

North Texas Commission 2017 Legislative Priorities

The North Texas Commission supports pro-growth state tax and regulatory policies that grow our economy and attract investment. We encourage policy makers to work to ensure such investment is unfettered and that Texas is able to capitalize on innovation to fuel additional job growth, business expansion and investment.

SUPPORT: Continuation of Texas Enterprise Fund at an increased level that keeps Texas competitive with other states.

SUPPORT: Continuation and amendment of the Ch. 313 tax code to enable Texas to compete for major, capital intensive projects with other states.

SUPPORT: Local control of property taxation decisions and appraisals.

OPPOSE: Any legislation that would result in a “split roll” between residential and business property taxation.

SUPPORT: Continued increases in sales tax rebate incentives for broadband, wireless, cable and telecommunications materials and equipment to incent investment while attracting and retaining Texas businesses.

OPPOSE: Any bill that would be discriminatory or otherwise damage Texas’ reputation as a “business-friendly” State.

TRANSPORTATION

SUPPORT: Continuing the policy of no diversions from the Highway Fund.

SUPPORT: High-speed rail and the regulatory changes necessary to grant TxDOT legal authority to implement and regulate high-speed rail projects.

SUPPORT: Continuation of eminent domain authority and related tools to allow planning and development of new and/or expanded transportation corridors including high speed rail, commuter rail, freight rail and highways.

SUPPORT: All tools necessary for successful construction of transportation projects including toll roads, tolled managed lanes, design build, concessions and any other financing avenues available.

SUPPORT: An update in transportation funding formulas to reflect current data and work with Texas Transportation Commissioners at the Federal level to accomplish this.

SUPPORT: Utilize revenue generated from comprehensive tax reform to address structural inequities in the federal transportation formulas. Educate Congress that when the current authorization bill expires at the end of Fiscal Year 2020, the funding formulas will be 15 years old and based on population data that is 20 years old. Transportation funding should be directed to states based on current data, current lane miles, and current population information reflecting the explosive growth of states and cities in several regions of the country.

WATER

SUPPORT: Streamlining state and federal processes for environmental permitting and Federal Section 404/401 water certification.

SUPPORT: Policies to reduce barriers to interbasin transfers.

SUPPORT: The continued use of eminent domain authority for water providers in order to ensure a reliable water supply to growing communities.

OPPOSE: Limitations on the authority of Texas Water Development Board or other water utility entities from exercising their ability to implement water management strategies in the State Water Plan.

EDUCATION

SUPPORT: Programs to enhance the development of Tier One Universities in North Texas, including funding for the Texas Research Incentive Program (TRIP) and for core research support.

SUPPORT: Initiatives to attract more world class researchers to North Texas, including

funding for the Governor's University Research Initiative.

SUPPORT: Measures to advance the objectives of the 60x30 goal established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board with emphasis on improved college readiness for high school graduates and an increased level of postsecondary educational attainment by 2030.

SUPPORT: Increased funding for health related institutions (HRIs), including increasing the current Research Formula match and the graduate medical education (GME) funding formula.

SUPPORT: Increased funding for high quality pre-K and early childhood education for all eligible children.

HEALTH CARE

SUPPORT: Reducing the number of uninsured Texans by securing available federal and state funds to reform and renew Medicaid coverage, thus providing financial relief to hospitals, medical providers and taxpayers.

SUPPORT: Developing and implementing public/private approaches to healthcare coverage improvement and reform that are market-based and capable of addressing the unique needs of Texas.

SUPPORT: Continuation and long-term extension of the Medicaid 1115 Waiver.

SUPPORT: Providing stable and adequate funding for public and private safety net hospitals in the Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) program.