



March 25, 2025

To: House Higher Education Committee
Re: Public testimony FOR HB 2110

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair Howard and Members,

The Texas Business Leadership Council appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of the committee substitute to House Bill 2110. We are a non-partisan network of business leaders advancing policies to support a more globally competitive Texas.

We currently have a skills gap due to low postsecondary attainment that is putting a strain on our workforce. Less than 25% of students earn a postsecondary credential by the age of 24 yet it is estimated that over 60% of Texas jobs will require a credential beyond high school by 2031.¹ That's not good enough to support our Texas economy.

By strengthening House Bill 8 (88R), the committee substitute to HB 2110 supports the "all of the above" approach we need to increase postsecondary attainment including advanced degrees as well as workforce credentials as highlighted by Governor Abbott's emergency item to expand access to career training opportunities.

¹ [Texas Talent Trajectory \(T3\)](#), 8th Grade Cohort Data: 2013 (2024); Carnevale, A.P et al. (2023), [After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education, and Training Requirements through 2031](#), Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce.

We applaud the **expansion of fundable outcomes to include transfers to private 4-year institutions** to reward community colleges for the investments they have made in the success of these students. The workforce needs more students to be on a path to an advanced degree whether it is via a public or private institution.

The committee substitute also provides **more clarity on eligibility for the Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST)** program which has been a major success to date with dual credit participation up by 22% statewide. Based on historical trends, this will lead to an increase in students completing postsecondary programs.

The committee substitute also **takes important steps to strengthen the credential of value methodology** by shortening the time period used to calculate ROI for a student's investment in their education. Additionally, it **utilizes the state's self-sustaining wage** determined by the Texas Workforce Commission as the threshold for determining whether a program is a credential of value which **reflects the goals of the Community College Finance Commission to increase access to good-paying jobs**. Enhanced workforce data collection and **regional workforce assessments will help to better align programs with local labor market demands and empower parents and students** to make more informed decisions about future education and career opportunities.

We have seen firsthand the impact of HB 8 (88R) through the **Texas Workforce Partnership Initiative**, a national program that the Texas Business Leadership Council proudly supports in partnership with Texas Association of Community Colleges, the Business Roundtable, and Business-Higher Education Forum. This initiative focuses on developing credentials of value aligned with business needs,

expanding work-based learning opportunities, and accelerating access to competitive, ready-to-work learners with in-demand skills.

Through the Texas Workforce Partnership Initiative, we have witnessed colleges' positive response to outcomes incentives by deepening their partnerships with the business community and creating or updating credentials based on industry input so that students attain the skills needed for success in today's workforce.

We commend Representative VanDeaver for his leadership and the committee for your efforts to increase postsecondary attainment this session. It is critical that we continue the momentum created by HB 8 (88R) with the steps that the committee substitute to **HB 2110** takes to strengthen it, **supporting the continued economic success of our state and a more globally competitive Texas.**

Respectfully,

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