



Association of Texas Professional Educators
305 E. Huntland Dr., Suite 300, Austin, TX 78752
(800) 777-ATPE • (512) 467-0071 • atpe.org

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MEDIA CONTACT:
Stephanie Jacksis
ATPE Media Relations
(512)467-0071 ext.337
cell: (281)760-8697

ATPE weighs in on expanded special session call

AUSTIN, Texas — Just after midnight, Gov. Greg Abbott released his expanded special session call with 19 items. The supplemental call adds legislation to increase funding for TRS-Care, which was not part of the governor’s original plan for the special session. Below is a statement from the state’s largest educator group, the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE).

“We’re glad that Gov. Abbott recognizes the urgency of the financial pressure that has been placed on Texas’s active and retired teachers due to rising healthcare costs,” ATPE Gov. Relations Director Jennifer Canaday said. “For years, the legislature has failed to increase healthcare funding to TRS to keep up with the demands of the market, and now educators are paying a high price for the state’s inaction.

We appreciate that Gov. Abbott is hearing the voices of thousands of educators on this issue, and hope he will heed educators’ voices by dropping attacks on their profession through anti-teacher payroll deduction legislation and efforts to drain funding from our public schools to benefit unregulated private entities. We’re thankful that several legislators have put forward meaningful legislation to address TRS healthcare funding and have urged the governor to add this issue to his agenda for the special session. In a special session that has been crowded with politically motivated issues and unnecessary bills, we look forward to working with legislators on this issue, which truly deserves focus and action.”

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The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) has been a strong voice for Texas educators since 1980. It is the leading educators’ association in Texas with more than 100,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, future, retired and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for 5 million public schoolchildren. ATPE is the ally and the voice of Texas public education.