ANNUAL REPORT
2021
TEXAS 2036
In travels across the state, meetings with policy experts, and surveys of Texas voters, we’re hearing a growing concern about the future of Texas. Texans want to work together to make this state the best place in the world to live and work.

Texas 2036’s efforts and accomplishments in 2021 show what Texans can do when they rally around innovative, data-driven policies that help the state today and for generations to come.
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Dear Friends and Fellow Texans,

The past year vividly showed why the work of Texas 2036 is so important to the future of this state.

Through policy leadership and landmark data and research initiatives, we helped bring Texans together, across ideological divides, to implement effective solutions to the very real and pressing challenges Texas faces.

On issues like education, health, workforce, broadband access, and government finance, Texas 2036 has established itself as a go-to resource on the core governance questions that are shaping Texas’ future. These issues don’t necessarily draw headlines, but they are essential to maintaining quality of life and economic growth in the Lone Star State.

To this end, we supported 45 bills that became state law with bipartisan backing. These results drive home the importance of data-driven efforts and policies focused on improving the lives of all Texans. Underneath those numbers is a success story made possible by the generous support of donors, ongoing collaborations with numerous partners across the state, and the dedicated expertise of the Texas 2036 team.

Texas’ bicentennial is less than 14 years and a mere seven legislative sessions away. At Texas 2036, we are more optimistic than ever that our state will conquer the challenges it faces—and leverage its vast resources, entrepreneurial spirit, and diverse and growing population—to lead our nation and world into the future.

We have work to do—the journey will not be easy—but we have no doubt that Texans will band together to make it. As you see the work that Texas 2036 accomplished in 2021, we know you will be as proud and optimistic as we are.

Together, we are forging solutions for the future of Texas.

Onward,

Margaret Spellings
President and Chief Executive Officer

Tom Luce
Founder and Chairman of the Board

45
Bipartisan bills backed by Texas 2036 that became state law in 2021.
PEOPLE

Smart and accomplished people anchor Texas 2036’s work. The organization’s 36-member board represents the full spectrum of Texas’ diverse communities, geography, industries, and political perspectives. Based on their shared love for the state, they have worked together to find common ground and sensible solutions for the issues that matter most to Texas’ future prosperity and success.

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2021 STAFF

In 2021, Texas 2036’s team—and its ability to make an impact—grew dramatically. There are now 28 staff members with a policy team that’s almost doubled in size in one year.

The skilled and versatile staff at Texas 2036 share a profound respect for their state, a tenacious optimism for its future, and a deep understanding of how data drives sustainable progress.

NOTE: Several locations are home to multiple board members and/or staff
FORGING A NEW PATH

On March 2, 2036, Texas will turn 200. If current trends continue, our population is expected to grow to 40 million by the time we celebrate our bicentennial. These new Texans bring a wealth of new opportunities, but a fast-growing population also presents potentially huge challenges that could slow the state’s future prosperity.

Texas 2036 was created to shine a light on the issues shaping Texas’ future. We bring people together to develop data-driven solutions that lead to lasting, meaningful change in critical policy areas such as education and workforce, health, infrastructure, natural resources, justice and safety, and government performance.

In 2021, Texas 2036 proffered datasets on health, workforce, and weather trends; produced innovative research on the state’s economic outlook and its school finance system; and partnered with experts and stakeholders across the state, building support for legislation that advanced goals across key policy areas in the Texas 2036 Strategic Framework.

That Framework culminated more than two years of research and analysis on core governance issues that will shape Texas’ quality-of-life and economic prosperity.

Guided by the goals and data laid out in the Strategic Framework, Texas 2036 is forging a future in which tomorrow’s Texans can create their own legacies of prosperity and ingenuity.

That’s why so many businesses, foundations, and people like you have invested in Texas 2036’s mission, vision, and approach. Thank you for coming together with other public-spirited Texans to create and implement high-impact policies that will make Texas the best place to live and work.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

DATA AND RESEARCH

At Texas 2036, data and research are the root of everything we do—facts and figures are the foundation of the impactful, sustainable, and high-quality policy solutions that we advocate for and help implement. 2021 saw the launch of several successful data projects and the release of decisive research that will continue to influence state leaders’ decisions in 2022 and beyond:

- One of Texas 2036’s most successful data products to date, the Health Coverage Policy Explorer, directly informed Senate Bill (SB) 1296. This landmark legislation will increase federal health funding flowing to Texas by $1 billion and will increase health care coverage for roughly 200,000 more Texans by creating an insurance premium rate review process at the Texas Department of Insurance for individual marketplace health insurance plans.

