



2021 State Legislative Priorities

Highest budget priorities

Maintain sufficient funding in Texas Enterprise Fund - Refresh with adequate funding to keep it competitive for major economic development opportunities.

Transportation - Ensure Legislature fully funds voter-authorized Proposition 1 & Proposition 7 and protects transportation funding that has been awarded by the Texas Transportation Commission for projects in the 2021 Unified Transportation Plan

K-12 - Maintain K-12 per pupil state funding to protect HB 3 investments targeted to improve teacher quality, support Pre-K, early literacy, math proficiency, and improve K-12 learning outcomes to ensure a greater share of Texas students graduate college, career, and or military ready. Preserve HB 3 tax rate compression provisions and reduce recapture impact to allow Central Texas districts to keep a greater share of local tax dollars.

Racial & social equity

Rejecting racism and standing for equality, justice, and respect are essential to a stronger community, a healthier future and a better Central Texas for all. We support policies that aid in overcoming racism and social inequities, including access to employment opportunities, healthcare, education, and affordable housing.

COVID-19

We support legislation that keeps public health at top of mind while providing an environment that allows businesses to continue operations with appropriate preventative measures in place.

Liability - We support legislation that addresses businesses' concerns about liability protections while operating during a pandemic. Specifically, we support safe harbor laws that ensure businesses are held harmless when operated in a good faith effort to comply with government provided COVID protocols. We support legislation that creates a 'restaurant' definition in statute to avoid the type of misclassification that was experienced during the pandemic.



Economic development

Central Texas must focus on emerging technologies and the diversification of our private sector economy.

Reauthorize Chapter 313 Agreements – Maintain critical tool to attract new capital investment to Texas

Maintain sufficient funding in Texas Enterprise Fund – Refresh with adequate funding to keep it competitive for major economic development opportunities.

Maintain Low Taxes – Texas' relatively low tax burden has helped fuel jobs and economic growth. Maintaining lower taxes will be a crucial component to our state's rebound from COVID's economic impact and ensure long-term growth and competitive advantage.

Public Safety – Austin's economy, quality of life, and reputation hinge on the ability and willingness of elected officials, police officers, and community and business leaders to work towards solutions that keep Austin safe, promote tourism for small business prosperity and ensures justice, equality, and respect for all.

Public Order Ordinances – Residents and tourists in Austin should feel safe in our community. We support policies that aid the most vulnerable, including access to social services, behavioral health services and affordable housing, while keeping public safety at top of mind.

Promote a Diverse Workforce – Support non-discrimination legislation that would make the state more competitive for talent, tourism and investment. Oppose legislation that could impact workforce recruitment efforts, complicate human resources administration, or undermine the business community's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Education & workforce

K-12 – Maintain K12 per pupil state funding to protect HB 3 investments targeted to improve teacher quality, support Pre-K, early literacy, math proficiency, and improve K12 learning outcomes to ensure a greater share of Texas students graduate college, career, and or military ready. Preserve HB3 tax rate compression provisions and reduce recapture impact to allow Central Texas districts to keep a greater share of local tax dollars.

Workforce – We support legislation that reskills and upskills the workforce.



Surface transportation

Ensure the Legislature fully funds voter-authorized Proposition 1 & Proposition 7

Allow for All Project Delivery & Funding Tools – Improve ability for local/regional transportation agencies to access private capital by preserving the ability to issue revenue bonds securitized by user fees. Grant local MPOs the authority to determine final project design and financing (including the use of managed lanes).

Telecommunications infrastructure

We support pro-investment, competitively neutral tax and public policy reform that removes barriers to infrastructure deployment, encourages private investment, and expands all high-speed internet services.

We support broadband expansion by exploring opportunities to draw down capital from programs like the FCC's Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, USDA's Broadband ReConnect, and other available funds.

Health care

Reduce the number of uninsured and improve access and affordability of healthcare in Texas, including maintaining telehealth to ensure continued availability of this essential tool that provides increased access to healthcare services for patients.

Mental Health – Support and fund approaches to increase access to mental health services among adult and pediatric populations, including crisis care. Extend Texas Child Mental Health Consortium including the Child Psychiatric Access Network (CPAN) and the Texas Health Child Access Through Telemedicine (TCHAT) Programs.

Technology & innovation

Privacy – To ensure regulatory certainty for business and consumers alike, legislation to protect consumer data privacy should be handled at the federal level in order to provide uniformity and standards throughout the U.S. In absence of a federal standard, the state program should support the following standards:

- Consumer consent processes should take into account the limitations of specific devices and not be overly burdensome or prescriptive to the consumer or technology provider.



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- New privacy laws should provide strong safeguards to consumers while also allowing the industry to continue to innovate. Additionally, new laws should be based upon a uniform set of standards to avoid imposing a patchwork of policies across jurisdictions.
- Specific requirements on data collection, use, or retention should be narrowly focused on personally identifiable, highly sensitive, or proprietary information.
- Privacy laws should be limited to specific practices tied to specific harms.
- Private rights of action, civil penalties, and other tools to encourage litigation should be avoided.
- Privacy laws should apply to government entities.