



Senate Select Committee on
Property Tax Reform & Relief
Interim Report
November 2016

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF

84th Legislature

SENATOR PAUL BETTENCOURT, Chair
SENATOR BRANDON CREIGHTON
SENATOR KELLY HANCOCK
SENATOR EDDIE LUCIO



SENATOR CHARLES PERRY
SENATOR VAN TAYLOR
SENATOR CARLOS URESTI

November 30, 2016

The Honorable Dan Patrick
Lieutenant Governor of the State of Texas
Capitol Building, Room 2E.13
Austin, Texas 78701

The Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief submits this report in response to the interim charges you have assigned to this Committee.

This report examines several topics, including franchise taxes, sales tax holidays, and ways to incentivize savings for taxpayers. In addition, budgeting formats and the spending limit are examined, along with ways to reduce state debt liabilities. Finally, this report provides ways to improve statewide coordination of behavioral health services and expenditures in Texas.

Letters from members of the committee along with supporting information for the Committee's work, including graphs, tables, witness lists and meeting minutes are included as appendices to the report. We appreciate the leadership you have displayed in asking this Committee to examine these issues, and we trust the recommendations offered in this report will serve to improve the lives of Texans.


Respectfully submitted,



Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair



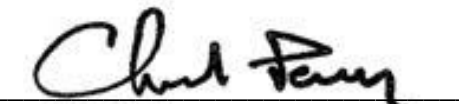
Senator Brandon Creighton



Senator Kelly Hancock



Senator Eddie Lucio



Senator Charles Perry



Senator Van Taylor



Senator Carlos Uresti

Interim Charges

1. Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities.
2. Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners.

A NEW PARADIGM FOR PROPERTY TAX REFORM AND RELIEF

Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities; and examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners

Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick’s directive, Oct. 14, 2015

On Nov. 5, 2015, Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick announced the formation of the Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief, comprised of Senators Paul Bettencourt, Brandon Creighton, Kelly Hancock, Eddie Lucio, Charles Perry, Van Taylor and Carlos Uresti. Lieutenant Governor Patrick named Sen. Bettencourt to chair the committee and charged the group with finding ways to improve the property tax process and reduce the property tax burden on property owners. Lieutenant Governor Patrick also directed the group to hold multiple hearings across the state to get input about the property tax system from a broad cross-section of Texans.

HEARINGS

Eight hearings over 11 months

The Select Committee held eight hearings across the state over 11 months and heard nearly 50 hours of invited and public testimony. A total of 321 witnesses testified and hundreds more provided written statements and material to the committee by mail and email. Total audience attendance was an estimated 2,150 persons. In an historic first for the Texas Senate, every out-of-town hearing was live-streamed on the Senate website, so countless more citizens of Texas were listening and watching. The witness lists and hearing agendas from each hearing are attached as Appendix A.

Hearings statistics

Hearing City Date Time Location	Duration Estimated Attendance	Public Participation
Austin – Dec. 7, 2015 – 2:30pm Capitol Extension	1 hour, 20 minutes	3 total participants: 3 provided invited, oral testimony from the Comptroller’s office for background
San Antonio – Jan. 27, 2016 – 10:30am University of Texas at San Antonio, Main Campus	5 hours, 54 minutes, 250 persons	66 total participants: 50 provided oral testimony 3 written testimony only 13 registered to testify
Harlingen – Feb. 11, 2016 – 9:00am University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Regional Academic Health Center, Auditorium	4 hours, 54 minutes, 100 persons	36 total participants: 26 provided oral testimony 1 written testimony 9 registered to testify
Lubbock – March 21, 2016 – 11:00am Texas Tech University – International Cultural Center	4 hours, 42 minutes, 150 persons	35 total participants: 29 provided oral testimony 3 written testimonies 3 registered to testify
Arlington – April 27, 2016 – 8:00am University of Texas at Arlington, E.H. Hereford University Center	11 hours, 10 minutes, 500 persons	115 total participants: 64 provided oral testimony 10 written testimonies 41 registered to testify
Houston – May 10, 2016 – 9:00am University of Houston, Student Center Ballroom	8 hours, 14 minutes, 600 persons	108 total participants: 61 provided oral testimony 11 written testimonies 36 registered to testify
Houston – Sept. 29, 2016 – 10:00am Houston Community College, West Loop Center Auditorium	6 hours, 9 minutes, 250 persons	41 total participants: 31 provided oral testimony 10 registered to testify
Plano – Oct. 3, 2016 – 10:00am Collin College Spring Creek Campus, Living Legends Conference Center	7 hours, 5 minutes, 300 persons	72 total participants: 57 provided oral testimony 3 written testimonies 12 registered to testify

HOW THE PROPERTY TAX SYSTEM WORKS

Prior to 1979, the property tax system in Texas was decentralized and had little oversight. Every taxing unit conducted its own appraisals and set its own tax rates. Frequently, the place to protest an appraised value was the governing body of the taxing unit. There were few state statutes governing the property tax process, and there was no codified body of laws.

The system was heavily reformed in 1979 (through the Peveto Bill) to be centered on the idea that each property would have one appraised value that would be used by all entities that could tax the property. This required the establishment of Central Appraisal Districts (CADs) for each county and the creation of the Property Tax Code in state law to govern this process.

The Texas Constitution requires that all property be appraised at market value as of January 1, and state law requires that CADs must appraise all properties in their boundaries at least once every three years. Many CADs appraise all of their properties every year. CADs begin the appraisal process after January 1 and once that process is complete, CADs are generally required to notify property owners of their appraised value for the year by April 1 or as soon as possible afterwards.

Taxpayers then can review the value the CAD has assigned to their property and, if they think the value is incorrect, protest it to the appraisal review board (ARB). The ARB is a panel composed of citizens paid on a per diem basis to hear property tax protests. The bulk of the protests brought before the ARB are heard in June and July. Property owners who still disagree with their value after their hearing may appeal the ARB's ruling to binding arbitration, district court, or the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH).

The ARB is required to approve the appraisal records by July 20, and by July 25, the CAD is required to certify that at least 95% of the appraisal roll for each taxing unit in the CAD has been finalized. The certified appraisal roll is provided to the tax assessor for each taxing unit, and the assessor then provides the roll to taxing units by August 1, allowing taxing units to begin the tax rate setting process.

Taxing Units (or their tax assessor-collector or appraisal district) are required to calculate four tax rates that form the foundation for the Truth in Taxation process required by the Tax Code. A brief summary of the four different types of tax rates at this time is listed below:

- The **Maintenance & Operations (M&O)** tax rate is used to raise money for the operational costs of a taxing unit, such as salaries, utilities and supplies;
- The **Interest & Sinking (I&S)** tax rate is used to fund the repayment of debt, such as bonds for roads;
- The **effective** tax rate is the tax rate that would bring in the same amount of total (M&O and I&S) property tax revenue as last year on this year's property tax base, meaning that as values rise, the effective rate falls; and
- The **rollback** tax rate is calculated to allow M&O tax revenues to grow by up to 8% each year from the prior year excluding new construction values and first-time homesteads, among other values.

These calculations must be completed by August 7, and the tax rates and an explanation of how they were calculated must be published in the local newspaper. Taxing units are required to adopt their tax rates by September 30 unless the appraisal roll is certified late.

Before adopting a tax rate, taxing units are required to publish public notices and hold two meetings open to the public. The first public meeting must be held 7 days after the public notices have run in local newspapers. The second meeting, where taxing units actually may adopt the tax rate, must be held at least 3 days after the first meeting.

After adopting its tax rate, a taxing unit then passes the information on to its tax assessor-collector unless voter approval of the adopted tax rate is required. If the local appraisal roll is certified in time, the assessor-collector is required to send out tax bills by October 1. Taxpayers must pay their property taxes by January 31 or the property taxes will become delinquent with the unpaid balance subject to penalties and interest.

Meanwhile, starting January 1, the appraisal district has already begun the process of appraising property for the next year, and the process continues for the next property tax calendar year.

THE CURRENT STATE OF PROPERTY TAXATION IN TEXAS

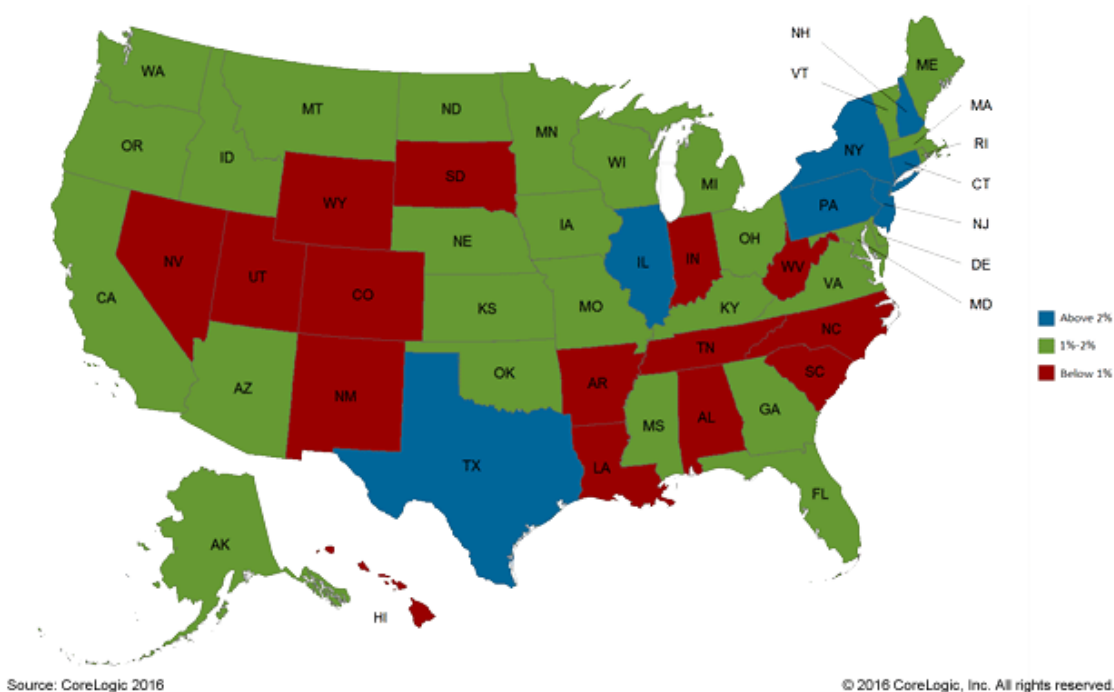
There are currently 1,019 school districts, 254 counties, 1,066 cities, and more than 1,700 special districts (e.g., municipal utility districts, public improvement districts, etc.) that can levy an ad valorem tax in Texas, for a total of over 4,039 taxing units.

Taxing units' appraised values, tax rates, and tax levies vary widely across the state. The highest concentration of taxing units is in Harris County, where there are more than 500 different taxing jurisdictions in a county with a population of approximately 4.6 million residents. Loving County, with a population of less than 100, has only two taxing units. All Texans pay county and school district taxes, and the majority pay city taxes as well. With the rapid proliferation of special districts, a growing number of Texans, especially in suburban areas, are now paying special district taxes, too. Against a backdrop of rising property values, the property tax burden in Texas has grown increasingly more difficult to bear.