- Changing World Oil Markets and the Texas Economy, released in partnership with the Center for Houston’s Future, modeled economic and state budgetary impacts of various oil price scenarios. Data from this report informed SB 1232, which is anticipated to increase investment fund returns for education by more than $100 million per year. The legislation streamlines the Permanent School Fund’s investment management of oil and gas royalties.

- The bi-annual Texas Voter Poll provided invaluable insights into the preferences and priorities of Texas voters, driving policy strategies at Texas 2036 and decisions in the Legislature.

- The Health Evaluation of Life Phases (HELP) tool, developed in collaboration with the Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin, examines the health of Texans throughout their lives—from infancy to old age. This innovative tool provides granular data down to the county level, allowing communities to better understand their own health.

- The landmark Texas COVID-19 Data Resource was expanded to include vaccine data. Built to fill a critical need early in the pandemic, the dashboard was closed in 2022, reflecting the state’s recovery from the pandemic and the evolution of the state’s reporting capabilities.

- The Aim Hire Texas regional workforce dashboard offers an unprecedented look at Texas’ education-to-workforce pipeline, assembling several state and federal data sets and analyses. This tool provides objective, needed insight into Texas’ current and future education and workforce needs across different regions of the state.

- And the Extreme Weather Trends report, produced in cooperation with the Office of the State Climatologist at Texas A&M University, examines Texas’ vulnerability to extreme weather and emerging climatic events.

Looking ahead to 2022, Texas 2036 is poised to launch new data resources that will drive key policy conversations across the state. Expected offerings include a Community College Finance Simulator, Hospital Pricing Transparency Report, and a platform conveying vital data on education and workforce in much more accessible ways. We will also refresh and reorganize the Texas 2036 Strategic Framework, putting into action lessons learned since 2020.
LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

During the 2021 legislative session, Texas 2036’s policy development was guided by the pursuit of high-yield investments, data-informed strategies, nonpartisan solutions, and a priority focus on areas in which Texas 2036 is uniquely positioned to bring expertise.

Texas 2036’s legislative agenda in 2021 centered on:

- **Education**, with a focus on COVID-related learning loss.
- **Workforce**, with a focus on better aligning state education initiatives to meet future workforce needs.
- **Health and Health Care**, with a focus on improving coverage, affordability, and access to care.
- **Digital Connectivity**, with a focus on improving state broadband planning, funding, and coordination.
- **Government Performance**, with a focus on government technology and data modernization.
- **Budget Prioritization**, with a focus on the strategic use of federal stimulus funds.

The above legislative reports detail Texas 2036’s contributions and achievements related to specific bills and priority policy areas.

SPOTLIGHT

From 2020 to 2021, Congress allocated a total of $117.5 billion in federal stimulus funding to Texas. In September, we released a Federal Funds Playbook that provided comprehensive guidance to policymakers on how and where to invest this once-in-a-generation financial windfall based on the following principles.

- **Target Long-Term Solutions**: Pursue prudent, data-driven investments that will positively impact the state for decades to come and reduce future costs.
- **Coordinate Efforts to Maximize Impact**: Governments, agencies, and businesses can make the biggest difference by working together.
- **Seek Financial Sustainability**: These dollars represent a temporary cash infusion, so the primary focus should be on one-time expenses, including investments that will either generate future revenues or offset future costs.
Throughout the 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, Texas 2036’s policy team tracked and engaged on bills across six priority areas in our legislative agenda.

Launched the Health Evaluation of Life Phases (HELP) tool in collaboration with Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin, a Lone Star State data resource to illustrate risk factors, health conditions, and impactful policy solutions for each life phase.

Released Changing World Oil Markets and the Texas Economy, new research by Texas 2036 and the Center for Houston’s Future on oil markets’ expected impacts on Texas.

Launched the Health Coverage Policy Explorer tool to allow Texans to explore the costs, calculations, and effectiveness of 500+ health care coverage policy scenarios.

First Voter Opinion Poll
Texas 2036’s engagement continued as the 87th Legislature held three special sessions.

1st Special Session
2nd Special Session
3rd Special Session

Launched the Health Evaluation of Life Phases (HELP) tool in collaboration with Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin, a Lone Star State data resource to illustrate risk factors, health conditions, and impactful policy solutions for each life phase.

Launched the Texas Road Show, which made its first stops in San Antonio, the Rio Grande Valley, Houston, and Corpus Christi.

