

**Chuck Allen Testimony**  
**House Select Committee on Economic Competitiveness**

Good morning/afternoon. I'd like to thank Chair Cook and Vice Chair Thompson and the other members of the Committee for the opportunity to be here today. My name is Chuck and I'm here today representing the North Texas Commission, of which I serve as Chairman, rather than in my capacity as Managing Director of Government Affairs for American Airlines.

First, I'd like to provide a bit of background on the North Texas Commission. The Commission was established in 1971 and is a public-private partnership dedicated to advancing the vibrancy of the North Texas region.

It's is a regional non-profit consortium of businesses, cities, counties, chambers of commerce, economic development entities and higher education institutions in the North Texas Region totaling more than 200 organizations. The Commission voice is comprehensive in that it represents not only the aforementioned business interests, but local governments as well and it exists to improve the economic vitality,

infrastructure and lifestyle of North Texas by marketing the region, promoting collaboration and advocating on critical issues.

North Texas is a 13-county region of 7.2 million people – and counting, with 1 new person added every 3 minutes and 20 seconds. We're anchored by the cities of Dallas and Fort Worth including 14 cities with a population of more than 100,000 people. Since this organization was formed in 1971, the population of the region has grown by 5 million people – that's greater than today's population in 29 of the 50 states. Geographically, North Texas is 9,000 square miles, larger than the states of New Jersey and Connecticut.

I would like to give you a brief overview of a few of the North Texas Commission's legislative priorities for this year and next year.

The North Texas Commission is in favor of 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. Fortunately, this state has a rich history of doing just that.

The Commission supports local control of property taxation decisions and appraisals, and opposes legislation that would place revenue caps, allow for tax rollbacks or put appraisal caps on local governments as this would affect their ability to finance local priorities and would have an adverse effect on their bond ratings.

We oppose any bill that would be viewed as discriminatory on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual preference or identity that would damage Texas' reputation as a "business-friendly" State. Looking back on this year's session, we were close to following the self-destructive path chosen by another state, that it later repealed after significant economic harm was clearly experienced.

We support continuing the policy of no diversions from the Highway Fund and utilizing all tools necessary for the successful construction of transportation projects including toll roads, tolled managed lanes, design build, concessions and any other financing avenues available.

The Commission also supports increased funding for high quality pre-K and early childhood education for all eligible children.

These are but a few of the legislative priorities for the North Texas Commission, but we believe they are the most important principles of a state that desires sustainable, long-term economic growth, greater business and personal investment, an improved quality of life and a higher standard of living for its citizens.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today. Now, I'm happy to answer any questions you have.

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