Statewide property tax levy data from 2005 to 2015 demonstrates the growing property tax burden. These tables are in Appendix B. Broken out by type of taxing unit (city, county, school district, and special district), the data set shows the following tax levy increases over a 10-year period:

- Special Districts – 92.66%
- Counties – 82.21%
- Cities – 70.97%
- Schools – 39.52%

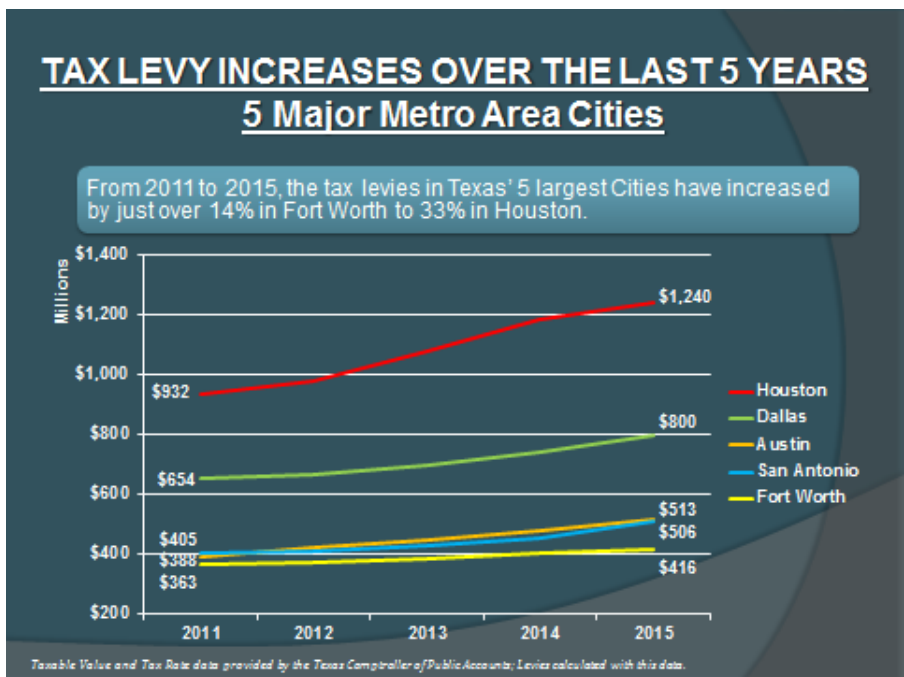
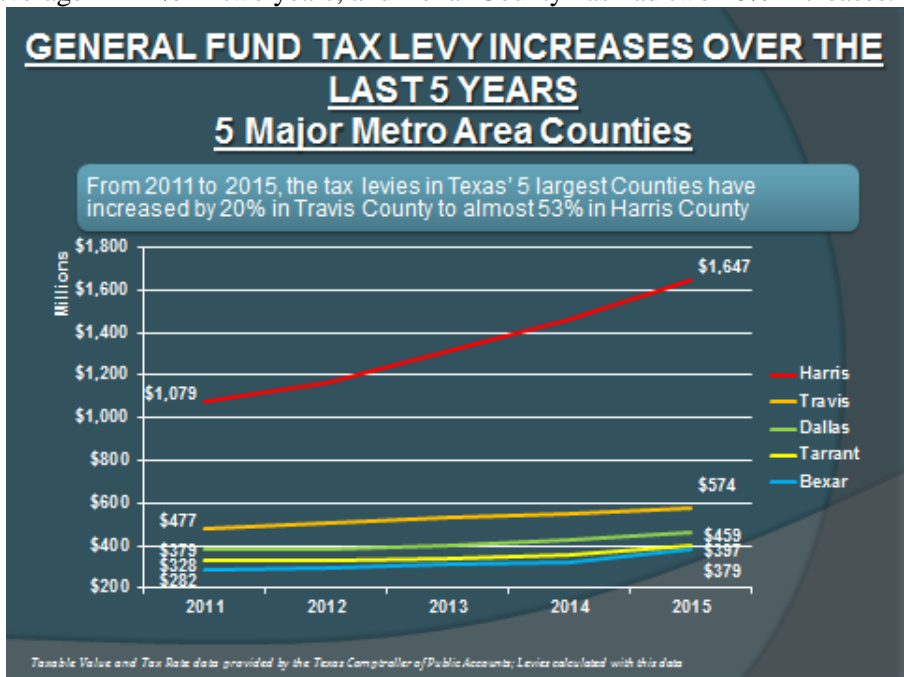
These tax increases not offset by property tax rate reductions partially explain why Texas has the fifth highest median property tax rate in the United States at \$2.17 of every \$100 of value and climbing. Only Illinois, New York, New Hampshire and New Jersey have higher median property tax rates. This is illustrated in the map below:



City, county tax levy increases

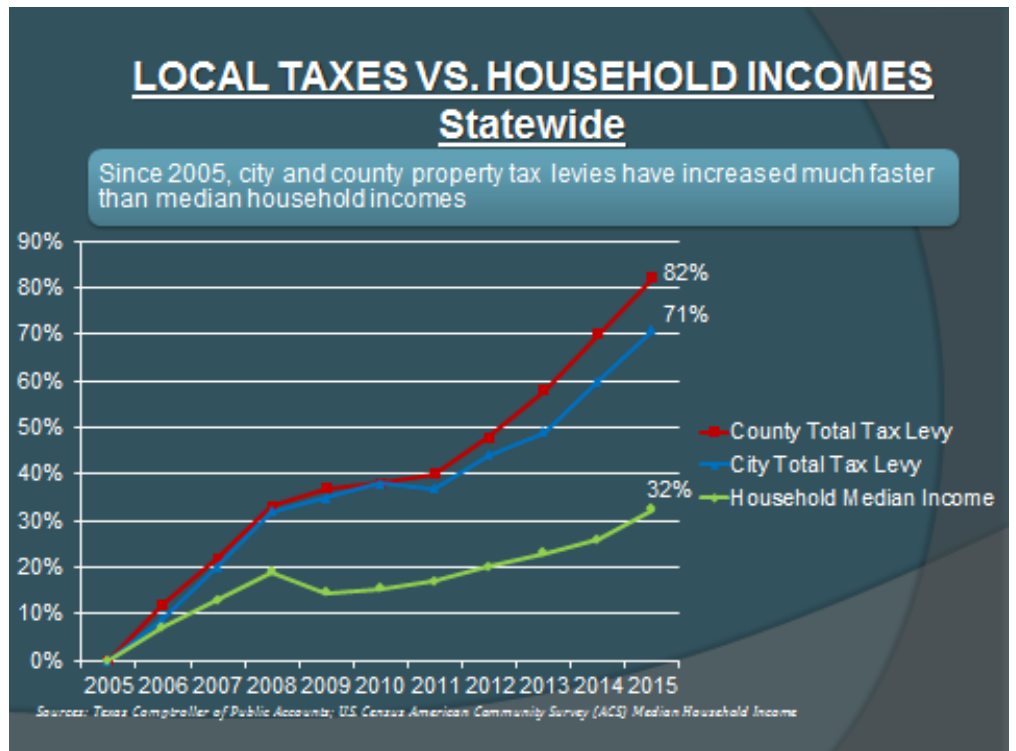
The tables below show that city and county levies have increased from 14% in Fort Worth to as high as 52% in Harris County. Taxpayers’ ability to pay has to become part of the property tax process as a whole. Increases in local government revenues of up to 52% over just three years in property tax levies is unsustainable. In fact, over three years from 2013 to 2016, the estimated average home tax bills for all four Harris County taxing jurisdictions is up 36%, or \$263. This increase is due to taxing units not cutting their tax rate. When combined with the other 500 taxing units, tax bills could total an average increase of \$1,000 over this period.

This is not just a Harris County problem as testimony from chief appraisers before the Select Committee revealed that in Travis County, appraised values have risen 12% a year for three years; all Dallas-Fort Worth homes are up on average 22-24% in two years; and Bexar County has had two 10% increases.



The Select Committee, using data from the Comptroller, plotted the increase in city and county property tax levies compared to the increase in median household income for each of the cities where the committee has held hearing as well as for the entire state. These charts, which are in Appendix C, show that generally, city and county property tax levies have increased twice as fast as median household incomes since 2005.

There is some variance between cities with respect to the size of the gap, but all the charts show a clear gap where total tax levies are rising 2½ to 3 times faster than median household incomes.



The total tax levy for cities and counties is paid by both business owners and homeowners, and tax relief should be provided to both groups as the businesses that pay them pass them along. Businesses operate in a competitive environment and cannot simply absorb the cost of rising property taxes if they are at all able to distribute those costs. Homeowners have to pay these higher tax bills individually.

A TWO PRONG ISSUE – VALUES AND RATES

As discussed above, the property tax system has two key components that are responsible for the bill taxpayers receive at the end of each year: the appraised value as set by the CAD and the tax rate set by their local taxing units, such as schools, cities, counties, and special districts.

The Texas Constitution requires the CAD to appraise properties based on their market value as of January 1. Although any appraisal is generally a market estimate, the CAD has a constitutional duty to value properties at market value. The Select Committee has taken much testimony about the interaction between taxpayers and their local CAD and ARB regarding their property values and how the appraisal process does or does not work.

Taxing units are required to adopt a tax rate for each tax year, but there are no other requirements with respect to how much the rate goes up or down relative to property values, except the 8% rollback rate, which limits how much property tax revenue can increase before voters can petition to vote to keep their taxes from increasing by more than 8%. In the case of school districts, exceeding the rollback rate requires an automatic election.

The Select Committee has also taken much testimony from taxpayers who are dissatisfied with their property tax burden and the fact that beyond protesting their values, they believe there is little they can do about it. Based upon this structure and the testimony received by the Select Committee, what follows below is an analysis of the issues that ail the current system and recommendations that may relieve some of those problems.

PROPERTY TAX RATES AND TAXPAYER EMPOWERMENT

When do voters have a say on property tax rates?

Under current law, the property tax rates fall into three main categories when it comes to voter input: school M&O taxes, I&S taxes for all types of taxing unit, and city, county and special district M&O taxes. The system for voter input on school and debt taxes is entirely different from the one for city, county and special district taxes. In general, voters must approve increases in school M&O taxes and debt taxes for all types of taxing units; however, voters functionally have no input on increases in city, county and special district M&O taxes other than a weak, petition-based rollback method.

When voter approval is required

When any taxing unit wants to issue debt that will be repaid with property taxes, the taxing unit must get voter approval before issuing the debt. The actual I&S tax rate may vary over time as interest rates, economic conditions and property values change. If a taxing unit wishes to issue more tax-backed debt, the taxing unit has to seek voter approval again.

School districts are also required to get voter approval after they raise taxes beyond a set rate. Once a school district increases their property tax rate above \$1.04 (generally, the effects of the 2006-07 tax rate compression may have left some districts with lower thresholds), it must get voter approval at a tax ratification election that is held within 90 days of the school board adopting the tax increase.

When voter approval is optional

Unless the city, county or special district adopts a tax rate that exceeds the rollback tax rate, voters have no opportunity to register their position at the ballot box. If the city, county or special district adopts a tax rate that exceeds the rollback rate, taxpayers have 90 days to petition to hold a rollback election. If the petition drive is successful, then an election is held to reduce the tax rate to the rollback rate; however, major obstacles exist for taxpayers to effectively trigger a rollback election.

How cities, counties and special districts calculate the rollback rate

A taxing unit first determines how much M&O tax revenue it brought in the previous year. The taxing unit then determines the value of its tax base for the current year and calculates the tax rate that would bring in the same amount of revenue. This is known as the effective tax M&O rate.

The taxing unit then multiplies that rate by 1.08 (to allow for 8% revenue growth) and adds it to the debt rate for the year, which is known as the rollback tax rate. New construction and first-time homestead exemptions are among the items excluded from this calculation, which means the 8% rate can actually allow a 12, 13 or even 14% increase in tax levies for areas with high rates of growth. Property located in Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) is also excluded from the rollback calculation. This, in part, has caused significant increases in TIRZ values statewide.

What must voters do to hold a rollback election in a city, county or special district?