Convened experts and thought leaders for Policy Advisory Group meetings, engagements, and surveys across 11 policy topics to share their insights and input on Texas 2036’s policy, data, and research priorities and initiatives.

Released the Extreme Weather in Texas, 1900–2036, based on research by the Texas State Climatologist, and a team of Texas A&M University and Texas 2036 researchers.

Released the Texas Road Show, which made its first stops in San Antonio, the Rio Grande Valley, Houston, and Corpus Christi.

Launched the Aim Hire Texas Regional Workforce Dashboard that allows Texans to explore the current and future workforce across Texas’ 24 workforce development areas.

Released the Texas Opportunities to Leverage Federal Stimulus Funds playbook with guidance on where to invest and what to avoid with the rare $117.5 billion influx of funding.

Second Voter Opinion Poll

First Voter Opinion Poll
EN G A G E M E N T

Stakeholder and community engagement is a year-round exercise for Texas 2036, starting long before the Legislature convenes—and continuing well after it adjourns. These coalitions, partnerships, Policy Advisory Groups, presentations, polls, and the Texas Road Show directly inform policy and research efforts.

TEXAS VOTER POLL

Texas 2036 is focused on Texans’ attitudes about the future of their state on a wide variety of topics. We gauge those attitudes, in part, through public opinion research, polling a representative sampling of Texas’ diverse voter base. The results help Texas 2036 set priorities, ensure strong public support for various initiatives, and provide a critical complement to our engagement of experts and stakeholders.

We conducted two voter polls in 2021—releasing the data and highlights in January and September. In each instance, we reached more than 1,000 Texas voters. These polls helped identify and track distinct shifts in opinion that have implications for policies at the Capitol and beyond.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>JAN 2020</th>
<th>JAN 2021</th>
<th>SEP 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voters who are extremely or very concerned about the future of Texas</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned about the future of Texas</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texans better off than they had been the year before</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texans worse off than they had been the year before</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Texas is better off than year before</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Texas is worse off than year before</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results demonstrate a growing concern across a majority of voters about the future of our state, and indicate growing demand for common-sense, bipartisan solutions to critical issues linked to the state’s future prosperity.

“The truth is that while Texas faces considerable challenges, the state also has great resources to meet them—and the poll shows strong support for practical solutions to a range of challenges facing Texas.

“Voters want leaders to set ambitious goals and deploy innovative solutions that maximize the return on Texans’ investment and create a firm foundation for future generations.”

– Ron Kirk and Marc Watts
Texas 2036 Board Members and Legislative Committee Co-Chairs
Feb. 2021 Opinion Editorial

“[Texas 2036] found a vast majority of voters surveyed support targeting long-term, long overdue infrastructure solutions—from delivering cleaner drinking water to expanding broadband internet access to upgrading state parks.”

– Dallas Morning News
Editorial Board
Sept. 2021 Editorial
COALITIONS

Stakeholder engagement creates results. Texas 2036 is a leader and coordinator of two major coalitions that convene major players and amplify diverse voices to achieve common goals:

*Aim Hire Texas*
Texas 2036 co-founded and co-leads Aim Hire Texas, a statewide coalition of more than 40 employers, nonprofits, and education and training providers. In 2021, the coalition successfully supported House Bill 3767, which improved education and workforce systems alignment.

*Digital Texas*
Texas 2036 was proud to play a leading role in the broadband debate, co-founding the Digital Texas coalition that brings together more than 40 community-based organizations for the common goal of increasing broadband access, adoption, and literacy in the state.

POLICY ADVISORY GROUPS

Texas 2036 invited more than 400 subject matter and policy experts to participate in exclusive meetings, a streamlined survey, and targeted individual conversations about long-term policy issues. We collected feedback from key stakeholders and leaders, and are using it to inform research, data, and policy priorities and initiatives. These engagements allow us to share data and ideas, assess emerging strategies, and develop plans and strategies to achieve high-impact and enduring policy outcomes.

“Digital Texas brings together voices from across the state on the ‘demand side’ of the broadband equation, helping the state to better organize and finance efforts to close the digital divide.”

– A.J. Rodriguez
Executive Vice President

“Texas 2036 is clearly establishing itself as a hub that brings together inspired thinkers and experts to spur new ideas and approaches to policy.”

– John Hryhorchuk
Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy
TEXAS ROAD SHOW

2021 saw the first stops on Texas 2036’s Texas Road Show. These events brought together local and state officials, business leaders, academics and students, donors, and an array of other partners and stakeholders in four diverse regions of Texas. Each stop sparked an exciting, creative conversation about issues facing Texas and its individual communities—and about potential strategies to address those issues.

