

Patrick, Bohac Propose Property Appraisal Reform Measure

by [John Pape](#)

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State Sen. Dan Patrick (R-Houston) and Rep. Dwayne Bohac (R-Houston) have presented a plan they say will address skyrocketing property tax bills.

The two legislators unveiled their plan before the Select Committee on Property Tax Relief and Appraisal Reform during its meeting at Lone Star College in Tomball yesterday.

Both Patrick and Bohac said they plan to introduce a number of bills during the next session of the Texas Legislature addressing appraisal reform. One measure, which was presented for the first time at Monday's meeting, calls for homesteads to be reappraised every two years rather than annually.

Bohac said they have a way to pass appraisal reform without a super-majority vote.

"Sen. Patrick and I have been fighting for appraisal cap reform for quite some time, and I think we've come up with an innovative solution that requires a simple majority vote in both the (state) house and the senate," Bohac said. "Our obstacle in previous sessions to solving this problem has been the necessity for a super-majority in order to pass significant appraisal reform. We've figured out a way around that."

Legislation passed in 2007 and ratified by voters last November limits the ability of appraisal districts to raise a homeowner's appraisal by more than 10 percent from one appraisal period to the next. The Bohac-Patrick Plan will limit, by law, homestead appraisals to a minimum of every two years, resulting in a practical effect of a five percent appraisal cap.

Patrick said despite an outcry from the public over skyrocketing appraisals, the legislature has failed to act to rein in the increases.

"Rep. Bohac has been a champion in the Texas House for appraisal reform and I look forward to working with him on this critical issue," Patrick said. "The people have demanded a reduction in appraisal caps; the legislature has failed to act. It is time to give homeowners the long term and permanent property tax relief that they deserve."

Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector Paul Bettencourt called the plan "a great step forward" in controlling rising property appraisals.

"This is a very sensible solution to the problem that we have in this state of skyrocketing appraisals," Bettencourt said. "The bill proposed by Rep. Bohac and Sen. Patrick is a great step forward for taxpayers in Texas."

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