Once a city, county or special district adopts a tax rate in excess of the 8% rollback rate, taxpayers have 90 days to gather enough signatures on a petition to hold a rollback election. In taxing units that have less than \$5 million in property tax revenues, taxpayers must get 10% of registered voters to sign the petition. In taxing units with more than \$5 million in property tax revenues, the petition must have signatures from 7% of registered voters. If a taxing unit exceeds the rollback tax rate, the taxpayers have 90 days to gather enough signatures on a petition to call for a rollback election. If the taxpayers are able to collect enough valid petition signatures, an election must be held to see if the adopted tax rate stands. If the taxpayers are unable to collect enough signatures, the tax rate for the year will be the adopted tax rate.

EXISTING ROLLBACK PROCESS – A BROKEN SYSTEM

Testimonies in the Select Committee’s hearings across the state indicated that the current rollback process for city, county and special district M&O taxes is complex, opaque and insulated from actual voter input. Taxpayers are so unfamiliar with the terminology and process that they generally do not understand what the rollback tax rate means and how it works, or even that the rollback process exists.

One concern highlighted by public testimony is that the process for calculating the rollback tax rate is cryptic and requires a fairly high level of background knowledge about property taxes to understand it. The calculations used to determine the effective and rollback tax rates require about 40 steps and information that the average member of the public does not have access to and cannot independently verify.

For example, cities, counties and special districts, when determining how much their property tax base grew from the prior year, get to exclude large amounts of value, making the base seem smaller than it really is and allowing the rollback rate to be higher than it needs to be. Examples of value excluded include: new and annexed property, the total value (not only the frozen portion) of over-65 homesteads, and value in TIRZ. All of these properties pay taxes, but they do not count as part of the tax base when the rollback rate is determined.

This means that local governments can see revenues grow by more than the 8% growth rate that the rollback rate is supposed to enforce. A revenue increase of 8% could really mean 12, 13, or 14% in reality, and that is not an effective limit to avoid over-taxation of taxpayers. The data in Appendix B shows many such levy increases over time.

Another concern is that the rollback election process is functionally inoperative due to the high rollback rate and petition requirements. The 8% threshold is so high and excludes so much value (such as value in TIRZ and new property) that local governments can remain under it while increasing property tax revenues by more than 8%. The current 8% growth rate is an artifact from when the Tax Code was codified in the 1970’s when interest rates were very high. Interest rates today are very low, but the growth rate remains well above the increase in taxpayers’ incomes. The vast majority of cities and counties never cross the 8% threshold for taxpayers to even petition to have an election.

The petition threshold is high enough (over 7% of registered voters in larger taxing units, over 10% in smaller ones) to make any rollback effort to be nearly an impossible task in any large city or county. In some cases, it requires the collection of more than 1,000 valid signatures per day for 90 days. Below are the petition thresholds for the five biggest cities and counties in Texas, which illustrate the difficulty in gathering such a large number of signatures in 90 days. Better public policy is to replace this requirement with an automatic election.

Cities	Registered Voters	7% Petition Threshold	Counties	Registered Voters	7% Petition Threshold
Houston	1,042,722	72,991	Harris	2,201,373	154,097
San Antonio	268,901	18,824	Bexar	1,027,676	71,938
Dallas	591,389	41,398	Dallas	1,266,403	88,649
Austin	508,854	35,620	Travis	710,351	49,725
Fort Worth	408,112	28,568	Tarrant	1,067,535	74,728

TAXPAYER ANGER AT AN UNACCOUNTABLE SYSTEM

A growing property tax burden, anger across the state

The Select Committee heard recurring testimony from individual taxpayers across the state that their property tax bills were rising faster than their ability to pay them. The Select Committee's staff presentations in each city noted that statewide, total city and county property tax levies over the last 10 years have generally risen more than twice as fast as median household incomes, as noted in Appendix C.

Another common theme in taxpayers' testimony was the general perception that they were powerless to do anything about their rising tax bill. Many witnesses testified that they protested their appraised values in an effort to keep their property taxes down; however, even these taxpayers noted that they were not in control of their tax bills, and that there was nothing they reasonably could do to get their property tax rate reduced as values increased.

At the Select Committee's hearing in Harlingen, the Libre Initiative provided particularly noteworthy testimony on the impact that rising tax bills have on potential homeownership in areas with a lower level of socioeconomic conditions. The organization stated that property taxes consuming more of household income hurts the ability of people to pursue homeownership and increases their dependence on government.

Public testimony also included one individual who drove six hours one way to the hearing in Lubbock to address the Select Committee members. He stated that in a single year, his property tax bill had increased 25%, and while he was in a hearing to protest the appraised value, the Appraisal Review Board Chairman asked the county's chief appraiser what could be done, even though state law provides that these two entities should operate independently of each other. The appraiser said they could do nothing, and the man lost his protest. At the Select Committee's hearing in Houston, a taxpayer testified that he was detained in handcuffs when he asked why the taxable value on his work vehicle had nearly doubled in just one year.

Taxpayer efforts typically focus on the appraisal and the CAD, with little consideration of the local taxing units that set tax rates. Those taxing units are required by state law to adopt a tax rate each year before they can send out tax bills. The only parameter the state sets are maximum rates the local taxing units are not allowed to exceed. Neither the constitution nor the Property Tax Code require the tax rates to remain static as appraisal values rise or fall.

Glenn Whitehead, chief appraiser for the Fort Bend Appraisal District, testified that most taxpayers do not realize that taxes are set by the taxing units rather than the appraisal districts. He also noted the Appraisal Review Board members lack significant training. At the San Antonio hearing, staff from the Comptroller's Office indicated that ARB training has been cut from two days to one day. Several taxpayers and CAD personnel testified that four hours of training is insufficient.

At the hearing in Arlington, Atascosa County Judge Bob Hurley testified in opposition to lowering the rollback rate and raised concern about an automatic rollback election's cost to the county. Sen. Taylor noted that despite lower rates, tax levies rose almost 50% in five years. They did not agree that this was a tax increase. A homeowner testified next, stating that an increased appraisal on a home is a tax increase. She noted that the property tax does not respect a person's income and raised concerns about the appraisal process. A retiree and disabled veteran testified about property rights, stating that with no right to property there is no freedom.

Lt. Gov. Patrick testified on the same panel at the Arlington hearing as a private citizen, noting the broad disagreement between the state, taxing unit officials, and the public of what constitutes a tax increase. He observed that taxing jurisdictions believe they are lowering property taxes while taxes are going up, stating, "You don't have the luxury to price someone out of their home, you just don't." Lt. Gov. Patrick also noted that if the rollback rate is reduced from 8% down to a lower number, then taxing jurisdiction budgets can only go up that lower percentage amount without the people voting. He spoke about the effect of rising taxes on a \$200,000 home doubling in a decade, noting that taxpayers cannot afford such an increase.

Truth in Taxation

Public testimony indicated that because of the complex nature of the property tax system, it is difficult for the average property owner to determine who is accountable for property tax hikes. Though public meetings are required for local governments to adopt a tax rate, taxpayers are frequently unaware these meetings are happening. When taxpayers do know about the meetings, the complexity of the notices are intimidating and the meetings are held at inconvenient times. The complexity of the tax rate setting process makes it unreasonable to expect average taxpayers, who are generally not experts in appraisal or assessment, to be able to make informed commentary in a public meeting on the topic beyond stating that they believe taxes are too high. Generally, the so-called ‘Truth in Taxation’ process is perceived by the public to be an oxymoron.

Local taxing entities often deflect taxpayers who are upset about rising tax bills by telling them that the tax rate has remained unchanged, the increase in their tax bill is due entirely to the increase in their appraised value, and they should speak to the appraisal district about their value. Appraisal districts typically respond that appraisal districts are bound by the state constitution to appraise properties at market value, and that the property owner’s tax bill is determined by the property tax rate, which is set by local taxing units. Because those local taxing units did not increase the tax rate and thus claim they did not increase taxes, property owners are left with no one to hold accountable. In many cases, the property tax rates approved by local elected officials was in excess of the unit’s effective tax rate and occasionally even the rollback rate.

Since property owners only get the right to petition for an election if a city, county or special district exceeds its rollback rate, property owners’ ability to hold their local taxing units accountable through the ballot box is almost nonexistent. And, unlike school taxes or bond propositions backed by property taxes, local governments are not required to get voter approval before increasing their M&O property taxes.

The one duty local officials are required to do every year – adopt a tax rate – is effectively abdicated by taxing units that leave the tax rate unchanged year after year as property values rise. The Select Committee received testimony from elected officials who felt that “they were not raising taxes” if they did not vote to increase the tax rate. As pointed out during testimony at the Select Committee’s hearing in San Antonio, according to data from Bexar County’s tax assessor-collector, Bexar County has seen a 30% increase for three years in total revenue. Anytime the public pays 10% or more per year on average, that is a burdensome tax increase.

ELECTIONS SET FOR VOTER INCONVENIENCE

Multiple witnesses at each of the Select Committee’s final two hearings testified about their ability to have a say about their property tax burden at the ballot box. Although both increasing school taxes and issuing bonds backed by I&S taxes require voter approval, the interaction between the Property Tax Code and the Elections Code unintentionally leaves room for elections that are designed to minimize potential voter turnout.

For example, the Galveston County Tax Assessor-Collector provided information to the Select Committee concerning the turnout for 14 elections in Galveston County going back to 2008. The elections included two presidential elections, two gubernatorial elections, a statewide primary election and a primary runoff, a constitutional amendment election, a general city election, five school district tax ratification elections (TREs), and one school district bond election. Of those elections, the highest turnout, as a percentage of registered voters, occurred with the 2012 and 2008 Presidential elections, which both had more than 55%. The 2014 gubernatorial, 2016 primary and 2016 May general election dates all had turnout of 24% or more.

But only one of the five school Tax Ratification Elections (TREs) was set on a date shared with another election, the 2015 Texas constitutional amendment election, and had a turnout of 11%. Of the other four TREs, none had above 11% turnout, and one, held on August 26, 2014, just before Labor Day, only had 4% turnout. All five TREs in the Galveston County sample were approved by voters. That Tarrant County Tax Assessor-Collector also agreed with the proposed new tax calendar.

State and local elections officials also testified before the Select Committee that because local taxing units that have set rollback, tax ratification or bond elections do not have to use the county election administrator to run the election, they do not have to comply with all the state and federal requirements that apply to general elections, such as the selection of polling locations or use of electronic voting machines. One local official in Houston testified that a Municipal Utility District held an election in a home's garage. Several witnesses in Plano testified that some school districts used a process called "rolling voting", where a polling location is moved during the day to ensure that polling was being done at locations where voters favorably disposed to passage of the school board's tax proposals might be gathered.

The Texas Secretary of State's Election Division and local elections officials also testified that state and federal laws require that the ballot for a general election date be set 78 days in advance of the election in order to allow for enough time for the printing and distribution of absentee ballots for military service members overseas. Because local taxing units can set rollback, tax ratification and bond elections on other election dates, however, the local taxing units do not have to comply with this requirement. Using the uniform election date in November would require this.

In the case of rollback elections and tax ratification elections specifically, the Property Tax Code allows an election to be held as little as 45 or 30 days from the date the election is set. Because the timeframes between the date these elections are set and the date they occur is generally less than the 78 days required for general election dates, there is a possibility that members of the military serving overseas may not have an effective opportunity to vote in local tax elections that directly affect the taxes on their home back in Texas.

