

TPA LEGISLATIVE OUTREACH SERIES

The oil and gas industry, of which pipelines are an integral part, is vital to the economy of Texas and the nation. TPA has reached out to Texas state legislators to inquire about the importance of the industry to the residents and businesses of their districts.

Here, Rep. Heriberto “Eddie” Morales Jr. (D-Eagle Pass), a lifelong resident of Eagle Pass, Texas, shares his thoughts and experiences. He serves as State Representative for House District 74, the largest and most unique district in Texas. Made up of 11 counties extending from Eagle Pass, Maverick County to the northeast portion of El Paso County, it includes more than 770 border miles of the Mexican border. Currently, Rep. Morales serves as Vice-Chair of the Energy Resources Committee.



REP. MORALES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PIPELINE INDUSTRY TO HIS TEXAS HOUSE DISTRICT, THE STATE AND THE NATION

- Q.** Your business experience is vast. Not only do you serve as a partner and member of the management board at Langley and Bannack, Inc., Attorneys at Law and the City Attorney for Eagle Pass and Brackettville, you are also an avid real estate investor and a commercial and residential builder. In addition, you are the owner of the family business, “The Piedras Negras Tortilla Factory.” Now you are Vice-Chair of the Energy Resources Committee in the Texas House. With your prestigious career as an attorney, a businessman, an investor and a legislator in mind, please talk about the role the oil and natural gas industry plays in the overall Texas budget, the business development of the state, and the general wellbeing of Texas residents.

A. With Texas boasting the 'Energy Capital of the World,' the Texas oil and gas industry is the cornerstone to our wellbeing and relatively low cost of living. From West Texas to the coast and in between, it fosters our continued growth and exceptionalism – paving the way to help fund our public schools, expand our skylines and provide Texans with an abundance of well-paying jobs and livelihood. The revenue generated from the industry helps propel our budget to enable the Legislature to make the necessary investments in numerous fields, including public services, infrastructure development in underserved areas, higher education, public safety and more. The oil and gas industry is truly a blessing to the state of Texas.

Q. Are energy services a substantial source of jobs and tax revenues in your district? What benefits does the sector provide to your constituents and why are they important?

A. *Absolutely. Texas House District 74 – the largest district in Texas – is home to Reeves County, one of the largest producers of oil and gas not only in the state, but also in the nation. This production employs more than 6,500 constituents in West Texas and is the lifeblood of our rural public schools, which mold future industry leaders.*

Q. Do you support policies that encourage the safe and sensible building of essential pipeline infrastructure to deliver essential oil and natural gas products, leading to lower energy prices for consumers?

A. *Yes. It is imperative that as we balance the necessity of energy dominance, while addressing environmental concerns, we do everything possible to ensure efficient and safe transport of the critical resources that benefit both producers and consumers. That work begins with our pipelines and the important work done by the Texas Pipeline Association.*

Q. What do you see as the biggest issue facing your constituents today as it relates to the energy sector, and what role do you envision oil and gas playing in your district in the future?

A. *The recent halt of new liquified national gas (LNG) exports has been of increased concern for my office and Reeves County, as well as the increased scrutiny of the industry, which overlooks the overwhelmingly positive impact it has on residents in my district and for every Texan. It is imperative that we work to address environmental concerns without hindering our production and exports. Texas is blessed with an abundance of natural resources, including oil and gas; we must always expand on our possibilities and **never** decrease or hinder them. As long as I have a say, oil and gas will always have a home in House District 74; we will always support our industry workers.*

Q. Is there any other relevant information you would like TPA members to know?

A. *I want to extend my gratitude to the Texas Pipeline Association for its advocacy and commitment to the betterment of the oil and gas industry and Texas at-large. In the Texas House, it is my honor to serve as the Vice-Chair of Energy Resources and watch the growth of this crucial industry and its positive impact on Texans across the state, but especially here at home.*