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**Business Leader and Philanthropist L. Frederick "Rick" Francis Recognized at 13th Annual Richard W. Weekley Public Policy Leadership Award Dinner in El Paso**

EL PASO – On Thursday, November 19, the Texas Business Leadership Council (TBLC) recognized El Paso business leader and philanthropist, L. Frederick "Rick" Francis, with its annual honor, the Richard W. Weekley Public Policy Leadership Award.

The TBLC's Richard W. Weekley Public Policy Leadership Award was created in 2014 to celebrate the organization's 20th anniversary. The award acknowledges the invaluable contributions made by business leaders in developing sound public policy for the benefit of the State of Texas and its citizens. Mr. Francis' public service spans higher education, healthcare, and community impact, reflecting his longstanding commitment to El Paso and the Lone Star State.

"Rick Francis represents the kind of business leadership this award was created to recognize. Throughout his career, he has consistently stepped forward to serve his community and our state, bringing his experience, judgment, and commitment to important work in higher education, healthcare, economic development, and civic life," said Justin Yancy, President and CEO of the Texas Business Leadership Council. "The TBLC is proud to recognize Rick's extraordinary record of service and leadership with our 2026 Richard W. Weekley Public Policy Leadership Award."

Regarding the award, Francis said, "It's truly an honor to receive the Richard W. Weekley Public Policy Leadership Award from the Texas Business Leadership Council. This recognition reflects the work of many dedicated people who share a commitment to investing in the future prosperity of El Paso and Texas."

About L. Frederick "Rick" Francis:

L. Frederick "Rick" Francis is Chairman of the Board and CEO of WestStar Bank Holding Company, Inc. and Executive Chairman of WestStar Bank. Additionally, he is the Chairman of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center – El Paso President's Development Council and the President of the Pioneer Association of El Paso County; a member and past Chairman of the Medical Center of the Americas Foundation and Paso del Norte Community Foundation, member of the Hospitals of Providence and has served the Governing Board in multiple capacities since 1996, including Chairman at the Transmountain, Memorial and Sierra Campuses.

Mr. Francis served on the Board of Regents for Texas Tech University System (2003 - 2019) and served two terms as Chairman; and the past-Chairman of the El Paso Chamber Foundation. He served on the Executive Committee for the Texas Hospital Trustees, the board of Western Refining, Inc., the Community Depository Institutions Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and the Community Bankers Council of the American Bankers Association. Mr. Francis served as president of Area 5 (Rocky Mountain States) Boy Scouts of America, the Young Presidents Organization, the Yucca Council Boy Scouts of America, the Sunturians, and Crime Stoppers of El Paso. Mr. Francis has been active with the Business Advisory Council at El Paso Community College, the Rotary Club of El Paso,

the Better Business Bureau, the Borderplex Alliance, Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce, and the Texas Business Leadership Council.

In 1996, Mr. Francis was honored as a "Silver Beaver" by the Boy Scouts of America and, in 2001, received the Dean's Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. In 2005, he was named "Outstanding Ex" by Coronado High School and "Distinguished Alumni" by the Jerry S. Rawls College of Business at Texas Tech University in 2008. In 2007, Rick and his wife, Ginger, were named El Paso's "Philanthropists of the Year" by the Association of Fundraising Professionals. He was named "El Pasoan of the Year" by El Paso Inc., inducted into the El Paso Business Hall of Fame, and inducted into the El Paso County Hall of Honor by the El Paso County Historical Society.

He is a graduate of Texas Tech University (BBA Finance), the Texas Tech School of Banking, and the Southwestern Graduate School of Banking conducted at Southern Methodist University.

About Texas Business Leadership Council:

The Texas Business Leadership Council is a network of Texas-based CEOs and senior business executives who advance a long-term vision of a prosperous Texas in a globally competitive business environment.

*Photo: From L to R: Dale Young, Woody Hunt, Richard "Dick" Weekley, Rick Francis, Ginger Francis, and Paul Foster*

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