EARLY SELECT COMMITTEE SUCCESSES

The Select Committee's statewide hearings and discussions have already resolved several property tax issues:

- Removal of unanimous, 3-0 vote requirement by the Harris County ARB for land value reductions. Testimony provided by the Comptroller's staff to the Select Committee indicated that no statutory grounds exist for an ARB to require unanimous votes;
- The Fort Bend CAD dropped its arbitration strike list after Fort Bend County Chief Appraiser Glenn Whitehead public testified about the list regarding the potential eligibility of property tax arbitrators in the county during the Select Committee's Houston hearing;
- Tarrant CAD ARB dropped its July 3 hearings after questions from Select Committee members;
- Successfully recommending a solution to a Tarrant CAD and taxpayer lawsuit over public information release;
- Credited by Tarrant County Tax Assessor Collector Ron Wright at the Plano hearing for the fact that one-third of Tarrant County's taxing units have cut rates for the first time;
- Collin County Judge Keith Self stated that the county had adopted the effective rate to keep its tax rate in check, noting that taxable value in Collin County grew almost 12% this year, and
- Resolved dozens of individual taxpayers issues by pulling various Chief Appraisers and staff together with taxpayers to resolve complaints.

CONCLUSIONS FROM TESTIMONY

Several conclusions can be derived from the testimony taken by the Select Committee with respect to the property tax rate setting process. First, many taxpayers are unaware of the process by which their property tax rates are set. They frequently know that they can protest their property value at the CAD, but do not usually know where to go to complain about their property tax rate.

Second, even for taxpayers who know that their taxing unit is responsible for setting the tax rate and want to make their opinion known, the process is so complex it can be difficult for the average taxpayer to cut through the terminology used, especially since the simple calculation of the average home value change times the tax rates from year to year were estimated from the public notices.

Third, even for taxpayers who have the knowledge to fully understand the process, the number of public meetings they would need to attend is a burden. Even a person in a rural area that only pays county and school district taxes would need to attend at least four separate public meetings to fully participate in the process. In urban areas, taxpayers could have 10 different taxing units listed on their property tax bill.

Finally, if a city, county or special district exceeds their rollback rate, the burden is on the taxpayers to organize a petition drive and then a rollback election campaign. And even if only the local school district exceeds their rollback rate, the election may not be set on a date that is convenient for voters in the district.

EMPOWER VOTERS – RATIFICATION INSTEAD OF ROLLBACK

Based on the public testimony received by the Select Committee, it is clear that the process for setting and adopting property tax rates must be reformed to make it more transparent and directly accountable to voters.

First, voters should get an automatic election on a general election date to ratify a decision by their local taxing units to increase property tax revenues above a set threshold. Second, the threshold for a tax ratification election must be lowered to be more in line with median household income growth. Third, the tax rate calculation process must be simplified to allow average citizens to understand what is happening and to prevent local taxing units from benefiting from the system by excluding large chunks of tax revenue to artificially deflate revenue growth or blaming revenue increases solely on rising property values.

Burden of proof shifted to local governments

Reforming the system requires a change in perspective from all stakeholders. Instead of citizens having to petition to vote to keep their taxes from increasing above the rollback rate, local officials need to make the case to their citizens on why those citizens should vote to increase taxes on themselves. Going forward, the burden of proof should rest on local officials to make the case for why the need additional revenue rather than on local residents to make the case for why they do not.

Focus shifted to tax rates instead of appraised values

The appraisal-driven focus of many taxpayers is in some ways a holdover of a mindset that arose after the Peveto Bill passed in 1979. In addition to the appraisal process, taxpayers must stay apprised of how much their local taxing units are raising in property taxes and how those funds are spent.

Because there were wide disparities and much inequality in how properties were appraised before the creation of CADs, in the first years afterward, values were increased to adjust for the inequality and under-appraisal of the old system. This was compounded by the effects of the school finance lawsuits, beginning in the 1980s when the Comptroller's Property Value Study was instituted to ensure that local school districts did not draw down too much in state funds due to local property appraisals being kept artificially low.

Increases in property values, however, are now more likely to be at least a broad reflection of trends in the real estate market. Being able to protest only their appraised value puts taxpayers in the difficult position of arguing to lower their value even if they know the local market is rising.

Additionally, the Select Committee discovered through testimony that the election requirements in the Property Tax Code do not always align with the Elections Code with respect to issues such as meeting the deadlines to ensure ballots can be printed and distributed to members of the military overseas or selecting polling locations.

In light of these guiding principles, the proposals below will form the core of a voter empowerment act and give voters an effective means of managing their property tax burden.

Revised Tax Ratification Process

CAD sends notices of appraised value to homeowners by March 15, all other property owners by April 15.

The deadline for a taxpayer to file a protest is moved to May 15.

CADs will be required to certify appraisal rolls to taxing units by July 10.

Taxing units must publish their Truth in Taxation notices by July 27.

Taxing units that adopt a tax rate that exceeds the rollback rate must do so by August 15. Taxing units that do not adopt a tax rate that exceeds the rollback rate may do so by September 30.

If a taxing unit adopts a tax rate in excess of the rollback rate, the ratification election will be held on the general election date in November.

If the election is successful, the tax rate is reduced to the rollback rate. If it fails, the initially proposed rate is adopted.

Tax bills can be sent by October 1 for all taxing units. If a taxing unit is subject to a ratification election, and the election fails the assessor will send supplemental tax bills to reflect the increase over the rollback rate. The delinquency deadline remains January 31.

Effect on cities, counties, special districts, and taxpayers

The proposed reforms target local taxing units that rely the most heavily upon the current system's flaws in order to maximize the units' property tax revenue. The strategy of some local taxing units to reach their revenue goal is to tax as close to the rollback rate as possible and ensure as much property value is excluded from the rollback calculation as possible.

The Select Committee's proposed reforms seek to ensure that as values rise tax rates fall (unless local voters approve an increase in tax revenue), thereby granting taxpayers some much-needed property tax relief.

The effects of these reforms will be felt the most over time, much as the effect of cities, counties and special districts failing to lower their tax rates is felt more acutely over time. For example, the city of Dallas and Dallas County have left their tax rates static from 2012 to 2015. The city tax rate has remained at 79.7 cents per \$100 of property value and the county has left the rate at 24.31 cents per \$100 of property value. Back in 2012, both the city and county rates were several cents under the rollback rate. But now, as property values have risen, both Dallas County and the city of Dallas are now taxing within less than half a cent of the 8% rollback rate. Over the same span, property values have risen by more than 19% in both taxing units. Because of this value increase and the lack of reduction in either entity's rate, taxpayers are paying over 19% more in taxes in 2015 than they were in 2012. Although the increase in the tax burden in any single year may not have been that great, the cumulative effect over several years of never lowering the property tax rate is large.

Even so, the Select Committee is aware from testimony that many cities, counties and special districts tax well below the rollback rate and likely will be unaffected by reducing the ratification threshold from the current 8% rollback rate. At the same time, their taxpayers will be protected from any large increases in the future unless the voters approve them in an election.

There is ample evidence that voters will approve tax increases when they believe additional government spending will benefit them, and will reject tax increases when they believe it will not. All of these local taxing entities have been seeking voter approval to issue property tax-backed bonds for years with no ill effects. School districts have needed voter approval to increase taxes for more than 10 years, and the Texas Supreme Court recently affirmed the constitutionality of that requirement.

Taxpayers should be cognizant of the cost in property taxes when they ask the elected leaders of their city, county and special district for new services or additional infrastructure. The taxes they will have to pay for those things is obscured behind the current Truth in Taxation and rollback procedures. Under the proposed reforms, taxpayers would need to vote to approve additional property tax revenue to pay for those services above the revised rollback limit.

Taxpayers would also benefit from having another avenue to control the growth in their property tax bills. Testimony indicated that the current process is difficult to understand and requires a significant investment of time and resources to fully participate in with little chance of success. A ratification-driven process for voter input on tax rates will enable them to register their position on potential tax increases for multiple taxing units from the convenience of their local polling place.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Legislature should consider repealing the current petition driven rollback process.
2. The Legislature should consider replacing the existing rollback process with one that requires automatic tax ratification elections held on the uniform election date and locations in November if a taxing unit exceeds the ratification tax rate.
3. The Legislature should consider reducing the 8% growth limit in the rollback tax rate calculations to a 4% or lower amount more in line with Texans' ability to pay.
4. The Legislature should consider simplifying the calculations used to generate the rollback tax rate as well as the other calculations that are used in the Truth in Taxation process.
5. The Legislature should consider simplifying and adjusting the tax year calendar to make it more favorable to the citizenry and government and in alignment with the requirements of the Elections Code.

APPRAISAL AND PROTEST PROCESS ISSUES AND REFORMS

INTRODUCTION

At all eight hearings around the state, the Select Committee heard similar testimony from individual taxpayers about the governance, transparency and accountability of appraisal districts and ARBs.

Property owners also testified about their experiences in dealing with CADs and ARBs. Taxpayer testimony statewide

revealed a public perception that CADs and ARBs are biased against the taxpayer, cater to the needs of local governments, and are not accountable to anyone – even if their ARB or CAD takes an action that violates state law.

Chief appraisers and tax assessor-collectors also provided data to the Select Committee about issues affecting their offices and jurisdiction. The Select Committee asked chief appraisers to discuss market and appraisal trends and questioned tax assessor-collectors about tax payments and delinquencies. At several of the hearings, chief appraisers and members of the Select Committee discussed the cost of litigation over commercial property values – an issue that has grown in importance as commercial property values have risen since the recession. The Select Committee also solicited testimony from several chief appraisers for ways to improve the appraisal system.

STATE AND LOCAL OVERSIGHT TODAY

Currently, the property tax system in Texas has two main levels of oversight. At the local level, a CAD board oversees the operations of the appraisal district and, in counties with a population of less than 120,000, also oversees the appointment of the ARB. At the state level, the Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division (PTAD) provides training, information collection, and limited oversight of CADs. The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation also licenses both property tax professionals who work for appraisal districts and property tax consultants who represent taxpayers before the ARB, but has a very limited oversight role.

Role of CAD board

A CAD board has five members appointed by the taxing units that have property appraised in the CAD. The primary purpose of a CAD board is to hire the CAD's chief appraiser and set the budget for the CAD. A CAD's budget is paid for by the local taxing units the CAD appraises property for, with each unit's share based on the amount of property they have in the district. The CAD board is not to provide direction concerning the appraisal of property in the CAD to the chief appraiser. In fact, by statute the CAD board is not allowed to discuss individual property values with the chief appraiser.

KEY AREAS OF CONCERNS RAISED BY TAXPAYERS

- *Fort Bend County CAD rejecting arbitrators who rule in favor of taxpayers and maintaining the arbitrators' names on a so-called blacklist*
- *CADs using faulty calculations that adjust the value of any comparable property to match up to the value of the subject property*
- *Accusations of bias, taxpayer intimidation from former ARB members*
- *ARB members' admitted ignorance of the market or income approach to appraise properties*
- *During an ARB hearing, ARB members asked CAD staff for permission to lower a property's agricultural value*
- *Properties that cannot be sold without violating the state's colonias-prevention laws are being appraised at a wide range of values from zero on up*

Role of PTAD

When the Texas Property Tax Code was enacted as part of the Tax Code in 1979, the State Property Tax Board was created to provide oversight for the new system. In 1991, the Board was abolished and its functions moved to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts as the Property Tax Assistance Division (PTAD). PTAD has two main functions that have an oversight role for the state's current property tax system: the Property Value Study and the Methods and Assistance Program.

Property Value Study (PVS)

The Property Value Study (PVS) is a ratio study of property values by category for each school district in Texas. The comptroller selects samples from each category of property and uses them to estimate what the total value for that category should be. This value is compared to the CAD's values, and if the CAD value is 5 percent above or below the comptroller's value, then the comptroller's value is used when the state runs the school finance formulas for that year. The PVS was originally created to prevent CADs from undervaluing property in an effort to draw down more state funds for their local school districts. Originally done in all school districts every year, it is now conducted in about half of school districts in alternating years.

