

State Representative James Frank
House District 69

September 10, 2024

Dear Fellow House Members and Nominees,

After much thought, prayer and consideration, I have decided to file for Speaker of the Texas House. Following the end of last session, and especially after the primary election results of March, it became clear to me that the House itself and our voters want to move in a different direction. By today's actions, I am officially asking you to consider whether I represent that direction.

I would like to share 3 of the biggest changes/improvements I will work to bring to the chamber. These changes are based on what I perceive about my personal strengths combined with the comments I have heard from many of you over the past several months.

1. **Communication** – In a body of 150 different members, it is impossible to overstate the importance and need for consistent and clear communication from the speaker's office about our schedule, priorities, etc. Personal communication must focus on members, but it is also critical that there is clear and personal communication with the Senate, the Lt. Governor and the Governor's office. Relationships don't get better by not talking. I have the time, willingness, and understand the importance of spending as much energy as necessary to ensure communication flows between the chambers and among the members.

The speaker's job requires tremendous time and attention, and, at this stage in my life, I can devote myself full-time to this critical role.

2. **Member Empowerment** – Every member of the House serves a district of nearly 200,000 Texans, and every district needs to have a voice in the process. Over time, political processes (in every arena including Texas) tend to gravitate to favor those in power. It is crucial that we review every practice in the House that consolidates power into the hands of the speaker and find intelligent ways to return these powers to the individual members. While we need to make sure the speaker's office can continue to perform its necessary organizing function, I would like to engage and empower members to represent their districts (regardless of seniority or party).

Furthermore, I believe there is a tremendous amount of talent in the House that remains on the sidelines and could be better utilized, both to represent their own districts and to formulate the policies of the state.

3. **Floor Management** – As a part-time legislature, most of our members make major sacrifices from business and family to serve as citizen legislators. While special sessions may occasionally be necessary, they should never be the result of poor planning or lack of communication between chambers or the Governor's office. One of the changes I believe needs to be made is to have the majority party's priority bills passed very early in session. It is important for those of us in the majority party to get our highest priority bills through the floor and to the Senate very quickly during session. This will allow us to ensure that Republican members can fulfill their promises to their constituents. It will also allow members of both parties to spend the rest of

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session focused on the 90-95% of other bills that our constituents on both sides of the aisle want us to debate and pass.

An additional issue that has been discussed at length is the issue of whether Republican members should maintain all the chairmanships in the House. I believe we should have only Republican chairs. This will allow significantly more Republican members to participate in leadership roles. I have heard some say that this would exclude 65 people from "the process". This could not be further from the truth—not being a chair does not exclude members from the process. If it did, then most Republicans would currently also be excluded from the process. (Note: Texas is one of only three states in the country with minority party chairs).

I believe I have the ability, integrity and available time to be the next speaker. If you agree, I would be honored to have your support. I look forward to talking with you over the coming weeks to hear your input.

May God bless you and your family,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James B. Frank". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" being the most prominent.

James B. Frank