

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: EDUCATION & WORKFORCE



Key Accomplishments: 88th Legislature

From pioneering reforms in community college finance to the strategic expansion of apprenticeship programs and the further alignment of education-to-workforce outcomes, the 88th Legislature made a tangible commitment to the future of Texas.

Texas 2036 has been an instrumental partner in this endeavor, leveraging data-driven, evidence-based policies to support accountability, assessment and transparent systems. These efforts, combined with the billions of dollars in generational investments in education and workforce issues have culminated in a dozen landmark achievements this session. Each one serves as a stepping stone in Texas' journey towards every Texan having the opportunity to earn a family-sustaining wage.

Historic Budget: Generational Investments



\$691 M

for community college
finance reform



\$500 M

for high-quality curriculum



\$3 B

for a new higher education
endowment called the Texas
University Fund

Reforming Community College Finance



This \$691 million investment places Texas at the forefront of national higher education reform by prioritizing proven value in the workforce for community college credential offerings. Combined with significant incentives for such offerings, more Texans will earn the credentials needed for good-paying, in-demand jobs.

House Bill 8
Rep. Vandeaver (R) / Sen. Creighton (R)

Expanding High-Quality Curriculum



High-quality instructional materials have a strong return-on-investment in improving student outcomes, even more so than lowering class size. A \$500 million investment offers these materials to schools and teachers, assisting new teachers with lesson planning while ensuring more rigorous, grade-level instruction in our classrooms.

House Bill 1605
Rep. Buckley (R) / Sen. Creighton (R)

Defending Accountability and Assessments



Assessment and accountability remain primary tools for ensuring that students of all races, incomes and zip codes have equitable access to a high-quality education. Families, school leaders and policymakers deserve strong assessment and accountability systems that prioritize student outcomes, readiness and transparency.

No bills undermining this system have reached the Governor.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: EDUCATION & WORKFORCE



Notable Education & Workforce Legislation



Advanced Math Pathways

Increases enrollment in high-level math courses by requiring districts to offer advanced math classes for high-achieving middle school students, regardless of their background or geographic location.

SB 2124: Sen. Creighton (R) / Rep. Howard (D)



High-Quality Tutoring

Ensures high-quality tutoring requirements remain in place for Texas students, facilitating Texas' continued recovery from the pandemic's impact on student outcomes.

HB 1416: Rep. K. Bell (R) / Sen. Paxton (R)



College, Career, and Military Readiness Study

Requires TEA to study post-secondary outcomes of students and how they correlate to student programming in high school, allowing the state to better inform its course and program offerings.

HB 1: Rep. Bonnen (R) / Sen. Huffman (R)



Rural Pathways Excellence Partnership

Expands options for rural school districts to provide college and career pathways that lead to post-secondary success and earning a family-sustaining wage in their hometown.

HB 2209: Rep. Lozano (R) / Sen. Hinojosa (D)



Workforce Data Modernization

Provides the state with data needed to ensure taxpayer-funded workforce development programs, including those that serve our veterans, are delivering a return-on-investment to Texans.

HB 1703: Rep. Ordaz (D) / Sen. Blanco (D)



Apprenticeship Reporting

Establishes data and analysis needed to expand apprenticeships in emerging and high-demand industries.

HB 4451: Rep. Bhojani (D) / Sen. Flores (R)



Workforce Development Funding

Creates the Lone Star Workforce of the Future Fund with \$5 million to provide Texans with the skills needed to earn a job with a family-sustaining wage.

HB 1755: Rep. Button (R) / Sen. Alvarado (D)



Adult Student Recovery

Provides adult students an opportunity to concurrently earn a high school diploma and a workforce-aligned postsecondary credential.

SB 2139: Sen. Parker (R) / Rep. Longoria (D)



Apprenticeship Funding Coordination

Streamlines and eliminates administrative barriers for apprenticeship and other work-based learning providers to increase the availability of such programs throughout Texas.

