

# Association of Texas Professional Educators

305 E. Huntland Dr., Suite 300, Austin, TX 78752  
(800) 777-ATPE • (512) 467-0071 • www.atpe.org

**Supporting Your Freedom to Teach<sup>SM</sup>**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media contact: Eric Allen**  
**(512) 694-4873 • eallen@atpe.org**

## **ATPE Award Makes Bold Statement**

Local lawmaker recognized for courage and service to constituents

There was one Republican member of the Texas House of Representatives who supported public education on each and every key piece of legislation during the recently past regular and special legislative sessions, Rep. Tommy Merritt (R-Longview). Merritt's actions were consistent with what the Association of Texas Professional Educators stated as fundamental to maintaining a quality education for each public school student in Texas.

This Saturday, ATPE will present Rep. Merritt with a Freedom to Teach award. The Freedom to Teach award allows us to highlight leadership and actions in the past legislative sessions on public education. ATPE's Director of Governmental Relations, Brock Gregg said the award is reserved for those who make extraordinary efforts on behalf of public education. "This award has been carefully conceived to recognize a select group of legislators who demonstrate unwavering representation for their constituents and support for public education. ATPE expresses our sincere gratitude for Rep. Merritt's leadership and actions in the past special sessions on public education," Gregg said.

The award will be presented by Gregg, along with local members of ATPE, during the No Texas Teacher Left Behind rally in Longview Saturday afternoon.

Event Details: Saturday, January 14, 2006 2:00pm  
Maude Cobb Activity & Convention Center

Judge Bill Stoudt will open the rally with a welcome to all who attend. Some of the NTTLB members will then speak for a brief time (approximately 10-12 minutes). Another member will then introduce the lawmaker.

*About ATPE: The 105,000-member Association of Texas Professional Educators is the largest educators' group in Texas and the largest non-union group nationwide. Its membership consists primarily of classroom teachers but also includes para-educators, administrators, college students and retired*

*educators. ATPE is committed to advocating for better benefits for all educators, promoting a collaborative work environment, protecting the right of educators to choose the association they feel represents their interests, and providing the best education possible for all Texas children.*