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Legislature listened to people, not editorials

Via e-mail

To the Editor:

On the **only issue** that matters, the 78th Legislative Session was a success.

The Texas Constitution requires the Legislature to pass a balanced budget. That's the only task we, legally speaking, require of our elected officials in Austin. Did everyone get what they want? Absolutely not.

While not perfect, budget priorities established in this session by the new leadership clearly reflect the will of the Texas expressed at the ballot box:

- Tightly controlled spending, strict responsibility over funds, and a retreat from the spend-and-tax mentality of the political left.

While more than 2/3rds of Texans voted for gubernatorial and legislative candidates pledging to reduce taxes, most of the state's major newspapers were calling for (and still are) such discredited ideas as higher rates and new taxes. Not wanting to confuse readers with facts, editorial pages painted the only solution to the state's budget shortfall as new, higher taxes. Never mind that states with income taxes, and higher rates, had far worse budget problems than Texas this year.

So, when Gov. Perry, Lt. Gov. Dewhurst, Speaker Craddick and the majority of House and Senate members pledged to work against tax increases, they were doing so with a clear understanding there was simply no alternative — raising taxes will forfeit growth and destroy jobs.

Many in the media, parroting cries from special interest groups, see government as the solution to life's problems. The real disconnect, however, is not taxes at all, but on spending and the philosophy of government.

Who should help people in need, the government or individuals? And when government helps, what criteria should there be? Almost 2/3rds of Texans last November used their vote to demand that taxpayer "help" be truly helpful, going only to those who really need it, and for only as long as necessary.

This time, when people said, "Don't mess with taxes," the Legislature listened.

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