Methods and Assistance Program (MAP)

The Methods and Assistance Program (MAP) was created in 2009 and reviews approximately half of all appraisal districts each year. MAP reviews cover four main areas: CAD governance; taxpayer assistance; operating procedures and appraisal standards; and procedures and methodologies. The comptroller uses both a mandatory survey and site visits to gather information about CAD practices under a MAP review. The MAP survey is also adjusted to reflect the size of the CAD being reviewed, since smaller CAD's CAD's may have to apply different standards and methodologies than bigger CADs.

After a CAD has finished its MAP review, preliminary findings are provided in the fall to the chief appraiser so the CAD can correct any deficiencies found before the findings become final in January. The CAD then has one year to take remedial action, after which any remaining deficiencies will be referred to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) for enforcement.

The comptroller also has several other roles in the property tax system that involve training, data collection and administrative tasks. Although these tasks do not give the comptroller direct oversight of the actions of CADs, the Comptroller's Office still has a major influence on how the property tax system is administered in the field.

Training: The comptroller is responsible for training ARBs and providing model hearing procedures for ARBs to use. ARB members must take training from the comptroller when they are initially appointed and continuing education every two years to remain on the ARB. However, training for ARB members has been reduced from two days to one day per testimony from the Comptroller's Office. This must be increased again.

Qualified arbitrator registry: The comptroller is also charged with maintaining the registry of arbitrators who are qualified to hear property tax protests under Chapter 41A of the Tax Code. The comptroller's primary duty is to ensure that registrants comply with the statutory qualifications to be an arbitrator and make the list available to taxpayers, collecting a \$50 fee from each arbitration to cover the cost of maintaining the registry.

Publications: The comptroller also has the responsibility to promulgate standardized forms for common actions such as filing for a homestead exemption. The office must also provide appraisal manuals to assist CADs with appraisal of certain types of property, such as agricultural or timber land or heavy equipment dealer inventory.

Under state law, the comptroller also must publish a biennial Property Tax Report that shows trends in property values, tax levies and the distribution of tax levies and exemptions across the state. The Comptroller's Office also publishes information about taxing units property values, tax rates and tax levies as well as detailed CAD Operations Reports that provide information about multiple facets of CAD operations.

Overall, the Comptroller's Office has two general oversight tools and a number of other responsibilities that are important to keeping the property tax system running efficiently and providing useful information about its structure and performance to taxpayers and the Legislature. Under statute, the agency does not have tools to provide direct oversight of the system.

KEY ISSUES

Based on public testimony from across the state, the Select Committee concluded that several key issues in the property tax appraisal and protest process have left taxpayers with little trust in the current system and even less faith in getting a fair outcome when they attempt to participate in it. The Select Committee also determined that the public perception of mistrust in the system stems most directly from property owners' individual experiences with CADs and ARBs, but has also developed due to structural factors.

Complex appraisal practices

Property owners' testimony to the Select Committee drew attention to the complexity of the mass appraisal process that CADs use to appraise properties. The technical appraisal terminology used to describe the CAD's internal appraisal process is unknown to the average home or business owner. This contributes to taxpayers perception that the appraisal process appears to be heavily weighted against them when they are dealing with their CAD or protesting their appraised value before the ARB.

Equally unclear to the average taxpayer are the factors CADs use to value property and the adjustments they use to compare similar properties. In fact, the Select Committee took testimony from two witnesses who claimed that the formulas used by the appraisal district where they owned property would force the value per square foot of any property compared to a subject property to be equalized, meaning that the formula could make the value of two dissimilar properties appear to be similar. Confronted with complexities such as these, taxpayers who are not already well-versed in property appraisal or the real estate industry can find it difficult to make a successful protest.

Lack of CAD accountability

Taxpayers also told the Select Committee that they had a difficult time finding their way through what they considered a maze of who to hold accountable for the increase in their appraised value and tax bills. The Texas Constitution requires property be appraised at their market value on January 1 each year, and appraisal districts are obligated to follow the constitutional and statutory guidelines when appraising property; however, local governments that do not lower their tax rate receive additional tax revenue when appraisals rise.

When taxpayers raise concerns about their property values and tax bills, local elected officials frequently deflect any responsibility for the operations of the CAD to the CAD board, which is responsible for overseeing the CAD – despite the fact that many CAD board members are appointed by the taxing units that have their property appraised by the CAD. Some CADs also shift blame to the Comptroller's Property Value Study as a reason why they have increased property values, claiming they will fail the study if they do not increase values, which can be true. As a result, a taxpayer trying to navigate the property tax system and understand who is in charge of what has no clear guidance on whether the CAD, local elected officials or even the state of Texas is responsible.

The ARB's lack of independence

Public testimony indicated that taxpayers generally see the local ARB as either an arm of the CAD or an entity heavily influenced by the CAD – an unsurprising perception given the nature of the ARB and where it performs its duties. The ARB is selected either by the local administrative district judge or the CAD board, is paid a per diem from the CAD's budget, and meets in office space provided by the CAD. ARB members interact with CAD staff on a regular basis during the course of hearing protests, and likely become familiar with each other simply due to frequent interaction.

Conversely, property owners told the Select Committee that attending an ARB hearing felt like walking into a semi-judicial setting where they were ‘guilty until proven innocent.’ A recurring theme around the state was taxpayers’ perception that their local ARB was biased against them in favor of the CAD.

Insufficient ARB training

The Select Committee took testimony at several hearings from property owners across the state that they had encountered ARB panel members who appeared to lack sufficient knowledge or training to correctly address the issues under their consideration. This was especially noted by property owners who have relatively complex issues that must be accounted for to determine how their properties should be appraised or whether they qualify for an exemption.

Testimony from the Comptroller’s Office indicated that ARB members must take a course to be educated on their duties and state law when they are first appointed, and a continuing education course in the second year of their term to remain on the board. ARB members in counties with a wide variety of property types are faced with a daunting task in trying to understand the intricacies of appraisal for each type of property that may come before them, ranging from single-family homes to large industrial complexes and everything in between. In addition to the appraisal and legal knowledge needed to perform their duties, ARB members also need to know the open government and parliamentary procedures necessary to properly conduct a hearing.

Perception of local government pressure

Many taxpayers at the hearings shared their perception that the CAD is simply an arm of local government, largely due to the lack of transparency regarding who is ultimately responsible for the actions of the chief appraiser and the CAD. The public’s perception is supportable by several facts: the CAD is funded by taxing units, the CAD board is appointed by taxing units, and those same taxing units depend on rising appraisals to bring in more revenue without having to increase their tax rates.

Lack of recourse for taxpayers when CADs, ARBs or taxing units violate state laws

One recurring issue that surfaced during the Select Committee’s statewide hearings was that when an ARB, CAD or taxing unit violates the Property Tax Code, taxpayers have no recourse except litigation. Most taxpayers who provided the Select Committee with anecdotal evidence of Property Tax Code violations indicated that they simply had to endure the suspected violations due to not having resources readily available in their household budgets to initiate a lawsuit. The Comptroller’s Office provides very limited oversight of CADs, but cannot provide legally binding guidance as to how a chief appraiser or their staff should interpret the Property Tax Code. Additionally, the Comptroller has no enforcement powers even if they are informed of a violation of the Property Tax Code. The Comptroller’s only enforcement powers fall under the purview of the items they review under the Property Value Study and the Methods and Assistance Program reviews.

Disasters and the property tax burden

The Select Committee took testimony at several hearings regarding the effect natural disasters have on property taxes. This issue has come up a number of times in the past decade, notably with Hurricanes Ike and Dolly, the explosion in the city of West, and the heavy spring floods across the state in both 2015 and 2016. The Property Tax Code already contains cumbersome provisions that are supposed to provide taxpayers some relief from their property tax burden in times of tragedy. A limited disaster reappraisal should be allowed at the request of the chief appraiser and the tax assessor-collector. The current voting required for multiple taxing units makes this effort nearly impossible to authorize in an urban area.

Current provisions

The disaster-related provisions in the Property Tax Code can generally be divided in to two categories: provisions that require a disaster declaration from the governor and those that do not. This means that some disaster relief provisions in code are only available after very serious or widespread disasters.

The statutes that allow certain homeowners to keep their pre-disaster appraisal caps, homeowners and small businesses to pay their property taxes in installments, and taxing units to elect to reappraise property all require a disaster declaration by the governor to take effect. These provisions are summarized below:

- Generally, if a home is rebuilt after a disaster, it is not considered a new improvement (and thus outside the 10% appraisal cap) if it has the same size and quality of construction. In the case of homes paid for with disaster recovery program funds, the home can still avoid qualification as a new improvement if the home must be larger and better built to comply with the program.
- Homeowners and small business owners (defined as those with less than \$5 million in gross receipts in 2009, adjusted for inflation) in a declared disaster area and whose property was directly damaged by the disaster are eligible to pay their taxes in four equal installments.
- A taxing unit located wholly or in part in a declared disaster area may choose to ask their CAD to reappraise the properties within their boundaries after a disaster. The local taxing unit must bear the costs of the reappraisal, and if a reappraisal is conducted, the new value is only applied to the taxing units that have chosen to reappraise. Taxes are pro-rated in the event of a reappraisal, so the taxes due reflect the change in the value of the property after the disaster.

The statute that allows homeowners to keep their homestead exemption after their home has been destroyed or rendered uninhabitable by casualty, wind or water damage while they rebuild does not require a disaster declaration to take effect. To keep their homestead exemption after a disaster, the homeowner must begin construction on the replacement structure within a year of the disaster.

Gaps in current law

Although existing statutes already provide protection to many homeowners and some small business owners affected by disasters, there are still gaps in those protections. The primary issue raised in testimony before the Select Committee was the fact that since taxing units are not required to ask for reappraisal after a disaster, taxpayers end up paying taxes on a property that was appraised when it was fully usable or habitable but now has a much reduced market value due to damage from the disaster.

In cases where the recovery from a disaster may be extended such as after a major wildfire or hurricane, taxpayers may get some relief when their property is reappraised at its damaged value in the following year and pay less in taxes.

For disasters that do not take years to recover from, taxpayers may never see any relief. For example, a home may be flooded early in the year after the appraisal has been set, but be fully repaired by the end of the year, so the appraisal for the property never reflects the fact that its value was seriously impaired for much of the year due to flood damage.

For two main reasons, local taxing units have little incentive to order a reappraisal after a disaster: first, the taxing units must pay for the cost of the reappraisal, which can be expensive; and second, the taxing units likely have concerns about forgoing any tax revenue in the near term as they themselves face disaster recovery costs. Combined with potential logistical issues depending upon the disaster, with the CAD being able to carry out a reappraisal, disaster reappraisals are very uncommon in Texas. Therefore, automatic limited disaster reappraisal upon a governor's disaster declaration is a better public policy solution.

CONCLUSIONS FROM TESTIMONY

The nearly 50 hours of oral testimony and voluminous written testimony the Select Committee took from property owners revealed several key points about the public knowledge and perception of the property tax process. Taxpayers seemed to clearly realize that if they did not agree with their value, they could protest their value and go before the ARB. The testimony taken indicated that the vast majority of taxpayers do this in an effort to keep their property taxes from increasing.

Despite the fact that taxpayers know they can protest the appraised value set by the CAD to their ARB, testimony was repetitive that the state's property tax system is unfair to taxpayers. Taxpayers know they have a right to be heard, but their testimony indicated they do not expect to be treated fairly by the ARB.

