



## Anti-TSA Groping Bill Fails in Texas

Texans around the state, and other Americans who have followed the travails of passing an anti-TSA groping bill in Texas this year, were stunned and disheartened when the Lone Star State's special session ended early Tuesday without passing the popular Travelers' Dignity measure.

It was a wild ride on a bucking bronco for the bill. It first sailed through the Lone Star State's regular House session (with [unanimous](#) approval), but the feds then [threatened](#) not to allow commercial flights in the state if the bill were to become law. The threat caused the state Senate to back away from the bill, which died without a vote in the Senate chamber. But after the regular legislative session, Texans [deluged](#) Governor Rick Perry's office with emails and phone calls imploring the Governor to call up the anti-TSA groping bill in a special session of the Texas legislature that had been convened for other purposes. During this time, two [Texas officials](#) denounced the groping they were subjected to by the TSA, and their personal stories, circulated on YouTube, fueled the firestorm of grassroots support for the anti-TSA groping bill.

Responding to the pressure, Perry called up the bill for consideration by the special session — after which the bill was [blocked](#) by the Texas Speaker of the House before being approval by a House committee. The House went on to pass a weakened version of the bill, the Senate strengthened the weakened version (almost restoring it to the original), and the special session ended without a final version of the bill being cleared by the legislature. In the end, the legislation failed not because it was voted down, but because it could not be brought up a second time on the same day in the House to allow for a vote on the final version without a suspension of the rules. The suspension, which required 120 yeas in the 150-member House failed by a vote of 96-26, in part because some of the bill's supporters had gone home.

After the vote on suspending the rules, Representative David Simpson of Longview (pictured above), the author of the anti-TSA groping bill, unloaded on the legislative leadership in a final speech, taking aim at "phony politicians." He recounted the famous Churchill speech about never giving up, and promised that he would never back down in his effort to stop unconstitutional searches of airline passengers in Texas. He then reminded his colleagues that he did not represent special interests, but was brought to the job by people who believed he would keep his constitutional oath. Simpson emphasized that lawmakers should restrain themselves from using the law for their own ends.

Urging the people of Texas to not be confused about why the bill failed, he laid the blame for its defeat squarely "at the feet of the leadership of this state." Simpson also noted the historical significance of two Texas battles: the Alamo and Goliad. Students of Texas history will remember that both these crucial steps in the struggle of "Texians" for independence were nothing less than massacres by the enemy. Not until Sam Houston surprised his opponents at the Battle of San Jacinto were the Texians finally victorious. They lost two battles, but won the war.

The war in Texas against the TSA's egregious searches will commence again when the state's biennial legislative session convenes in January 2013. Texans are urging continued opposition in sister states until they can take up the mantle again. Lone Star constitutionalists point to the role of constituent



Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on June 30, 2011

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influence — grassroots organizations, radio talk shows, and a persistent flow of calls, letters, and e-mails to the State Capitol — for keeping the issue front and center in lawmakers' attention.

Simpson declared in his final speech, "As long as there is tyranny we must never cease to oppose it."



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