

Date

Dear Representative or Senator (Last Name),

I am a parent in the Spring Branch Independent School District in Houston. Strong public education is important to me and to others in my community. We understand the challenges that legislators face in finding ways to improve the performance of our schools. While there are no easy solutions, we urge you to support proposed legislation that will bring improvements to the current system of school finance.

Over the past few years, our state's approach to funding public education has actually taken money *away* from our children: overall per-child spending has declined from about \$4226 in 2008 to about \$3431 in 2017. According to our State Constitution, one of the premises that our state was built on is that we will provide quality, free public education for Texas residents. However, per-child funding from 2008 to 2017 has dropped **nearly 20%**. If you care about our state's public school system, then you realize that this decline is unsustainable and that it must be addressed.

I want to encourage you to support three pieces of legislation that have been proposed to help bring relief to struggling school districts like mine.

1. Please support **HB 1324**: this bill will help SBISD recoup the \$31M it currently pays to the state on homestead exemptions that it does not collect. We all appreciate property tax relief, but SBISD current suffers disproportionately *by having to pay revenue that it doesn't collect*.
2. Please support **HB 1326**: This bill addresses unfair funding for SBISD and other Recapture Districts that provide full-day Pre-K. Right now, these districts receive only a half-day's worth of funding for their Pre-K students, *even when those students attend a full day of school*. This discrepancy costs SBISD \$7.6M, but it can easily be fixed.
3. Support **HB 1037** and **SB 358**: These bills address reimbursement of transportation costs for Recapture Districts. Currently, SBISD is excluded from the transportation allotment in the school funding formula that non-Recapture schools receive. This will cost SBISD \$1.4M this year.
4. Support **HB 21**: This bill increases increase the basic funding for almost all school districts from \$5,140 to \$5,350 per student every year. Positive step in the right direction to address the school funding issue head-on.

I know you hear a lot these days about the urgency of fixing public school funding. The first steps involve moving toward fair, full funding models, and these pieces of legislation do just that. Ultimately, I want you and your colleagues to address this issue fully in a special session.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your support for **full and fairly funded** public school education.

Sincerely,
(Your Name Here)