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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Texas Public Employees Association Acknowledges Importance of Pay Raise *Back-To-Back Annual Salary Increases Critical to State Workforce*

AUSTIN, Texas (May 18, 2005) – The Texas Public Employees Association (TPEA) today expressed appreciation for the decision by House and Senate budget conferees to include in the state budget annual pay raises for state employees in each year of the 2006-07 biennium.

“The proposal adopted last night is a good pay hike for Texas’ state employees. It represents the first back-to-back pay raise they have received in 14 years. We are hopeful this increase will help stabilize the workforce by providing a meaningful financial incentive to attract new employees to a career in state government, and to induce the state’s most experienced workers to continue with their state careers instead of leaving for better-paying jobs,” said TPEA Executive Director Gary W. Anderson.

“The objective is to reduce chronic, double-digit employee turnover. This pay raise, the first in four years, is long overdue and a meaningful step toward achieving that objective,” Anderson said.

The compensation package adopted by House and Senate budget-writers includes:

- A 4 percent pay raise effective Sept. 1, 2005 (the beginning of the 2006 fiscal year) and another 3 percent increase Sept. 1, 2006.
- Lower-paid workers, who would not benefit as much from a straight percentage increase, will receive a minimum increase of \$100 a month in September and another minimum monthly increase of \$50 on Sept. 1, 2006.
- Longevity pay will rise to \$20 a month for every two years of state service and Hazardous Duty pay will increase to \$10 a month for every year of state service.

“We appreciate the legislative leadership’s willingness to work with TPEA on our recommendations for a state employee pay raise. Each of these items is designed to stabilize the workforce by reducing turnover and to provide a meaningful pay increase for state employees. TPEA developed a pay raise package and worked with legislators throughout the session to have it adopted,” Anderson said

Anderson said the compensation increase would not have been possible without the leadership of Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst and House Speaker Tom Craddick, and the hard work of Senate Finance Chairman Steven Ogden, and House Appropriations Chairman Jim Pitts.

“State employees also would like to thank state Rep. Joe Pickett and state Sen. Tommy Williams
(more)

whose extraordinary, behind-the-scene efforts kept their colleagues focused on the importance of increasing the compensation package for state employees,” Anderson said.

“TPEA regards the pay increase as a significant step forward because it recognizes the value of our dedicated and hardworking state employees,” Anderson said. “State employees throughout Texas appreciate the decision to increase their pay in each year of the biennium and to include a minimum monthly increase so employees at all levels will benefit.

“This pay raise, hopefully, will help recruit, and then retain, the talented individuals who are necessary to make state government fulfill the expectations of taxpayers. The increases in longevity and hazardous pay reward the commitment of our most experienced state employees and those who protect the public safety,” Anderson said.

“We appreciate these legislators for acknowledging how crippling turnover has been for state agencies, and their response with this compensation package begins to bridge the gap between the state and other employers. It is a welcome step toward stabilizing the state workforce,” he said.

Established in 1946, TPEA is a 14,000-member non-union professional association, and it is the oldest and largest legislative advocacy group representing current and retired state employees.

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