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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Thursday, January 29, 2009

## **Clean air legislation creates collaborative, multi-agency approach to incentivizing new emissions control technologies** *Appliance standards and energy efficient building codes among omnibus bill's many moving parts*

(AUSTIN) -- An omnibus clean air bill filed today by state Sen. Kip Averitt (R-Waco) continues his ongoing efforts to protect public health and defend the state's economy against the restrictions associated with failure to meet federal air quality guidelines.

"Last session we passed Senate Bill 12, which is already producing significant air quality improvements," said Averitt, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources. "And this session we are doing clean air even bigger and stronger. The Legislature is charged with protecting our state's economy and ensuring public health, and this legislation gives us a whole new set of tools to accomplish that job."

Averitt's bill provides incentives for new, point source-oriented air quality technologies, modifies and enhances existing state air quality programs, and establishes appliance standards and energy efficient building codes.

"Perhaps the most exciting component of the bill was built upon the recognition that our state agencies with jurisdiction over energy and natural resources must work together if we are going to effectively address the air quality challenges facing our state," said Averitt, referencing the New Technology Implementation Grant Program created by the bill. "We're going to put some of the state's smartest people together at the same table and allow them to incentivize new technologies -- the right technologies -- so that the state can help get those technologies to the market faster."

Under Averitt's new grant program, the Comptroller of Public Accounts, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the Public Utility Commission (PUC), and the Texas Railroad Commission (RRC) will utilize their unique areas of expertise in a collaborative way to identify and financially encourage innovative emissions control-based clean air technologies that exceed current state and federal guidelines.

(more)

Other mechanisms in the bill designed to incentivize the adoption of innovative clean air technologies include a rebate program for plug-in hybrid passenger vehicles and support for electricity storage projects related to renewable energy.

Averitt's bill continues the accomplishments of his Senate Bill 12, which was passed during the 80th Legislative Session, by modifying and enhancing the Texas Emissions Reduction Program (TERP) and the Low Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP).

The bill also establishes the Energy Efficient Appliance Grant Program, which will incentivize the purchase of equipment and appliances that meet or exceed federal Energy Star standards, and it encourages the rest of the state to match the energy efficient building codes that certain Texas municipalities, such as Dallas, have already established.

Other notable components of the bill include the establishment of a strategy to get Texas to the table during any federal climate change discussions and the introduction of a cumulative effect component to the air quality permitting process at TCEQ.

Under the bill's federal climate change regulation language, TCEQ, PUC and RRC will be required to jointly participate in the development of federal laws, rules and requirements related to climate change.

"If and when the feds decide to adopt climate change related regulations, we want to be in a proactive position, because we have more to lose in that situation than any other state in the union," said Averitt.

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