HB 1: Rep. Bonnen (R) / Sen. Huffman (R)

Meet the Team



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These bills supported by Texas 2036 have been sent to the Governor pending review and potential signature during the veto period, which lasts until June 18, 2023.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: INFRASTRUCTURE



Key Accomplishments: 88th Legislature

With an eye on a resilient future, the 88th Legislature made a profound commitment to building the Texas of tomorrow. From improving water infrastructure and increasing broadband access, to enhancing state parks and expanding the state's energy portfolio, this session was about laying the groundwork for enduring prosperity and progress.

Texas 2036 seized the opportunity presented by the unprecedented surplus to invest in the state's infrastructure. These efforts resulted in almost \$5 billion in generational investments and a dozen bills that would generate long-term value that will resonate for generations. Each investment signifies a commitment to fostering a robust, thriving Texas that delivers unparalleled opportunities and an enriched quality of life for all Texans.

Historic Budget: Generational Investments

The Legislature made significant, meaningful appropriations towards addressing Texas' long-term infrastructure challenges. Outside of flood and hurricane resiliency, most of the listed funding is contingent on voter approval in the fall.



\$1 B

for water infrastructure and supply



\$1.5 B

for broadband



\$1.1 B

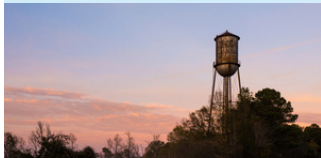
for state parkland acquisition and development



\$1.2 B

for flood and hurricane resiliency

Preparing for Water Needs



Aimed towards repairing aging, deteriorating water systems and creating new water supplies, two new dedicated water funds are in the works thanks to a \$1 billion investment.

Senate Bill 28
Senate Joint Resolution 75
Sen. Perry (R) / Rep. T. King (D)

Bridging the Digital Divide



\$1.5 billion will support expansion of broadband internet service to underserved and unserved areas of the state through a dedicated fund.

House Bill 9
House Joint Resolution 125
Rep. Ashby (R) / Sen. Huffman (R)

Creating New State Parks



To safeguard, improve and create new state parks as the state's population continues to grow, the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund holds the potential to preserve and expand our natural landscapes for future generations.

Senate Bill 1648
Senate Joint Resolution 74
Sen. Parker (R) / Rep. Walle (D)

Expanding More Energy Sources



Given the potential for hydrogen as part of Texas' energy future, new legislation establishes a critical framework for the growth and development of this promising energy sector.

House Bill 2847
Rep. Darby (R) / Sen. Sparks (R)

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: INFRASTRUCTURE



Notable Infrastructure Legislation



Texas Space Commission

Creates the Texas Space Commission and Aerospace Research and Space Economy Consortium, after Texas lawmakers included \$350 million in their budget.

HB 3447: Rep. Bonnen (R) / Sen. Huffman (R)



Flying Vehicles

Reactivates the Advanced Air Mobility Advisory Committee to assess state law and any potential changes needed to facilitate the development of advanced air mobility operation and infrastructure.

SB 2144: Sen. Parker (R) / Rep. Cook (R)



Geothermal Well Ownership

Authorizes a geothermal energy operator to take possession of an abandoned oil or gas well for the purposes of geothermal energy production.

SB 1210: Sen. Blanco (D) / Rep. Guerra (D)



Removing Barriers to Housing Growth

Eases administrative barriers to new housing construction by allowing third parties like engineers and inspectors to review permitting and planning documents when cities are unable to do so within statutorily mandated timelines.

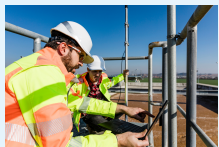
HB 14: Rep. Cody Harris (R) / Sen. Bettencourt (R)



Electric Vehicle Registration Fees

Offsets declining motor vehicle fuels tax payments by requiring electric vehicles to pay a registration fee to help the state continue to fund highway development and maintenance.

