Chairman Buckley and Members of the House Committee on Public Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 8. Texas Business Leadership Council (TBLC) is a statewide, nonpartisan network of business leaders working to build a more globally competitive Texas.

Texas is the number one state for job creation, and we attract more corporate relocations and business expansions than any other state. This is a testament to your pro-growth legislation, but it begs the question, what are we doing to ensure that our students are equipped to be successful in these new jobs?

An effective education system facilitates a robust talent pipeline that drives a vibrant economy. It is critical for Texas to have a transparent academic accountability system supported by a modern assessment model that prioritizes student learning to ensure we are providing a strong fundamental education so that all young Texans can take advantage of the great opportunities available in our state.

Businesses depend on an accountability system to make informed decisions about where to invest, expand, and hire. Without consistent accountability ratings, we lose a key tool in evaluating workforce readiness and long-term economic viability in communities across our state.

To that end, **HB 8 ensures the consistent release of annual ratings** and assessment results. In addition to supporting the business community in economic development decisions, it will empower the Legislature and taxpayers to monitor policy implementation and return on investment to drive student achievement and adjust course where needed to improve Texas's national ranking for public education.

Additionally, **HB 8 replaces STAAR with a shorter, smarter, and more instructionally supportive system based on state academic standards** by 2027-28 that will ensure students are learning materials that **align with the TEKS and our values as a state**. Through-year testing options will provide immediate, actionable data to support instruction improvement.

HB 8 provides meaningful change to the existing assessment regime by eliminating unnecessary benchmarks to free up more time for high-quality instruction. It's estimated **this could cut testing by as much as 15-30 hours per student**. Further, it

codifies the existing teacher review committee so that **all questions are vetted by Texas educators** to ensure each item is fair, on grade level, reflects the TEKS and valuable for guiding instruction.

**HB 8 empowers parents by streamlining access to test results and providing tools to accelerate learning**. Results must be available within two business days after the administration window and include diagnostic reports with instructional strategies for teachers and parents.

We appreciate the move away from introducing new indicators that run the risk of inflating ratings and obscuring academic outcomes. HB 8 ensures that we **maintain clarity, transparency and rigor** in the A-F system as well as a **focus on closing achievement gaps** so that all Texas students can maximize their potential.

We commend Chairman Buckley for his leadership and the steps this bill takes to strengthen public education in Texas. A strong accountability system isn't only about school performance—it's about the future of Texas. It's about ensuring that every student graduates prepared for success. It's about ensuring businesses have the skilled workforce necessary to drive innovation and economic growth. And it's about keeping Texas the best place to do business in the country.

Thank you to each of you for everything you do for Texas students.


Respectfully,

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