

## *The Quorum Report*

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### **PATRICK ANNOUNCES HE IS A NO VOTE ON AVERITT AMENDMENT**

#### **Dunnam ends up at same place with slightly different twist**

Show Sen. **Patrick**

as voting no on busting the spending cap. The freshman state Senator from Houston said today that he plans to vote no on Sen. **Kip Averitt's** (R-Waco) proposed constitutional amendment that would allow lawmakers to exceed constitutional spending limits to accommodate property tax relief passed last year.

The amendment, which was passed out of *Senate Finance* this morning, should come up for a vote in the Senate by the middle of next week. Patrick told a post-lunch panel at the *Texas Public Policy Foundation's* Policy Orientation that next week's vote presents a real dilemma for conservatives.

Lawmakers will be asked to bust the spending cap for tax relief, he said. "Well, if you're a fiscal conservative as I am, I want lower taxes but I'm scared to death of busting that cap because I'm not really confident what they're going to do with what the money when they get it. Everybody's hand is out."

Patrick also criticized Averitt's amendment for connecting the tax relief and spending cap provisions, saying the amendment makes senior citizens the scapegoat for breaking the cap.

While his vote would mean denying senior citizens and the disabled the benefits of last year's property tax cut, the Senator said he planned to stand firm and vote no "because somewhere, someone has to say enough is enough."

He said that he would reconsider his no vote on one condition: adding a provision to the amendment that would allow voters to also decide whether to lower the property appraisal cap to 5 percent.

Later in the afternoon, *House Democratic Caucus* Chair **Jim Dunnam** announced a similar position. He said, "I find it incredible that any member of the Legislature would vote to bust the state spending cap without first seeing a real budget. We are in this position because of the irresponsible fiscal policies of Governor **Rick Perry** and **Tom Craddick** and four years of budgeting that created this crisis. Busting the state spending cap without first seeing a budget simply gives them another blank check to continue their gross fiscal mismanagement of our state."

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