

PHILIP CORTEZ

TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 117

A Southside San Antonio native, State Representative Dr. Philip Cortez, was first elected in 2012 to serve his lifelong community as state representative for District 117. He earned his Associate's degree from Palo Alto Community College in 2000 and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 2002. Representative Cortez later earned a Master of Public Administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 2007. He earned his Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Texas at Austin in December 2017.



Prior to his position as a state representative, Rep. Cortez was elected in 2007 and re-elected in 2009 to the San Antonio City Council. As a councilman for District 4, he prioritized developing the district's neighborhoods and citywide improvement projects. He fought to improve police and fire departments, clean up parks, and modernize libraries throughout the district. Mayor Julian Castro selected Rep. Cortez to serve as Chairman of the Audit, Infrastructure and Growth Committees, President of the San Antonio Housing Trust Public Facility Corporation, and the Governance Committee.

In 2019, Rep. Cortez retired from the U.S. Air Force after proudly serving for 20 years. He served for seven years as an enlisted airman with the 433rd Airlift Wing at Lackland Air Force Base, eventually rising to Staff Sergeant. In 2006, Representative Cortez was commissioned as Second Lieutenant. He was deployed to the Middle East in April 2016 for six months to support Operation Inherent Resolve. Rep. Cortez was awarded a Commendation Medal (First Oak Leaf Cluster) for Outstanding Achievement during his deployment.



During his tenure as a state representative, Rep. Cortez has successfully passed legislation supporting veterans and their families, improving our public schools, protecting senior citizens, and bringing jobs to Bexar County. Additionally, he has continually stood up for property rights through annexation reform on behalf of West Bexar County citizens. In the 86th Legislative Session, he served on the House Appropriations Committee – Article II, Statewide Health Care Costs Select Committee, House Resolution Calendar Committee, and Vice-Chairman of the House Elections Committee. During the 2020 interim, he was appointed to the Texas Legislative Council.

For the 87th Legislative Session, Rep. Cortez was appointed as the Chairman of the House Committee on Urban Affairs, providing him the opportunity to shape all urban cities' goals and objectives. This nine-member committee oversees municipalities, including their creation, organization, and powers. The committee also has jurisdiction over the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs and the Texas Commission on Fire Protection. He is also serving on the Higher Education Committee, which will address education beyond high school.

Rep. Cortez believes that education is the great equalizer, and he is proud to do his part to strengthen the knowledge base for Texans throughout the state.



Rep. Cortez is married to Debbie Cruz-Cortez, J.D. She received her law degree from SMU Dedman School of Law and now is a prosecutor in the Bexar County District Attorney's office. They are proud to serve the residents of House District 117.