It is critical to the functioning of any public process that those affected by the process trust that it operates in a fair and impartial fashion. Testimony indicated that when events occur where a taxpayer has reason to question if the CAD or ARB is treating them impartially, whether the Property Tax Code is being followed, or whether ARB members are capable of addressing the matters before them, events like this can do serious damage to the public's trust in the system.

It appears clear from the testimony taken that some steps are necessary to ensure that public trust in the system as a whole is restored by ensuring the process is as transparent, accountable and responsive as possible. There is a need to ensure that CADs and ARBs operate independently, ARB members are properly trained, and existing laws are enforced.

While reforming the property tax process to make it more transparent, accountable and responsive will help restore taxpayer trust in the system, it will not resolve issues with the property tax burden growing too rapidly for Texas homeowners and businesses. But reforming the rollback process to give taxpayers the right to vote when taxes exceed a more reasonable ratification rate will also help the appraisal process by relieving some of the pressure from taxpayers on it. Taxpayers whose values increase by an amount equal to or less than the rollback tax rate will know that their tax bill will not increase by more than the rollback tax rate, and thus will have less reason to protest their property value.

Other taxpayers, however, whose appraised values increase by more than the rollback tax rate, will know that their taxes could rise more quickly. These taxpayers likely will still feel a need to protest their appraised value if they think the increase is excessive. The same would be true of taxpayers who are disputing how their property is appraised, if their property qualifies for a special appraisal or if it qualifies for an exemption. Reforming both the property tax process and the tax rate setting process are necessary to both public faith in the process as well as active participation in it.

PROPOSALS

Based on the testimony the Select Committee received, two main areas of reform are necessary: additional training, data collection and oversight at the state level; and state statute modifications that govern how CADs and ARBs operate. Together these changes would make the system more transparent, user friendly and accountable.

State level recommendations

At the state level, the greatest need is for there to be effective oversight of the property tax system to ensure that the entities at the local level – appraisal districts, appraisal review boards, and taxing units – follow the Property Tax Code without taxpayers being faced with filing a lawsuit to ensure they do so. Also, ending the ability of a taxing unit to bring a lawsuit challenging the values of a whole class of property owners is good public policy, as taxpayers cannot easily bring a counter-suit against the taxing unit.

One means of achieving this would be to create a board to advise the comptroller on property tax matters and giving the comptroller, in consultation with the board, the ability to issue binding rulings enforcing the Property Tax Code.

- The advisory board would consist of seven members selected by the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker, and comptroller, with the comptroller having the authority to select the chair. The members would be selected from property tax professionals (including both those who work for taxpayers and those who work for CADs), property owners, and tax assessor-collectors.
- The advisory board would be given the authority to hear complaints about or resolve questions posed by individual licensed property tax professionals in the state as well as entities that are part of the property

tax process, such as ARBs and CADs. The board's authority would apply to tax assessor-collectors and taxing units, but explicitly on issues directly relating to their duties under the Property Tax Code, such as the calculation of tax rates or compliance with Tax Code deadlines.

- The advisory board would also be given the authority to issue binding rulings on the issues brought before it and the authority to enforce its rulings.

One theme in the testimony taken by the Select Committee was that Property Tax Code statutes themselves were not deficient and actually had many requirements that, if followed, would make for a better property tax system. But the fact that there is no entity with the ability to enforce the Property Tax Code means that anyone who chooses to violate the Code can do so with relative impunity. Giving an entity at the state level the ability to enforce the Property Tax Code will in and of itself make for a more transparent, responsive and user friendly property tax system in Texas.

STATE LEVEL SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Legislature should consider creating an advisory board appointed by the comptroller to provide direct oversight over the property tax system, issue binding rulings with respect to the interpretation of the Property Tax Code, and have enforcement authority over those rulings.
2. The Legislature should consider giving the Property Tax Assistance Division in the Comptroller's Office authority to enforce the collection of property value, tax rate and tax levy data from local governments.
3. The Legislature should consider requiring taxing units to submit to the Comptroller their effective and rollback tax rate worksheets as well as the order adopting the tax rate each year before they may issue tax bills.
4. The Legislature should consider requiring the Property Tax Assistance Division to increase the amount of training required for basic certification to serve on an appraisal review board as well as specialized training for appraisal review board members who will hear complex or technical protests.
5. The Legislature should consider requiring the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) to share any data they gather from investigation of a property tax licensee with the Comptroller's Office.
6. The Legislature should consider requiring TDLR to take timely action on disciplinary actions that the comptroller has referred to TDLR.
7. The Legislature should consider giving the comptroller the authority to ensure that CADs follow the guidelines set out in any appraisal manuals issued by the Comptroller's Office.

Local level recommendations

Statutes governing the administration of the protest and appraisal process at the local level need legislative attention as well. The reforms proposed below would help bring transparency, accountability and clarity to the Texas property tax system. The proposals below are not meant to be an exhaustive list that will solve all the issues brought before the Select Committee, but are a selection of relatively simple solutions to help resolve the some of the recurring issues that were brought before it.

LOCAL LEVEL SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Legislature should consider revising the required Truth in Taxation calculations to simplify the form used. The core calculation should be revised to subtract a taxing unit's levy from the prior year from the current year to determine the additional taxes that will be imposed, and then provide the additional cost to the average home due to the increase in taxes.
2. The Legislature should consider revising the open government laws to make clear in statute that the information or records of a third party that contracts with a central appraisal district are subject to open records requests.
3. The Legislature should consider revising the Property Tax Code to require the limited re-appraisal of property that is located in an area that is or was subject to an official disaster declaration by the governor.

4. The Legislature should consider repealing the ability of a taxing unit to challenge the values of an entire class of properties, even within its own boundaries, to the detriment of taxpayers and other taxing units.
5. The Legislature should consider adding language to the Property Tax Code to clarify that appraisal review board decisions, whether by a panel or the whole board, only require a majority vote, and not a unanimous vote.
6. The Legislature should consider revising the Property Tax Code to provide that an appraisal review board may hold weekend hearings on Saturday or Sunday, but not both; evening hearings after 5 PM; and no hearings on federal holidays.
7. The Legislature should consider requiring appraisal districts to conduct internal ratio studies before the issue initial notice of appraised value to check for equity between properties.
8. The Legislature should consider the creation of a specialized protest panel to handle value protests brought by owners of complex or uncommon properties.
9. The Legislature should consider expanding access to arbitration as an alternative to an appeal to district court for properties that qualify for agricultural, open space or timber appraisal.
10. The Legislature should consider giving the comptroller the authority to use local funds to issue paychecks to ARB members.
11. The Legislature should consider removing the authority to appoint the ARB chair from the CAD board and give the authority to the members of the ARB.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letters from Senators on the Select Committee

Appendix B: City, County, School and Special District Levies

Appendix C: Median Income vs. Tax Levies

Appendix D: Witness Lists

Appendix E: Meeting Minutes

**APPENDIX A: LETTERS FROM SENATORS ON THE
SELECT COMMITTEE**

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SENATOR
EDDIE LUCIO, JR.

November 15, 2016

The Honorable Paul Bettencourt
Chairman, Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief
Capitol Room E1.712

Chairman Bettencourt:

Thank you for your leadership of the Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief over the interim. I especially commend you for taking the initiative to bring the committee to communities across the state, including the Rio Grande Valley, to hear firsthand stories of Texans whom we are tasked with representing and helping in our roles as state legislators.

It should be clear to anyone who attended any of these hearings that many residents of our state are struggling to pay taxes on the properties they own. The Legislature began to address this issue last session with the property tax reduction afforded by Senate Bill 1, of which I was a co-author. However, hearing testimony from tax professionals, city and county officials, and hundreds of property owners has convinced me that we must continue these efforts in the coming session in a way that will better address root causes that give residents concern over the property tax system.

The first such cause is an inability or unwillingness for citizens to engage meaningfully with local governments and taxing entities. One need look no further than the attendance of the Committee's seven road hearings - which attracted over 300 attendees, on average, and undoubtedly many more watching online - to see that property owners in Texas have a desire to interface with their elected officials concerning taxation. However, turnout in elections related to taxation remains remarkably low - not only for tax ratification elections, which, according to the committee report, have turnout rates as low as 4%, but also for elections where voters choose the officials who set tax rates in the first place.

Public participation is a two-way street. It is government's responsibility to ensure citizens have every possible opportunity to scrutinize its workings, make their voices heard, and hold elected officials accountable. At the same time, it is the responsibility of citizens to take advantage of opportunities: to educate themselves on the issues that affect them at all levels of government, to critically engage with officials, and to use the ballot box to vocalize their support, or lack of support, for their representatives in government.



DISTRICT 27: CAMERON ★ HIDALGO ★ KENEDY ★ KLEBERG ★ WILLACY
COMMITTEES: CHAIR, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS ★ VICE-CHAIR, EDUCATION ★ NATURAL RESOURCES & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ★
VETERAN AFFAIRS & MILITARY INSTALLATIONS ★ SUBCOMMITTEE ON BORDER SECURITY

Several of the Committee's recommendations seek to make it easier for residents to become more involved in the process of setting tax rates, most notably through a reconfiguration of the calendar to allow for a more uniform election date, and I am interested in learning more about these proposals to determine whether they will increase public participation. Citizens cannot rely on changes made by the Legislature to replace their democratic duty to engage in their local communities and hold their officials to account. Politics, and especially local politics, is meant to be a dialogue: it is the government's responsibility to facilitate this dialogue, and a citizen's responsibility to participate fully in all of its stages.

As I mentioned above, the Committee's hearings over this interim have proven that many Texans do go out of their way to participate in the process, as evinced by the presence of thousands of taxpayers from across the state at our meetings. From their testimony, it is clear that many across this state are in dire need of property tax relief, as they are being priced out of their homes under current law. These residents - mainly those who are economically distressed or on fixed incomes, especially our senior citizens and residents of disaster areas - undoubtedly need our assistance.

As you are no doubt aware, however, our pool of resources with which to help them is limited, and will likely be more tightly constricted than usual this session due to low oil prices and other competing priorities like school finance and pension funding. This is why I urge the Committee to develop solutions that will provide targeted relief to those who need it most, rather than blanket proposals that benefit those who would use the relief for luxury rather than for necessity.

Due in part to the numerous mandates that the state has, over the years, delegated to localities without providing the necessary funding, local property taxes fund many indispensable services on which Texans, especially those of lower socio-economic status, depend every day. Restricting the income of these jurisdictions, as several of the Committee's recommendations risk doing, serves only to harm those least fortunate while absolving wealthier property owners from paying their fair share.

To be sure, finding solutions that focus on Texas' indigent, elderly, and disaster-stricken property owners will be more difficult than issuing across-the-board cuts. In my thirty years as a legislator, I have been reminded every day of the words of President Kennedy, whose portrait hangs in my office, we do these things "not because they are easy, but because they are hard." I truly believe that these solutions are in the best interest of our communities across the state, and of the state as a whole. I look forward to working with you, and with the other members of the Committee and the rest of the Senate, to achieve the goal of better serving all of our constituents.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for your dedicated service through your leadership of this committee.

Sincerely,



Eddie Lucio, Jr.
State Senator

ELJ/cwl





CHARLES PERRY
TEXAS STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 28

November 15, 2016

Paul Bettencourt
Chairman
Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Relief & Reform
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711

Chairman Bettencourt:

It was an honor to serve on your committee regarding property tax reform. I appreciate your willingness to chair this committee at the call of Lt. Governor Dan Patrick and hold hearings across Texas in both urban and rural communities. This allowed the committee to hear directly from citizens and local officials who may not have been able to testify if the hearings were held solely in Austin.

