OATH OF OFFICE ADMINISTERED
TO OFFICERS OF THE SENATE

The President directed the officers of the Senate to proceed to the Bar of the Senate.

Chief Justice Wallace B. Jefferson administered the Constitutional Oath of Office to the officers as follows:

I, ______________________, do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of ____________________ of the Senate of the State of Texas, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this state, so help me God.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The President acknowledged the presence of Governor Rick Perry.

The Senate welcomed its guest.

ADDRESS BY GOVERNOR

Yesterday, we heard from the comptroller, and the news was good. It confirmed much of what we've known over the past two years: that the Texas economy is healthy and growing, and thanks to the hard work and dedication of people working all across this state, the revenue forecast is up, and up significantly.

Again, all good news, and a complete change from the forecast we faced just two years ago.

At that time, we were still dealing with the effects of an ugly national recession, and much of the talk, both in the newspapers and around town, surrounded not whether we'd have to raise taxes, but how much we'd have to raise them to keep our state afloat.

As you all know, that's not the path we chose.

We chose the responsible path, the fiscally-conservative path, and that path has led us here today.

We sat down, separated our wants from our needs, prioritized, and tightened our belts, wherever necessary, and wherever possible.

Far from the catastrophe many predicted for us at the time, that approach helped our economy improve more quickly, and more profoundly, than many had expected.

The main lesson to draw from that story is simple, when people keep more of their own money it's better for them, it's better for their families, and it's better for the state.

That's a lesson we must take to heart as we begin the 83rd Legislature.

Trust me when I tell you that there are interests all across this state who view Monday's revenue estimate as the equivalent of ringing a dinner bell.

They all want more for their causes, they all figure we have money pouring out of our ears now, and they all have your address and phone number.
However, in the face of that kind of pressure, we have to remember that Monday's revenue estimate represents not a chance to spend freely, but an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to the very policies that have made Texas economically strong in the first place.

It's also a chance to put our fiscal house in order for the years to come. That's why, over the past several months, I have called for major budgetary reforms that include reducing diversions, a stricter constitutional limit on spending, a renewed commitment to stopping any and all new taxes or tax increases, and stopping any attempt to raid the Rainy Day Fund for ongoing expenses.

For the sake of all Texas taxpayers, we must control the appetite for more spending.

We need to stop writing IOUs to the next budget, and delaying payments we know will come due.

We need to reduce the use of fees and dedicated accounts for anything other than the purpose for which the fees were collected, and if we're not going to use them in the way proposed, stop collecting them.

With a better budgetary picture, now is the time to set the books straight and improve the fiscal outlook for future legislatures.

It's also time to take a hard look at providing tax relief.

We need to ensure consumers and employers alike have more cash on hand to pay their bills, hire more people, and invest in new efforts.

We need to reduce the demands on our innovators so they're free to innovate, and able to turn their great ideas into great success.

We need to continue streamlining our government, do more with the resources we have available, and continue delivering needed services in an effective, and efficient, manner.

Of course, budgetary issues aren't all you will be tasked with.

We must deal with infrastructure needs in water, energy and transportation, both for now and stretching into the future.

We need to find the right ways to educate our workforce, whether that means a college degree or technical certification, so employers can continue to count on finding the best and brightest here in Texas.

We need to reform our laws to make it harder for people to abuse our public assistance and unemployment insurance systems, by authorizing drug screenings for those programs.

We also need to better protect our most vulnerable citizens, the unborn, by expanding the ban on abortion to any baby that can feel the pain of the procedure, and putting in place common-sense oversights on clinics and physicians involved.

These are just a few of the issues we'll address this session, and I look forward to working with Governor Dewhurst and each of you in doing the people's business over the next 140 days.

At the end of the day, I'm certain you'll work together in the best interest of our state, and merit the faith placed in you by the millions of Texans who put you here.
May God bless you and, through you, may He continue to bless the
great State of Texas.

(Note: Prepared text)

**MOTION IN WRITING**

Senator Eltife offered the following Motion In Writing:

Mr. President:

I move that the President be authorized to appoint a committee of five Members
to notify the House of Representatives that the Senate is organized and ready to
transact business.

ELTIFE

The Motion In Writing was read and was adopted without objection.

Accordingly, the President appointed the following Committee to Notify the
House of Representatives: Senators Taylor, Chair; Hancock, Hinojosa, Schwertner,
and Uresti.

**AT EASE**

The President at 12:38 p.m. announced the Senate would stand At Ease subject
to the call of the Chair.

**IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

The President at 12:47 p.m. called the Senate to order as In Legislative Session.

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES NOTIFIED**

The Committee to Notify the House that the Senate was organized and ready to
transact business appeared at the Bar of the Senate and Senator Taylor notified the
President and Members that the committee had performed its duty.

**ELECTION OF PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

**EIGHTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION**

The President announced that the time had arrived for the election of President
Pro Tempore of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session.

Senator Zaffirini placed in nomination the name of Senator Leticia Van de Putte
for the office of President Pro Tempore of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session.

On motion of Senator Eltife and by unanimous consent, the nominating speech
by Senator Zaffirini and the remarks made to second the nomination were ordered
reduced to writing and printed in the *Senate Journal* as follows:

**Senator Zaffirini:** Mr. President and Members, it is with great joy and love that I
rise to nominate our beloved friend and colleague, Senator Leticia Van de Putte of San
Antonio, to lead the Texas Senate as our President Pro Tempore. In this important
capacity she will act as Governor of Texas whenever the Governor and Lieutenant
Governor are out of state. On those days Texas will reflect its changing face under the
administration of an Hispanic woman, Governor Leticia Van de Putte.