

Legislature must cut homeowners insurance costs

By Enterprise Editorial Staff

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This is one of those categories where Texas doesn't want to be No. 1, but a recent survey confirmed the bad news: Texas has the highest homeowners insurance premiums in the country, according to the [National Association of Insurance Commissioners](#).

Texans paid an average \$1,460 a year for the most common homeowner policy sold nationwide. The national average was about half that - \$791.

Only Florida, at No. 2, was close to Texas' costs at \$1,390. After that, there was a big falloff to No. 3 (Louisiana, \$1,155) and No. 4 (Oklahoma, \$1,048)

The survey shows once again that Texas homeowners' rates are, in the memorable words of a quirky candidate for governor of New York, "too damn high."

When the Legislature convenes in January, it has to do more than agree with fed-up consumers that something ought to be done about this.

It has to do something.

It has to get these rates lower. That means fixing a broken system that lets insurance companies basically set their own rates with little or no control from the [Texas Department](#) of Insurance.

Lawmakers can't be fooled by arguments from insurance companies that Texas has had a lot of major hurricanes. We've had two in the recent past, and many years of virtually no damage from tropical storms - like this year.

The biggest priority for the Legislature will be addressing the state's budget

shortfall of up to \$25 billion. That's a pocketbook issue for state government that cannot be ignored.

But homeowners insurance is a pocketbook issue for the people of Texas. The elected officials who represent them must not come home until they have delivered tangible relief here.