SB 505: Sen. Nichols (R) / Rep. Canales (D)



Water Workforce Development

Allows high school students to earn a wastewater operator certification, creating a pathway for students to earn a needed credential for entering a critical workforce sector.

HB 1845: Rep. Metcalf (R) / Sen. Perry (R)



Utility Regulatory Reform

Removes a regulatory disincentive for the consolidation of water and wastewater utilities, enabling better managed utilities to absorb distressed systems and creating better economies of scale for source water, rate base and workforce utilization.

HB 3232: Rep. Rogers (R) / Sen. Perry (R)



Broadband Program Improvements

Updates definitions of broadband, clarifies provisions regarding the state's broadband development map and permits the Broadband Development Office to award grants, financial incentives and low-interest loans for broadband infrastructure projects.

SB 1238: Sen. Nichols (R) / Rep. Ashby (R)

Meet the Team



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INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: HEALTH CARE



Key Accomplishments: 88th Legislature

In bold steps towards a healthier Texas, the 88th Legislature confronted head-on the escalating challenges of health care affordability and access across the state, initiating ambitious reforms to revive and recalibrate our health care markets, while also improving the efficiency and functioning of safety nets.

Texas 2036 focused our expertise on the root causes of these affordability issues and the gaps in health care services this session. Armed with data-driven policies, we supported strategies to enhance market competition, curb excessive pricing and mitigate unsustainable expenditures. Further, the legislation supported by Texas 2036 would extend Medicaid for new mothers. The result is a dozen bills that will help reshape health care markets and fill crucial gaps in coverage, ensuring a brighter, healthier future for Texans.

Revitalizing Healthy Markets



To restore competition to health care markets, this bill prohibits contracts that restricts choice or prevent price transparency. This bill demonstrates overwhelming bipartisan support for market competition and consumer rights.

House Bill 711
Rep. Frank (R) / Sen. Kolkhorst (R)

Empowering Smart Shoppers



To empower Texans who haven't yet hit their deductible, this bill addresses out-of-pocket expenses by helping patients to become savvy health care consumers, regardless of network restrictions.

House Bill 2002
Rep. Oliverson (R) / Sen. Hancock (R)

Improving Billing Transparency



Patients deserve a detailed understanding of the charges they incur. This new billing transparency legislation requires providers to issue itemized, plain-language bills.

Senate Bill 490
Sen. Hughes (R) / Rep. Caroline Harris (R)

Optimizing Health Data



Unlocking the potential of the all-payer claims database will grant researchers access to a wealth of anonymized health care claims data for important research and insights.

House Bill 3414
Rep. Oliverson (R) / Sen. Hancock (R)

Extending Postpartum Medicaid



By extending Medicaid eligibility for pregnant women from two months to 12 months postpartum, Texas moms will be better able to care for their babies and themselves.

House Bill 12
Rep. Rose (D) / Sen. Kolkhorst (R)

Ensuring Affordable Prescription Drugs



To address the skyrocketing cost of medications, Texas will have a new path to import lower cost prescription drugs from Canada.

House Bill 25
Rep. Talarico (D) / Sen. Kolkhorst (R)

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: HEALTH CARE



Notable Health Care Legislation



Expanded Access to Youth Mental Health Services

Creates an innovation matching grant program for community-based initiatives that promote early access and intervention.

SB 26
Sen. Kolkhorst (R)
Rep. Jetton (R)



Medicaid Communication Modernization

Removes barriers to communication with enrollees through modern methods like text messages to provide useful information about enrollment and reenrollment.

HB 2802
Rep. Rose (D)
Sen. Blanco (D)



Emergency Telemedicine Pilot

Restores a pilot program in rural areas for regional trauma resource centers to provide emergency medical services instruction and pre-hospital care instruction to health care providers via telehealth.

