

Observation Assessment # 4

Date: 1/27/2021

Subject: Congressional Youth Advisory Council Meeting #4

Assessment:

This week was the 3rd Congressional district Congressional Youth Advisory Council's fourth meeting. The topic for this meeting was the difference between Federal and State governments in fiscal, legislative, and judicial matters. We discussed this by having a panel discussion with Rep. Van Taylor as well as a member of the Texas State House of Representatives, Rep. Candy Noble. Rep. Noble was first elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 2018 and she represents District eighty-nine and is now currently serving her second term in the eighty-seventh Texas Legislative session. She has served on the House Committees on Human Services, Ways & Means, and Resolutions Calendars and got her degree at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene in Elementary level education and currently serves as a member of their Board of Trustees as well as your position in the Texas House. The meeting was supposed to have the attendance of three other members of the Texas House of Representatives including Rep. Justin Holland, Rep. Scott Sanford, and State Rep. Matt Shaheen. Unfortunately some of them had to cancel due to some last minute business in Austin for the preparation for the next legislative session.

Even though this was the fourth program meeting, it was only my second chance to attend one of these meetings in person due to scheduling conflicts. The meeting itself was structured where we started with introductions from both Rep. Van Taylor and Rep. Noble as well as what they are currently focusing on in the legislature, and then onto each of the different student members of the program. I had known that the program had several people from around the 3rd congressional district but I was actually kind of surprised by the number of different schools everyone was from. Following introductions both Rep. Nobles and Taylor gave a small presentation on the big differences between the procedures and goals of the United States House of Representatives and the Texas State House of Representatives. These included things like small procedural rules like how legislation is introduced and how it flows through the committee and voting process as well as larger things like the processes of passing a budget. I was very interested in the issues they mentioned regarding budget passing. Rep. Nobel mentioned that the State of Texas does not usually have much issue when it comes to passing a budget because there are certain stipulations included in the State constitution. Like how a certain percentage of the available budget must go to education and how the state has less issues when it comes to gaining funding like income taxes and things of that nature. Conversely, Rep. Taylor talked about passing a budget in the U.S. House can be a completely different story. Not only is it a challenge to get all the different representatives to agree on budget allotments, but the system they actually used is very antiquated and inefficient. Prior to 1975 the House used a one bill budget system to pass a budget which means it would take a single bill vote to pass a complete budget, but now they use a twelve step appreciation system which causes many needless

speed bumps which stops budgets from actually being effectively discussed and even voted on. So often the U.S. The House doesn't even get the opportunity to vote or completely develop a budget because of these different roadblocks. Following the presentations by both Reps. We moved onto the Q&A portion of the meeting. This gave us the opportunity to pick the Reps' minds on specific issues. Most of the questions asked focused on environmental protection and energy usage as well as student loans and taxes, which make a lot of sense since the state of Texas has been expecting another freeze similar to the one we experienced last year and since the room was full of highschool students planning to graduate in the next few months.

Overall the entire meeting was a good experience and I was happy to get the chance to hear the thoughts of two Reps. in different yet also very similar positions in the separate levels of government as well as see what was on the minds of the other program members and people my age.