

2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The 88th Legislature convenes on January 10, 2023. The mission of the Texas Business Leadership Council (TBLC) is to build a more globally competitive Texas. With each new legislative session there is opportunity to create and improve public policy that will promote our competitiveness and overall economic health.

As such, the TBLC will continue advocating for critical issues that our state must address for Texas to continue moving along a positive path. Those issues include education and workforce, economic development, state infrastructure, and cybersecurity policy.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

- Preserve and Fund the Comprehensive School Finance Reform initiatives in HB 3 (86th Legislature).
- Preserve annual assessments, maintain accountability standards, and defend the A-F System in our K-12 public school system.
- Increase support for relevant and rigorous teacher preparation routes.
- Support high-quality public charter schools.
- Bolster middle school college and career advising by strengthening the alignment to high school and postsecondary pathways and requirements through increased professional learning and coordination, aligning endorsements to meta-majors and programs of study, and aligning with industry needs.
- Support equitable access to dual credit, Early College High School, and Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (PTECH), with a focus on increasing the number of students that enroll and earn applicable college credit, degrees, and credentials of value while in Texas high schools.
- Support expanded access to and funding for high-quality virtual and hybrid learning options aligned with the recommendations of the Texas Commission on Virtual Education.
- Advocate for the recommendations of the Texas Commission on Community College Finance that strengthen K12, higher education, and workforce alignment that prepare students for in-demand careers.
- Incentivize attainment of credentials of value and require institutions of higher education to identify stackable credentials of value on readily accessible websites and publications and incorporate these pathways into their advising framework.
- Expand opportunities for paid work-based learning, apprenticeships and other opportunities that provide students with meaningful work experience, and create connected pathways to marketable skills, degrees, and industry recognized credentials.
- Provide statutory authority to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to enforce the Texas Transfer Framework and related initiatives.
- Ensure the Texas Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative promotes the effective expansion of high-quality work-based learning opportunities at scale, including transparent, measurable outcomes that promote lifelong learning and reskilling opportunities for all Texans from secondary students through adult learners.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE (CONT.)

- Appropriate additional funds to support Tri-Agency staffing to ensure effective implementation of Tri-Agency initiatives including data sharing, and to support collaboration among the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Texas Workforce Commission to meet the goals of “Building a Talent Strong Texas.”
- Advance efficiencies in the correctional system in order to enhance second chance hiring options for employers.
- Advocate for increased education and workforce training of incarcerated Texans that will reduce recidivism and benefit employers engaged in second chance hiring.
- Maintain the Texas Dream Act allowing Texans without legal status to pay in-state tuition at state institutions of higher education.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Support a new, modern, and transparent economic development program that will ensure Texas’ economic security, promote technological and manufacturing independence, help solve the supply chain and shortage crisis, and create new capital investments in our communities.
- Maintain a competitive Texas Enterprise Fund with a minimum balance of \$200M for the biennium.
- Strengthen Texas’ Production (Film) Incentive Programs.
- Explore a possible increase to state revenue through the careful and controlled expansion of the entertainment industry in Texas.
- Maintain a tax and regulatory environment that encourages innovation and job growth.
- Enable Independent Practice for Advance Practice Registered Nurses, with a special focus on health professional shortage areas.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

- Support continued fiscal stewardship in managing the corpus of the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT), and continued implementation of projects included in the State Water Plan and financed through SWIFT.
- Support efforts to further develop the state water planning process and implementation of projects resulting from that process.
- Expand agency capacity to allow the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to adequately address state water needs, such as water supply development, flood control mitigation and infrastructure repairs.
- Monitor the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission review of the Texas Water Development Board and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Engage in legislative initiatives resulting from Sunset policy recommendations, as necessary.
- Support legislation related to, and an investment of state fiscal resources in, science necessary to address water challenges facing the state, including Surface Water Availability Models and Groundwater Availability Models.

CYBERSECURITY

- Continue to improve state agency preparedness through legislation that increases cybersecurity preparedness, education, and training throughout state government.
- Support legislation that mitigates cybersecurity risks to election and voting systems.