During these hearings, it became even more apparent that our property tax system needs reform at all levels. It is unfair when property is appraised at full market value after a home was flooded or burned down. It is also unacceptable that families in Texas are literally being taxed out of their homes.

I want to reiterate, as the legislature moves forward on property tax reform, that rural communities face different and unique challenges that do not exist in urban communities.

I represent 51 counties and 36 of those counties have a population of ten thousand or less. In many of the counties I represent, raising property taxes by one cent is only enough to hire one minimum wage worker. In Harris County, a one-cent tax increase brings in tens of millions of dollars. Furthermore, larger counties benefit from economies of scale that allow for more efficient processes to implement tax reform measures.

Additionally, many rural counties face property value volatility due to the oil and gas market fluctuating. This instability makes local government budgets just as volatile, making rollback elections an unavoidable outcome if reforms do not address oil and gas interests. I am pleased this report recommends changes that would allow for cost effective rollback elections.

As property tax reforms unfold, I want to ensure rural counties are not required to raise property taxes in order to implement reforms, nor are unduly hindered while transforming to a fair and transparent property system. I hope to continue to work with you and fellow members of the legislature to find balance between rural and urban Texas.

Respectfully,

Charles Perry
Texas State Senator
District 28

COMMITTEES: AGRICULTURE, WATER & RURAL AFFAIRS, CHAIR
CRIMINAL JUSTICE • HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES • HIGHER EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 12068 • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711



VAN TAYLOR
TEXAS STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 8

COMMITTEES:

NOMINATIONS, VICE-CHAIR
SUNSET ADVISORY COMMISSION, VICE-CHAIR
EDUCATION
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
TRANSPORTATION
PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

November 15, 2016

Chairman Paul Bettencourt
P.O. Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Chairman Bettencourt,

I want to commend you on your leadership and vision to go directly to the people with property tax hearings across the state. Not only have these hearings provided our constituents with the forum to share how skyrocketing property taxes are affecting their everyday lives, it also amplifies the voice of the people we serve.

On no other issue have I seen such a divide between the will of the people and government interests. The fear in peoples voice, worried they are going to have to sell their home because the tax burden has grown to immense, was emotional and powerful. Meanwhile, taxpayers were lectured by local government officials, taxpayer-funded lobbyists, and high-powered government consultants on why they need more and more of the people's money. And on why government needs unhinged freedom to grow as the political elite see fit.

This divide has exposed a system where government growth is set to autopilot without a mechanism for the people to check its power. Such a system, which seeks to silence the people, belittles the principles of our Republic and is in dire need of reform.

Summarizing the interim committee charges and hearings, the Property Tax Relief and Reform Committee Report provides a useful starting point for legislative review during the upcoming 2017 legislative session. As I am sure you will agree, I believe there are issues in this report that warrant further discussion as well as important topics not covered in the report. I look forward to continuing working with you to pass meaningful reforms that empower the people and provide much needed tax relief.

Semper Fidelis,

Van Taylor

CAPITOL OFFICE
P.O. Box 12068
ROOM 4E.2
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711
(512) 463-0119
FAX: (512) 463-1017

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL OFFICE
MAVERICK COUNTY COURTHOUSE
501 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 114
EAGLE PASS, TEXAS 78852
(830) 758-0294
FAX: (830) 758-0402

The Senate of The State of Texas



Senator Carlos Hresti District 19

SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT OFFICE
3315 SIDNEY BROOKS DR., SUITE 100
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78235
(210) 932-2568
FAX: (210) 932-2572

WEST TEXAS REGIONAL OFFICE
312 SOUTH CEDAR
PECOS, TEXAS 79772
(432) 447-0270
FAX: (432) 447-0275

DIAL TOLL FREE: 1-800-459-0119
DIAL 711 FOR RELAY CALLS

November 15, 2016

The Honorable Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Chairman Bettencourt,

Thank you for your leadership as Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief, for organizing the eight committee hearings across the State, and helping develop the Interim Report to the 85th Legislature. I appreciate the opportunity to work with you on this report and the opportunity to share some insights on the committee's interim report. I found the report does contain some reasonable recommendations and therefore I have signed it, however, I am submitting this letter to record some of my concerns.

A recommendation from the report, supported by hours of testimony from local officials and taxpayers, is the need to provide additional training to both Appraisal Review Board (ARB) members as well as Central Appraisal Districts (CAD). We call on ARB's and CAD's to provide a vital function in our local communities and the state should provide adequate resources to support their functions. As the testimony and report note, 4 hours of training appears to be insufficient and we should require a more robust training.

The report also addresses the contemplation of requiring rollback or bond elections to coincide with a general election. Voter participation in general elections are historically greater due to increase visibility and other factors. Coordinating a rollback and bond election to coincide with a general election would provide taxpayers the greatest opportunity to participate and weigh in on an important decision that will affect their families. I look forward to further discussion on achieving this goal while retaining the integrity of both the Property Tax Code and the Elections Code.

While I do believe we can collectively make improvements to the current property tax system, it warrants mentioning that Texas' ranks near the bottom in total state and local taxes paid by residents. This is impressive given we have asked cities and counties to provide the lion's share of services in our state, and granting them the property tax as a primary method to fund those services.

While the interim report accurately reflects that State wide property tax levies have increased from 2005 to 2015, it doesn't adequately explore the origins. It remains important to note that during that time period, despite the great recession, Texas experienced both incredible economic and population growth. As more individuals migrated to Texas it added additional properties to county and city tax bases. Simultaneously, Texas experienced an unprecedented growth in mineral interests which also added additional values to the local tax levy. I believe a more accurate discussion about the increase in tax levies would include these considerations into account when discussing the overall tax levy increases.

FINANCE; NATURAL RESOURCES & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION, VICE-CHAIR; JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE TO STUDY BORDER SECURITY,
SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD



The Honorable Paul Bettencourt
November 15, 2016
Page 2

CARLOS URESTI
TEXAS STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 19

During any time of increased growth, local communities will experience additional costs associated with providing services such as law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, operations of local courts, roads and infrastructure. These needed services represent the majority of every local community's budget. I think it is in our collective best efforts to provide our local communities with the necessary tools and resources to efficiently and adequately provide the services we depend on.

While commercial property taxpayers represent some of the largest taxpayers in our state, there is concern amongst many Texans, including those who testified before the committee, that commercial property is not being taxed fairly in comparison to residential property. Homeowners note real concerns with the appraisal system, and their remedies to challenge an unfair appraisal, and many commercial property owners note these same concerns. The difference is that large commercial property owners have greater resources, and an incentive to routinely challenge their appraisal, even if it may be a fair appraisal. The committee missed an opportunity to study whether or not the undervaluing of commercial property contributes to higher residential property taxes, and to what extent.

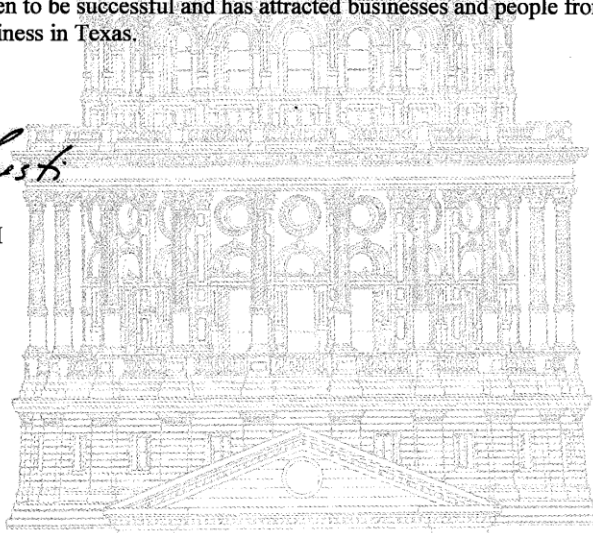
The report notes that there may be valid reasons to explore the need to lower the rollback rate from 8 percent, but regrettably doesn't address why the recommendation of 4 percent is the appropriate starting point. We heard testimony that doing so would restrict a county's ability to operate on a pay-as-you-go basis and may require counties to hold larger reserves to accomplish necessary projects. Yet the report missed the opportunity to explore and address these concerns.

We also received testimony that a cap on city and county budgets may not resolve the goal of reducing property taxes. For those local communities that are currently experiencing modest increases of less than 4% may be incentivized to increase their taxes further to prudently plan for future projects.

I believe there is great merit in allowing decisions about local taxes and local budgets to be determined by the local voters and their locally elected officials. To date, my office has not received a single correspondence from a local elected official in my district, Democrat or Republican, who believes a 4% cap is wise. The state can, and should provide additional property tax relief as our state budget allows. This model has proven to be successful and has attracted businesses and people from all over the world to live and conduct business in Texas.

Sincerely,

CARLOS I. URESTI



**APPENDIX B: CITY, COUNTY, SCHOOL AND
SPECIAL DISTRICT LEVIES**

Appendix B: Total tax levies by taxing unit type 2005 to 2015

Special District Property Tax Levies, 2005 to 2015

Year	Total Property Taxes Levied	Special District Taxes Levied	Special District Levy as a % of Total Levy	Annual % change in Special District Levy	Annual % change in Total Levy
2005	\$33,478,989,315	\$3,609,629,697	10.78%	7.14%	8.09%
2006	\$35,552,907,030	\$3,972,185,910	11.17%	10.04%	6.19%
2007	\$35,114,596,621	\$4,513,060,409	12.85%	13.62%	-1.23%
2008	\$38,979,969,545	\$4,952,734,969	12.71%	9.74%	11.01%
2009	\$40,034,355,798	\$5,133,820,497	12.82%	3.66%	2.70%
2010	\$40,275,451,155	\$5,394,690,759	13.39%	5.08%	0.60%
2011	\$40,515,816,942	\$5,038,666,683	12.44%	-6.60%	0.60%
2012	\$42,748,637,566	\$5,543,422,373	12.97%	10.02%	5.51%
2013	\$45,266,928,108	\$5,318,507,423	11.75%	-4.06%	5.89%
2014	\$49,067,216,670	\$6,370,469,864	12.98%	19.78%	8.40%
2015	\$52,207,422,947	\$6,954,137,406	13.32%	9.16%	6.40%

Percentage Change 2005-2015

92.66%

Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts; 2015 Data is subject to Revision

County Property Tax Levies, 2005 to 2015

Year	Total Property Taxes Levied	County Taxes Levied	County Levy as a % of Total Levy	Annual % change in County Levy	Annual % change in Total Levy
2005	\$33,478,989,315	\$4,772,652,208	14.26%	6.94%	8.09%
2006	\$35,552,907,030	\$5,339,613,542	15.02%	11.88%	6.19%
2007	\$35,114,596,621	\$5,836,989,949	16.62%	9.31%	-1.23%
2008	\$38,979,969,545	\$6,342,704,903	16.27%	8.66%	11.01%
2009	\$40,034,355,798	\$6,526,724,060	16.30%	2.90%	2.70%
2010	\$40,275,451,155	\$6,567,069,864	16.31%	0.62%	0.60%
2011	\$40,515,816,942	\$6,742,926,165	16.64%	2.68%	0.60%
2012	\$42,748,637,566	\$7,064,653,310	16.53%	4.77%	5.51%
2013	\$45,266,928,108	\$7,558,391,626	16.70%	6.99%	5.89%
2014	\$49,067,216,670	\$8,114,998,194	16.54%	7.36%	8.40%
2015	\$52,207,422,947	\$8,696,383,818	16.66%	7.16%	6.40%

Percentage Change 2005-2015

82.21%

Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts; 2015 Data is subject to Revision

