education in Texas. The results of the study will inform the

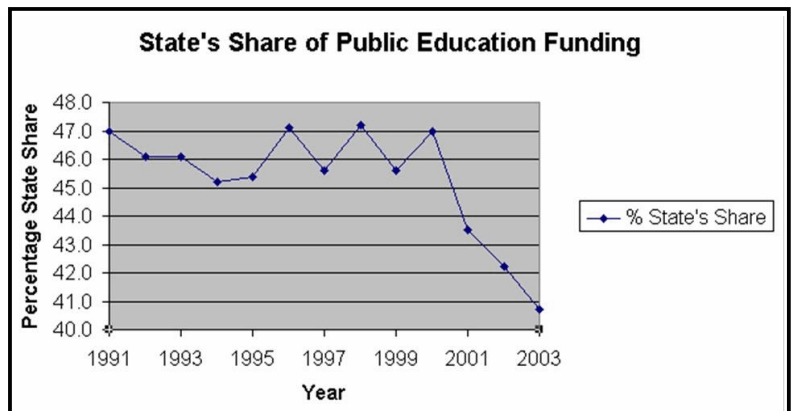
Legislature's tax restructuring efforts during a special session on school finance. Governor Rick Perry announced last week that he is prepared to call the session this fall or next spring.

"The wisdom of the Governor's special session, as opposed to addressing this issue during regular session, is that it concentrates all tax system restructuring for the benefit of public education," commented Branch. "The leadership's plan is falling into place nicely."

"We are making progress on this all-important issue," Branch said. "As the Constitution and people of Texas demand, public education is at the top of the Legislature's priority list."

About Representative Dan Branch (R-Dallas)

Representative Dan Branch, 45, serves on the Appropriations Committee and the Public Education Committee of the Texas House of Representatives as the only Dallas County member on either committee. In addition, Branch serves as Chair for Budget and Oversight of the Public Education Committee. Before his 2002 election to the Texas House from District 108 (Downtown Dallas through University Park), Branch served as President of The Dallas Assembly and as Chairman of the Texas Public Finance Authority. Appointed by then Governor George W. Bush, Branch served for seven years on the TPFA Board, from 1995-2001. For more information, visit <http://www.house.state.tx.us/members/dist108/branch.htm>.



Source: Legislative Budget Board