

Senate Finance Chairman **Steve Ogden**, R-Bryan, on his committee's proposed state budget: "That budget saves public education. It saves the nursing home industry in Texas. It takes care of Medicaid patients. The House budget does not. We know how to balance this budget, so the debate is whether you want to save public education and whether you want to save nursing homes, or not. And I think we're right. And we're going to fight for it."

U.S. Trade Rep. **Ron Kirk**, the former mayor of Dallas and 2002 candidate for U.S. Senate, in *USA Today*: "If there's a definition of an optimist, it's a black Democrat in Texas."

Injured reserves: Rep. **Joe Pickett**, D-El Paso, tore his Achilles Tendon in the House's intramural football game; doctors told him that, after his surgery, he's not supposed to put that foot on the ground for six weeks.

One of the houses lost in the fires around Possum Kingdom Lake belonged to Rep. **Jim Keffer**, R-Eastland. No one was hurt.

**Rick O'Donnell** is no longer with the University of Texas System.