HB 617
Rep. Darby (R)
Sen. Alvarado (D)



Non-Medical Barriers to Health

Improves case management for pregnant women on Medicaid by assessing their non-medical health related needs.

HB 1575
Rep. Hull (R)
Sen. Kolkhorst (R)



Insurer Network Directories Improvements

Builds upon prior efforts to create useful provider network directories by expanding the type of providers that must be listed.

SB 1003
Sen. Johnson (D)
Rep. Smithee (R)



Physician Access to Patient Benefit Information

Ensures health care providers have accurate, real-time information regarding a patient's health benefits, including cost-sharing.

HB 4500
Rep. Caroline Harris (R)
Sen. Hughes (R)

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Meet the Team



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INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: JUSTICE & SAFETY



Key Accomplishments: 88th Legislature

With a firm resolve and a forward-looking approach, the 88th Legislature responded to pressing justice and safety issues in Texas. Harnessing the power of data and technology, important enhancements on policing, the judiciary and child welfare were addressed.

Texas 2036 provided vital support, offering a data-driven perspective that supported reshaping the role of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, the state's regulatory body overseeing peace officers. This approach also helped address challenges, such as the judicial court backlogs and outdated child welfare technology, bringing these issues forward to support legislators' efforts. This commitment fueled the progress of six major legislative efforts, which were fortified by millions of dollars in investments.

Historic Budget: Impactful Investments



\$4.6 M

and 19 additional employee positions to support landmark TCOLE Sunset legislation and reforms



\$6 M

to update legacy IT court data collection systems



\$4.3 M

to fund direct IT services for state courts to ensure judiciary can operate efficiently and securely in their day-to-day IT functions



\$2.2 M

to stand up a court appearance text-reminder program



\$931.2 M

to completely eliminate unfunded law enforcement and judicial pension liabilities



\$320K

for IT and data analysis at the Texas Commission on Jail Standards

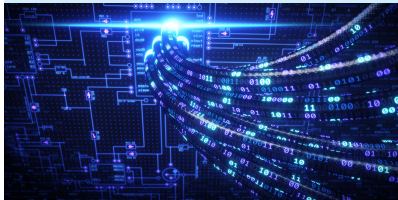
Building Public Confidence in Law Enforcement



Sunset legislation includes multiple reforms fundamentally re-shaping the agency responsible for licensing and regulating peace officers and law enforcement agencies, including repealing problematic "discharge categories" in favor of a new officer misconduct reporting system and a new data infrastructure for officer personnel records and licensing actions.

Senate Bill 1445
Sen. Paxton (R) / Rep. Goldman (R)

Modernizing Child Welfare IT Systems



The Department of Family and Protective Services will report on the funding and timeline requirements needed to modernize the state's child welfare IT system to one that meets federal standards. The report should put the state on the path to upgrade this crucial technology infrastructure, supporting caseworkers and better caring for children.

House Bill 1
Rep. Bonnen (R) / Sen. Huffman (R)

Addressing the Judicial Caseload Backlog



This bill will require the systematic collection of case-level court data to provide a better understanding of what's behind persistent and costly court backlogs. Coupled with appropriations updating the state's legacy IT system, Texas court data will be an asset to the administration of justice, rather than a mere byproduct of the courts.

House Bill 841
Rep. Ordaz (D) / Sen. Middleton (R)

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: JUSTICE & SAFETY



Notable Justice & Safety Legislation



Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies

Requires hundreds of law enforcement agencies to get recognized professional accreditation.

SB 267
Sen. King (R)
Rep. Burrows (R)



Oversight of Higher-Education Programming in Prisons

Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to review and approve degree and certificate programs offered in state prisons.

SB 526
Sen. West (D)
Rep. Cook (R)



Access to Criminal History Information

Allows institutions to pull bulk criminal history to advance criminal justice research.

HB 1184
Rep. Rose (D)
Sen. Johnson (D)



Trial Court Information & Statistics

Requires submission of monthly court-level statistics and the most populous counties to report detailed trial court workload information.

