

Fort Bend County Business Collaborative

2023 Legislative Agenda



LOCAL CONTROL

- Oppose additional property tax and revenue cap legislation and exclude and exempt economic development incentives from property/revenue tax calculations as related to existing property tax and revenue cap law.
- Support expansion of annexation powers at municipal government level when conditions prove favorable to both municipal and extraterritorial parties.
- Support local governments, public private partnerships, and companies with contracts to local governments to lobby state and federal government.
- Support cities right to determine permitting guidelines within its jurisdiction.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Support anti-crime initiatives that focus on the victim over offenders. Support limitations on PR bail for any felony offenses and for repeat misdemeanor offenses.
- Support money for pilot program in Fort Bend County to develop a jail diversion program to serve those afflicted with mental health disabilities who are in the criminal justice system.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Oppose any efforts to erode or restrict use of current economic development tools including but not limited to economic development sales tax corporations (Type 4A and 4B), tax abatement (Chapter 312), Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones, the Freeport Tax Exemption, Hotel Occupancy Tax, the Texas Enterprise Zone Program, and finally ensure reauthorization of Chapter 380 and 381 (scheduled to sunset) this session.
- Support efforts to provide an incentive mechanism for school property relief tax for large scale capital investment projects.
- Support a state-wide plan to maximize inland and sea ports to advance economic development opportunities and strengthen state supply chain channels.

HEALTHCARE

- Support incentivizing students in health care professional studies at universities and colleges and existing health care workers to offset shortage of health care professionals in the workforce.
- Support funding to extend remote and telehealth services for Medicaid patients, particularly in patient monitoring, to better control cost and patient outcomes.
- Support maintaining funding levels for mental health services.
- Support maintaining and fully funding the Medicaid shortfalls.
- Support maintaining funding for a safety net for trauma and rural hospitals.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

- Support additional funding for community and technical colleges and university systems and develop funding models that support workforce training tied to industry needs.
- Support revising the state testing and accountability system to better reflect more metrics than just one test on one day. Additionally, the current A-F system hurts the housing market with misinformation regarding school performance.
- Support fully funding the public-school finance system. A high-quality and well-funded public education system is essential to a strong economy and an educated workforce.
- Support continued funding and policies that incentivize weighted funding for career and technology pathways. Including loosening certification requirements for career professionals to partner with local school districts.
- Support diversifying access to state workforce dollars to include innovative local approved programs and projects.
- Oppose policy that prevents school districts from selling land/buildings on the open market without first offering the property to charter schools.
- Support the University of Houston's legislative priorities including the establishment of a permanent state-supported endowment to benefit UH's goals of elevating itself to a top ranked public university; state-support institutional enhancement contributions and base funding; and an additional building in Katy to expand academic programs for both UH and UHV.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Support replenishing the Infrastructure/Flood Fund to support expansion of vital infrastructure projects at the level of or greater than \$700 million (as funded in the past).
- Support policy and funding for expanded broadband and 5G wireless deployment that induces and/or increases high speed data connectivity to the home in urban, suburban and rural communities.
- Support developing resiliency for the power grid to avoid power shortages and outages.
- Support leveraging state funding with federal transportation dollars to support projects in Fort Bend County that enhance safety, support freight corridors, and serve as evacuation routes for natural disasters (Highway36A extension, Grand Parkway completion, Fort Bend Toll Road bridge across the Brazos).
- Support local allocation and the ability for local entities to compete for federal grants in lieu of state allocations and state pass thru for Water, and Storm Water Funds.
- Support allocating a portion of TWDB funding for local planning grants and studies.
- Support the development and implementation of a user fee for vehicles using alternative fuels.