- San Antonio
- The Rio Grande Valley (McAllen, Edinburg, Weslaco, Harlingen, and Brownsville)
- Houston and North Houston
- Corpus Christi and Sinton

In 2022, the Texas Road Show goes on with stops in El Paso, Texarkana, Nacogdoches, Lufkin, Lubbock, Amarillo, Midland, Odessa, Longview, Tyler, and Beaumont and Port Arthur.

“I am a proud supporter of Texas 2036 and would encourage each of you to engage and participate in the important work Texas 2036 is doing for our state and our future.”

– Val LaMantia  
Texas 2036 Board Member  
Sept. 2021 Road Show Event
PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic partnerships are key to Texas 2036’s success—and essential to bringing about positive policy changes in Texas. In 2021, we cultivated and strengthened partnerships with groups and entities across the Lone Star State, including:

- Center for Houston’s Future
- Center for Public Finance at Rice University’s Baker Institute for Public Policy
- The Commit Partnership
- Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin
- It’s Time Texas
- Metro 8 Chambers of Commerce
- Office of the State Climatologist at Texas A&M University
- Texas Association of Business
- Texas Cultural Trust
- Texas Demographic Center
- Texas Rural Funders
- The Institute for Urban Policy Research at the University of Texas at Dallas
- Texas Lyceum
- Urban Education Institute at The University of Texas at San Antonio
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- Other business organizations and chambers of commerce from across the state

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

In 2021:

- Texas 2036’s work and people generated more than 1,200 mentions in publications and broadcasts at the local, state, and national levels.
- Tweets had more than 1.2 million impressions, up 1,400% from 2020, and the quality of engagement was exceptional—key legislators and major media outlets amplified Texas 2036’s work and messages regarding critical issues and current events.
- We authored 98 blog articles on an array of timely topics that reflect the organization’s policy pillars, priority areas, and publications, and website visitors spent 67% longer reading posts than in 2020.

Social Media Highlights:

VP of Policy @JohnHryhorchuk talks with @KanikaKling about the unique opportunity federal funds offer Texas to address our state’s immediate and long-term challenges. @TXCapTonight @SpectrumNews1TX #TXlege

In advance of next week’s third special legislative session, we reached out to voters across the state of Texas to find out what they’re thinking. Here’s what we learned.

#txlege #TexasVoterPoll

https://texas2036.org/poll/

Texas has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to solve long-term problems and prepare for the state’s future in a way will benefit the next generations of Texans. Get the playbook here: https://texas2036.org/federalfunds/ #txlege

“In advance of the 2023 legislative session—what many are hoping will become a “workforce session”—it is essential to look at community colleges’ role in workforce development.”

– A.J. Rodriguez & Texas Association of Business President and CEO Glenn Hamer
Nov. 2021 Opinion Editorial

“Texas’ reliance on the oil and gas industry could jeopardize up to $29 billion in public school funding over the next 15 years, according to a new study by two nonprofit policy groups.”

– Texas 2036 & Center for Houston’s Future
March 2021 Houston Chronicle Article

“Texas’ weather is growing more extreme, according to a new study released Thursday by the Texas State Climatologist, Texas A&M University, and Texas 2036—and recent polling shows that Texans are already feeling the damaging effects.”

– Texas 2036 & The Office of State Climatologist
Oct. 2021 Press Release
Texas 2036 FY2021 revenue was $17.3M which was comprised of $9.7M in cash received in 2021, $6.9M in pledges payable in 2022 through 2026, and $715,000 recognized for the Federal Paycheck Protection Program.
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Madison Yandell
Sharon Young
Zeynep Young
ZeZorich Family Foundation
At Texas 2036, we’re focused on the fundamentals of governing—issues like education, workforce development, health care, infrastructure, natural resources, and budget stewardship—that will shape our state tomorrow.

We’re working together, thinking long-term in inclusive and collaborative ways, to ensure Texas’ future is as proud and prosperous as its past.

MARGARET SPELLINGS
President and Chief Executive Officer
Texas 2036 is a non-profit organization building long-term, data-driven strategies to secure Texas’ continued prosperity for years to come. We engage Texans and their leaders in an honest conversation about our future, focusing on the big challenges. We offer non-partisan ideas and modern solutions that are grounded in research and data to break through the gridlock on issues that matter most to all Texans. Smart strategies and systematic changes are critical to prepare Texas for the future.

texas2036.org

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