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# Officials Differ On Scope Of Special Legislative Session

AUSTIN — Something is floating in the Texas sky and it's big enough to obscure the sun. To some observers it looks like a spring cloud, to others, it's more like the airship Hindenburg. But really, it's just a question: How will the Legislature, in a 30-day special session, fix the state's unconstitutional tax system?

Since the late 1980s the Legislature repeatedly has failed to agree on something better than "Robin Hood," the court-ordered wealth-sharing formula that requires rich school districts to contribute a portion of their tax revenue into a pot divided among poor school districts.

And, during those 20-odd years, the

Legislature forced school districts to pay an ever-increasing share of the cost to fund education. Now hundreds of districts are taxing at the cap rate of \$1.50 per \$100 valuation.

Texas' top officeholders are looking toward April 17, opening day for the 79th Legislature's third called session, each with different perspectives on how to proceed.

Gov. Rick Perry called the special session with the sole purpose of getting lawmakers to fix the state's broken property tax system.

Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, who presides over the Senate, wants to expand the call to include school finance reform.

Even House Speaker Tom Cradick, R-Midland, who heretofore has kept a lid on any proposal that smells like a new tax or throws money at a problem, is talking in conciliatory terms.

But Perry seems firm in his resolve to limit the Legislature's business to property tax reform, because the Texas Supreme Court ruled the property tax system must be made constitutional by June 1 "or else."

Adding pressure to the court-imposed deadline are Carole Keeton Strayhorn, Richard S. "Kinky" Friedman and Chris Bell, candidates for governor.

The challengers are banging drums and tooting fives for reform, and if Perry's leadership fails to produce acceptable results, they likely will win points with voters in the November election.

All three say they are for teacher pay raises, and Perry says he is, too. But Friedman has given his teacher-pleasing idea the catchiest title: "The No Teacher Left Behind Act."

### Comptroller cuts off payments

Also, Strayhorn, in her role as state comptroller, stopped a \$10,000 payment to a Washington, D.C., lobbying and public relations firm used by the governor's Office of State-Federal Relations.

Strayhorn said an audit by her agency found that payments made to The Federalist Group were to go to a third party, Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, a firm that does not have a contract with the state of Texas.

Earlier, Strayhorn stopped further payments to Cassidy & Associates, another Washington, D.C., lobbying firm that is under contract with the Office of State-Federal Relations. She said an audit shows payments to the firm have already exceeded the contracted limit of \$330,000.

Gov. Perry's office brushed off Strayhorn's action, calling it a publicity stunt, and saying the money was used to promote tourism.

### Strayhorn files suit against state

On March 24, Strayhorn sued Secretary of State Roger Williams for making it unreasonably difficult for independent candidates to get on the ballot for the November statewide election.

Williams said his office would manually examine the signatures on her petition, rather than sample enough signatures at random to be statistically accurate and quicker.

The Strayhorn campaign wants the state's chief election officer and an appointee of Gov. Perry, to audit signatures now through the end of the signature-gathering period on

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State Capital

HIGHLIGHTS  
By Ed Sterling

May 11.  
Williams refused, and said his office would not begin the task until after May 11.

Strayhorn and Friedman need 45,540 valid signatures each in order to get a spot on the ballot.

### TABC enforces aggressively

The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission has begun to send officers into bars to arrest drunken patrons. The fine is \$500 and/or jail time.

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Let's Look Back...

## 24 & 48 YEARS AGO

**March 25, 1982**  
Medical Technician Ken Craig survived after a bullet grazed the top of his head during a mugging in San Antonio...

Camille Ashby was the guest of honor at a party hosted by her parents Mr. and Mrs. Brock Ashby on the occasion of her third birthday...

Mrs. Harvey (Marcy McInteer) Popp, recent bride, was complimented with a bridal shower in the home of Mrs. Gladys Gold on March 18...

Mr. and Mrs. Simon Bartos of Rosenberg announced the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter, Sharon Jane, to Ricky Wayne Kristynik of Rosenberg, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Kristynik of Garwood. Vows will be exchanged March 29 at 3 p.m. at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Rosenberg...

Mrs. Jack (Jan) Harrell, wife of the Eagle Lake Community Hospital administrator, joined her husband here last weekend after resigning her position as a teacher in the Liberty High School. The have purchased the Jody Heard home on Partridge Lane and plan to move there from the apartment at Mrs. T.W. Scott's as soon as the home is vacated...

Members of the United Methodist Church of Eagle Lake are very pleased over the addition of 10 beautiful colonial type mercury vapor lamps on the front grounds of the church yard on Prairie St. Mrs. Marie McClanahan

donated the lights to the church in memory of her late sister, Miss Sallie Jones...

Relatives and friends were saddened to learn Mrs. Virgie Alison Cooper, 91, of Eagle Lake passed away March 19 at her home. Funeral services were held March 21 from Mill-Bauer Funeral Home...

First place district winner in the Colorado Soil and Water Conservation District contest was John Lee Korenek Jr. a senior at Rice High School. First place in the Conservation poster contest was Keith Charles Korenek a sixth grader at St. Mary's in Nada...

Ms. Virginia R. Thorpe and Wendell Ward both of Eagle Lake, were united in marriage in a lovely ceremony at the Eagle Lake Community Hospital Chapel on March 12...

Mr. and Mrs. Lester Cranek Jr. became the proud parents of an eight pound, eight ounce baby girl, Leslee Kai. She was welcomed home by half brothers, Andrew and Kyle and half sisters, Kelly, Kara, Kristen, Vikki and Julianne...

Navy Photographer's Mate Airman

Apprentice Thomas E. Bartosch, son of Eugene R. Bartosch of East Bernard, is serving aboard the Navy's newest nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, the USS Carl Vinson, homeported in Norfolk, Virginia.

### March 27, 1958

In the fifth annual Eagle Lake Quarterback Club Night Relays held Monday, John Pendergrass was the sole winner from Eagle Lake to score in the meet. Dixon Gilbreath of Weimar received the only record breaker trophy with a time of 23.1 seconds in the 200-yard dash. Track Queen Elizabeth Strunk presented the highest individual trophy to Lynn Hoffman of Columbus...

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Hodnett arrived here Wednesday for a two-month vacation with relatives and friends. They have been residing in Venezuela, South America where he is associated with an oil company...

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Engstrom of Garwood honored their daughter, Harriet, on her fourth birthday with a party Saturday using the Easter theme in decor...

Laddie Lee Krenek of Garwood was honored by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Krenek, with a dinner party Sunday afternoon on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday...

Mrs. Ida Causey of Eagle Lake was among the 103 honor students at The University of Texas College of Education on the Fall semester honor roll list and she received Magna Cum Laude honors...

Eagle Lake Eagles trackmen scored points in both invitational track meets last weekend. Coach Victor Scott's Eagle Lake Eagles tallied 3-1/2 points in Boling Friday with Jim Milby winning third in the discus throw and Edward Harborth tying for fourth in the 220 yard dash and 4-1/2 points in Columbus with Harborth tied second in the 100 yard dash and won fourth in the 220 and Walter Jones for fourth place in the broad jump...

Walter Lee Miller, owner of Altair Package Store in Altair was burglarized for the fifth time in less than a year and the robbers got away with \$300 to \$400 this time.

STAR OF THE WEEK

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