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Gov. Rick Perry Calls Special Session of Legislature To Address Educational Excellence and Property Tax Relief

AUSTIN - Gov. Rick Perry today announced he is calling the Texas Legislature back to work on April 20 for a special legislative session on Educational Excellence and Property Tax Relief. "Since the implementation of the Robin Hood school finance scheme, the brightest minds in Texas have pondered a permanent solution," Perry said. "The time for pondering is over; the time for action is now."

Perry said that he wants a permanent solution along the lines of the plan he has unveiled during the past few months, but he also said that he looks forward to working with lawmakers on their suggestions and ideas on school finance. Last week, Perry announced a comprehensive Educational Excellence and Property Tax Relief Plan that will cut school property taxes by \$6 billion, pump \$2.5 billion new dollars into public schools, significantly increase funding equity, and preserve Texas' strong job creation climate.

Earlier this year, Perry proposed a Taxpayer Protection Plan that will prohibit local taxing entities from raising appraisals on residential properties by more than 3 percent a year and limit revenues local entities can raise from property taxes to inflation and population growth. Perry also has called for Educational Excellence Incentives that will refocus attention from minimum expectations to maximum achievement.

The governor noted that the months leading up to the special session call make it clear that, regardless of party or philosophy, there is broad consensus among legislators, educators, employers and families that the current school funding system is outdated and unworkable. "Property taxes are too high, and fast action is needed to help our taxpayers and our schoolchildren," said Perry. "We agree on many of the broad goals, but there is nothing like the certainty of a session to bring greater consensus on the details."