House Bill 1182
Rep. Harless (R)
Sen. Whitmire (D)



New Courts & Judicial Workload Reporting

Creates new courts includes a provision to require regular, public reporting of judicial caseloads and clearance rates for those parts of Texas that need new courts.

House Bill 3474
Rep. Leach (R)
Sen. Hughes (R)

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Meet the Team



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Luis Soberon
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INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE



Key Accomplishments: 88th Legislature

With a historic budget surplus, the 88th Legislature enacted a judicious \$321 billion budget that invests in our state's long-term needs. Texas policymakers leveraged these funds toward strategies that will fuel economic growth, better serve Texas taxpayers and ensure our state remains financially secure into the future.

Backed by a long-term, data-driven approach and a deep understanding of the state budget, Texas 2036 offered essential support to legislative efforts aimed at maximizing the impact of these investments for generations to come. Texas 2036 testified 26 times in legislative appropriations hearings this session, in addition to extensive pre-session budget work, to help provide guidance on how to ensure one-time and continuous investments can promote fiscal sustainability and improved government performance. The resulting budget underscored a judicious stewardship of taxpayer dollars that will underpin a robust and sustainable future for Texas.

Historic Budget: Generational Investments



\$1.9 B

for increased state employee
pay scales over the biennium



\$900 M

for a supplemental lump-sum
payment for Employees
Retirement System unfunded
liabilities over the biennium



\$931.2 M

to eliminate unfunded
law enforcement and
judicial pension liabilities

Ensuring Fiscal Sustainability



With a historic budget surplus, the legislature took prudent steps to ensure that a temporary surplus could finance long-term growth. Prudent actions included buying down unfunded pension liabilities, saving the state billions in future interest payments, as well as creation of endowment and revolving funds for higher education and infrastructure.

Modernizing State Data and Technology



Smart investments in state data and IT capacity can yield long-term savings and improve the efficiency of government operations. This session, budget writers funded strategic investments in upgrading agency technology and data analysis, and lawmakers bolstered efforts to address cybersecurity risks.

Supporting the State Workforce



A high performing government requires that state agencies employ qualified public servants. After significant turnover, the legislature responded with much-needed pay raises for agency and legislative staff, including targeted pay raises for some of the highest-demand, highest turnover positions. This effort was coupled with benefits reform that included incorporating parental leave for state employees.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF TEXAS: GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE



Notable Government Performance Legislation



Employees Retirement System of Texas Pension Cleanup

Cleans up and makes technical corrections to the Employees Retirement System pension reform bill from last session.

SB 729
Sen. Huffman (R)
Rep. Bonnen (R)



Judicial Retirement System of Texas Pension Reform

Creates a new cash balance retirement plan for new state district and appellate judges, lowering the fund period and stabilizing it long-term.

SB 1245
Sen. Huffman (R)
Rep. Bonnen (R)



Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council

Starts an appointed Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council to study and monitor artificial intelligence systems developed, employed or procured by state agencies.

HB 2060
Rep. Capriglione (R)
Sen. Parker (R)



Paid Parental Leave for State Employees

Creates a paid parental leave program for state employees, providing eight weeks of leave for mothers who give birth or four weeks for spouses or parents with a gestational surrogate or adopting a child.

SB 222
Sen. Nichols (R)
Rep. Metcalf (R)



Expanded Cybersecurity Incident Reporting

Expands the types of cyberattacks required to be reported to Texas Department of Information Resources and requires local governments to also report these cyberattacks as state agencies currently do.

SB 271
Sen. Johnson (D)
Rep. Shaheen (R)



New Chief Information Security Officer

Defines and establishes the position of Chief Information Security Officer at Texas Department of Information Resources, improving agency data infrastructure and ensuring state-held data is protected and private.

SB 621
Sen. Parker (R)
Rep. Capriglione (R)

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