



Dr. Harrison Keller, Texas Commissioner of Higher Education, opened Spring Meeting discussing credential attainment rates.



Christi Craddick, Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, updated attendees on the state of oil and gas in Texas.



Texas Secretary of State, Jane Nelson, briefed members on the role of her office and election integrity.



President of the Texas Economic Development Corporation, Aaron Demerson, discussed opportunities and challenges for economic growth.



TBLC President Justin Yancy emceed Spring Meeting and Policy Summit where he shared the TBLC's progress.



TBLC Vice President for Policy Kelle Kieschnick giving her first (of many to come) TBLC policy and task force updates.



Rep. Angela Orr, John Kroll, and Rep. Charles Cunningham (left to right) chatting during one of the day's intermissions.



Policy Summit 2024 is our most successful yet with a sold-out crowd of over 150 guests.



TBLC Vice Chairman Nick Serafy delivering welcome remarks at Policy Summit 2024.



Rep. Brad Buckley (left) and Rep. Gary VanDeaver (right) were our 2024 Woody L. Hunt (center) award recipients.



Rep. Buckley after accepting the award discussing the need for High Quality Instructional Materials provided by HB 1605.



Rep. VanDeaver giving remarks on the historic impact of HB 8's outcomes-based funding for our community colleges.



Our event keynote, Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath, discussing the state's efforts to improve student outcomes.



John Dickson, Rep. Giovanni Capriglione, Katharine McAden, and Chris Luce (left to right) served on the "Leveraging AI for a Prosperous Texas" panel where they talked about what the future holds for incorporating artificial intelligence into regular business practices and the policy needs to get it right.



Bryan Ashton, TBLC Members Renard Johnson and Debra Chromy, plus Kristin Boyer, Jenny Achilles, and Justin Yancy (left to right).



Former TBLC Chairman, Gay Gaddis, participating in Q&A with state leaders.



A huge thank you to all of our Policy Summit 2024 sponsors!



Rep. Mike Schofield was one of several legislators who joined us for our annual Policy Summit.



TBLC Member Zach Walker, Managing Partner of ATX Defense.



SPRING MEETING & POLICY SUMMIT 2024 RECAP

On March 27, 2024 the Texas Business Leadership Council (TBLC) held its 2024 Spring Meeting in conjunction with its 9th annual Policy Summit. The Spring Meeting opened with **TBLC President Justin Yancy** providing a brief introduction to the first segment, “Competitive Texas: Voices Leading the Charge,” featuring a series of briefings from state leaders including **Texas Commissioner of Higher Education Harrison Keller, Texas Railroad Commission Chairman Christi Craddick, Texas Secretary of State Jane Nelson,** and **Texas Economic Development Corporation President and CEO, Aaron Demerson.**

Dr. Keller highlighted the significant steps the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has taken to support implementation of House Bill 8’s outcomes-based funding formula. He also touched on the agency’s priorities for 2024-25 including making financial aid more predictable and more support for career advising. Chairman Craddick discussed Texas’ competitive advantage in the energy sector globally and efforts to address federal policies that are hindering this. Secretary Nelson discussed the actions her office is taking to ensure election integrity across the state. She also spoke about her recent trips to India and the United Kingdom with Governor Abbott promoting trade relations and the significant role Texas business leaders play in our state. Aaron Demerson echoed this in his comments and noted that Texas is the top state for job creation, exports and foreign direct investments. He attributed Texas’ success to bringing together the worlds of workforce, economic development and education coupled with elected leadership that gets it. Justin closed out the Spring Meeting with a discussion about TBLC priorities for the year ahead including increasing membership and more expansive policy work with the hiring of **Vice President of Policy, Kelle Kieschnick.** Kelle discussed the reboot of task force meetings and advocacy efforts at the Capitol.

The TBLC then transitioned from our private Spring Meeting to our public event, Policy Summit 2024. **TBLC Vice Chairman Nick Serafy** of **Proficiency Testing Service** provided welcoming remarks before transitioning to the presentation of the Woody L. Hunt Legislative Leadership Award. TBLC member emeritus **Woody L. Hunt** of **Hunt Companies, Inc.** presented the award to **Rep. Brad Buckley** and **Rep. Gary VanDeaver** for their leadership in passing HB 1605 and HB 8 respectively during the 88th Legislature, ensuring access to high quality instructional materials in public schools and transforming community college finance. Rep. VanDeaver spoke about the generational change that HB 8 provides for Texas families through postsecondary educational opportunities. Rep. Buckley discussed how providing high quality instructional materials will improve student outcomes and better support Texas teachers.

Following the award presentation, we were honored to be joined by **Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath** during lunch. Commissioner Morath’s keynote address highlighted efforts the state is making to better serve students. The Teacher Incentive Allotment provides state funding to pay teachers based on effectiveness and helps to retain the best educators. College, career and military readiness is being bolstered by the increased access to dual credit that HB 8 provides. He also discussed how high quality instructional materials and monitoring district performance with school ratings have both been shown to improve student outcomes. After lunch TBLC member **John Dickson** of **Bytewhisper Security** moderated a panel entitled “Leveraging AI for a Prosperous Texas” that discussed the opportunities that artificial intelligence provides to businesses and the workforce, as well as the need for guardrails to protect against inappropriate uses. The panel featured **Rep. Giovanni Capriglione** and TBLC members **Cris Luce** of **SmartSort Technologies** and **Katharine McAden** of **Google.**

The TBLC hosted 156 guests, a “sell-out” crowd including **Rep. Charles Cunningham, Rep. Angelia Orr** and **Rep. Mike Schofield.** Media covered the event from the Texas Tribune, and fundraising goals were smashed making Policy Summit 2024 our most successful yet.