

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - December 3, 2003

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Jackpot Dreams Take A Mega Step Forward As *Mega Millions*™ Tickets Go On Sale In Texas



State Representative **Talmadge Heflin** chooses his Mega Millions numbers for Friday's drawing, as TLC Executive Director **Reagan E. Greer** touts the \$44 million jackpot!

(Austin, December 3) - At 6 a.m. this morning, Texas became the eleventh state to offer its lottery players a chance at *Mega Millions*™ jackpots, as tickets for the multi-state game went on sale at more than 16,000 Texas Lottery® retailers around Texas.

"It's an exciting day for the Texas Lottery, our players and our retailers," said Reagan E. Greer, Executive Director of the Texas Lottery Commission. "It's also an exciting new milestone, as proceeds from this multijurisdiction game will allow us to increase our contribution to the Foundation School Fund for public education in Texas."

The Legislative Budget Board has estimated that even with the dollars that get re-directed to *Mega Millions* from existing games like *Lotto Texas*™, additional net revenue to the State for the Foundation School Fund will come to \$101 million for the biennium.

Lottery players in the Lone Star State will be competing for jackpots and other prizes with players from Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Virginia and Washington.

"Our *Mega Millions* billboards all over the state are now promoting Friday's jackpot, the first drawing Texas players can participate in," said Greer. "I know our players like it when jackpots are high, but it's important to remember to 'Play Responsibly.' After all, it takes only one ticket to win."

To play *Mega Millions*, players choose 5 numbers from 1 to 52, and one Mega Ball number from a second field of numbers

from 1 to 52. Each play costs a dollar. Players must match the five numbers plus the Mega Ball to win the jackpot, which starts at \$10 million and increases until it is won.

Texas was able to join *Mega Millions* through the passage of HB 3459, which Governor Perry signed on June 10. In joining *Mega Millions*, Texas added its own twist to the game. For an extra dollar, Texas players will have the option of multiplying their non-grand/jackpot prize winnings two, three or four times through an add-on feature called the Megaplier.™

"We like to think of it as 'Texas-sizing' your winnings," explained Greer. "Let's say the number three is drawn as the Megaplier. A \$2 prize for matching the Mega Ball is now \$6 for those players who purchased the Megaplier feature. The \$175,000 prize for matching five numbers, but not the Mega Ball, is now \$525,000 for those players who purchased the Megaplier feature."

The addition of *Mega Millions* to the 'Games of Texas' gives Texas players the opportunity to play a big jackpot game four nights a week.

Mega Millions drawings are held on Tuesdays and Fridays. In the past year, *Mega Millions* jackpots have averaged \$42.3 million. The largest *Mega Millions* jackpot was \$183 million. The Big Game, *Mega Millions* predecessor, began in 1996 and had a \$363 million jackpot in May 2000. The name changed in May 2002 with the creation of *Mega Millions* that featured a new matrix and additional states selling tickets.

Lotto Texas, the Lottery's first big jackpot game that marked its eleventh anniversary last month, has its drawings on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Like *Mega Millions*, *Lotto Texas* has a different matrix than when the game started. Players now pick five numbers from 1 to 44, and a Bonus Ball number from a second field of numbers from 1 to 44.

Lotto Texas jackpots start at \$4 million and have gone as high as \$85 million. Tonight's *Lotto Texas* jackpot is \$15 million.

The odds of winning the *Mega Millions* jackpot are one in approximately 135 million. The overall odds of winning any prize in *Mega Millions* are 1-in-43.

The odds of winning a *Lotto Texas* jackpot are 1 in 47.7 million. Overall odds of winning a prize in *Lotto Texas* are 1-in-57.

For more information about the Texas Lottery, please visit the official Texas Lottery Commission Web site at www.txlottery.org. For more information on *Mega Millions*, visit www.megamillions.com.