Appendix b: Total tax levies by taxing unit type 2005 to 2015

City Property Tax Levies, 2005 to 2015

Year	Total Property Taxes Levied	City Taxes Levied	City Levy as a % of Total Levy	Annual % change in City Levy	Annual % change in Total Levy
2005	\$33,478,989,315	\$4,901,791,597	14.64%	6.38%	8.09%
2006	\$35,552,907,030	\$5,322,985,519	14.97%	8.59%	6.19%
2007	\$35,114,596,621	\$5,890,306,731	16.77%	10.66%	-1.23%
2008	\$38,979,969,545	\$6,451,012,447	16.55%	9.52%	11.01%
2009	\$40,034,355,798	\$6,593,755,037	16.47%	2.21%	2.70%
2010	\$40,275,451,155	\$6,755,401,406	16.77%	2.45%	0.60%
2011	\$40,515,816,942	\$6,711,934,736	16.57%	-0.64%	0.60%
2012	\$42,748,637,566	\$7,067,779,921	16.53%	5.30%	5.51%
2013	\$45,266,928,108	\$7,324,430,806	16.18%	3.63%	5.89%
2014	\$49,067,216,670	\$7,789,068,440	15.87%	6.34%	8.40%
2015	\$52,207,422,947	\$8,380,435,861	16.05%	7.59%	6.40%

Percentage Change 2005-2015

70.97%

Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts; 2015 Data is subject to Revision

School Property Tax Levies, 2005 to 2015

Year	Total Property Taxes Levied	School Taxes Levied	School Levy as a % of Total Levy	Annual % change in School Levy	Annual % change in Total Levy
2005	\$33,478,989,315	\$20,194,915,813	60.32%	8.96%	8.09%
2006	\$35,552,907,030	\$20,918,122,059	58.84%	3.58%	6.19%
2007	\$35,114,596,621	\$18,874,239,532	53.75%	-9.77%	-1.23%
2008	\$38,979,969,545	\$21,233,517,226	54.47%	12.50%	11.01%
2009	\$40,034,355,798	\$21,780,056,204	54.40%	2.57%	2.70%
2010	\$40,275,451,155	\$21,558,289,126	53.53%	-1.02%	0.60%
2011	\$40,515,816,942	\$22,002,289,358	54.31%	2.06%	0.60%
2012	\$42,748,637,566	\$23,072,781,962	53.97%	4.87%	5.51%
2013	\$45,266,928,108	\$24,854,671,461	54.91%	7.72%	5.89%
2014	\$49,067,216,670	\$26,792,677,172	54.60%	7.80%	8.40%
2015	\$52,207,422,947	\$28,176,465,862	53.97%	5.16%	6.40%

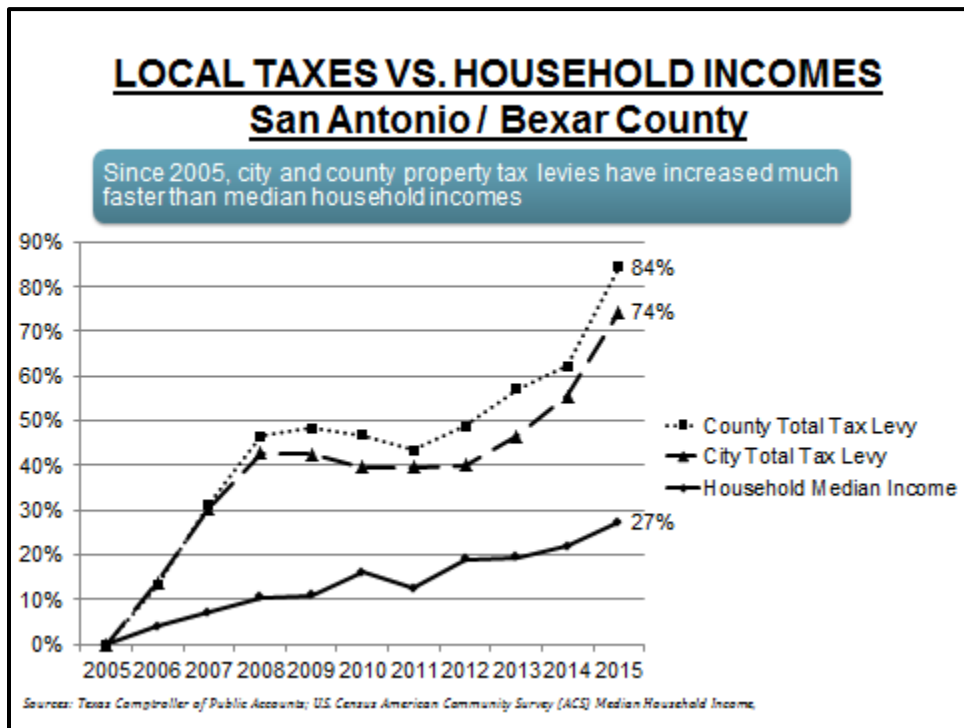
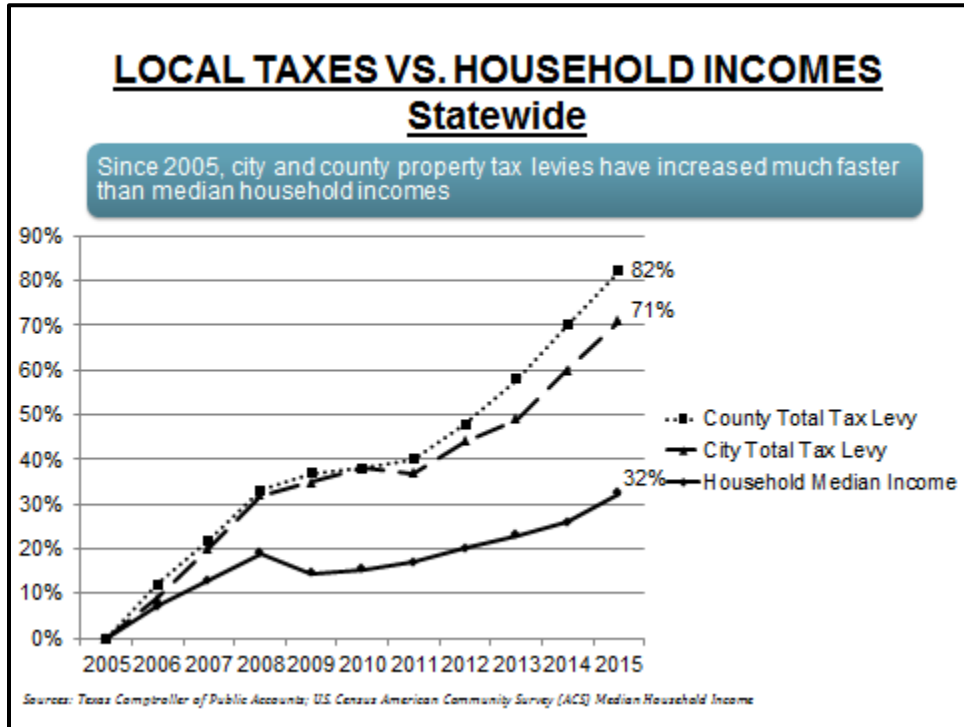
Percentage Change 2005-2015

39.52%

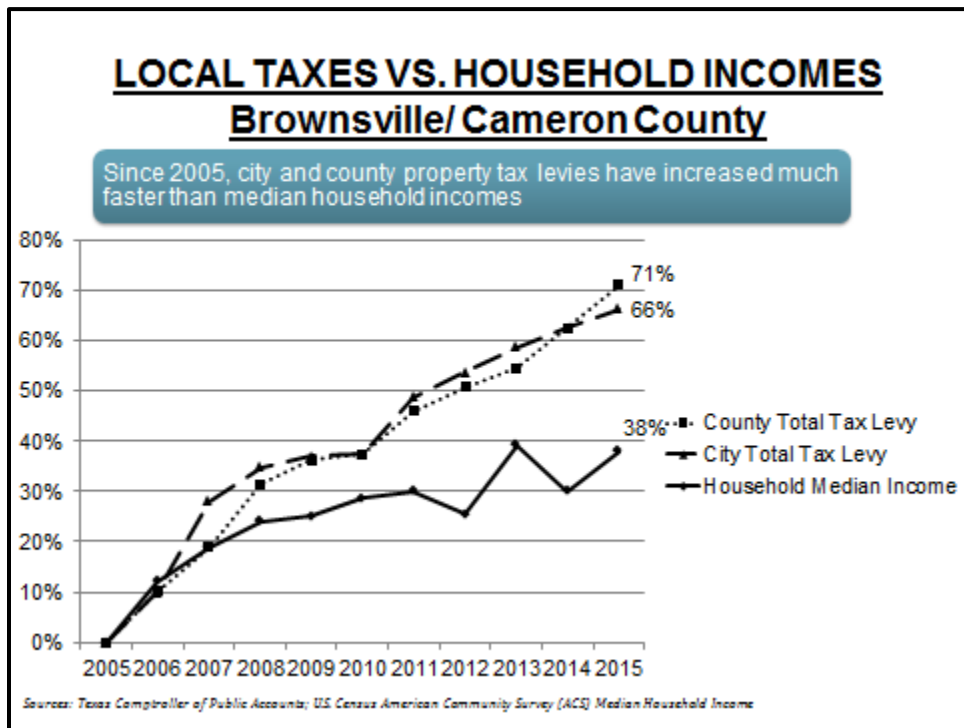
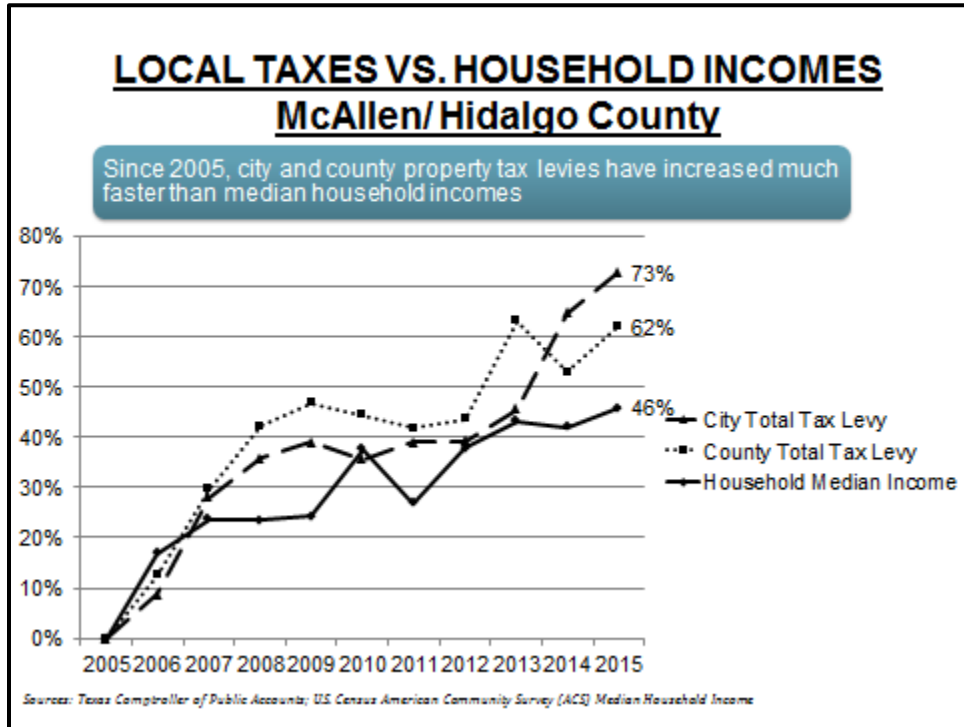
Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts; 2015 Data is subject to Revision

APPENDIX C: MEDIAN INCOME VS. TAX LEVIES

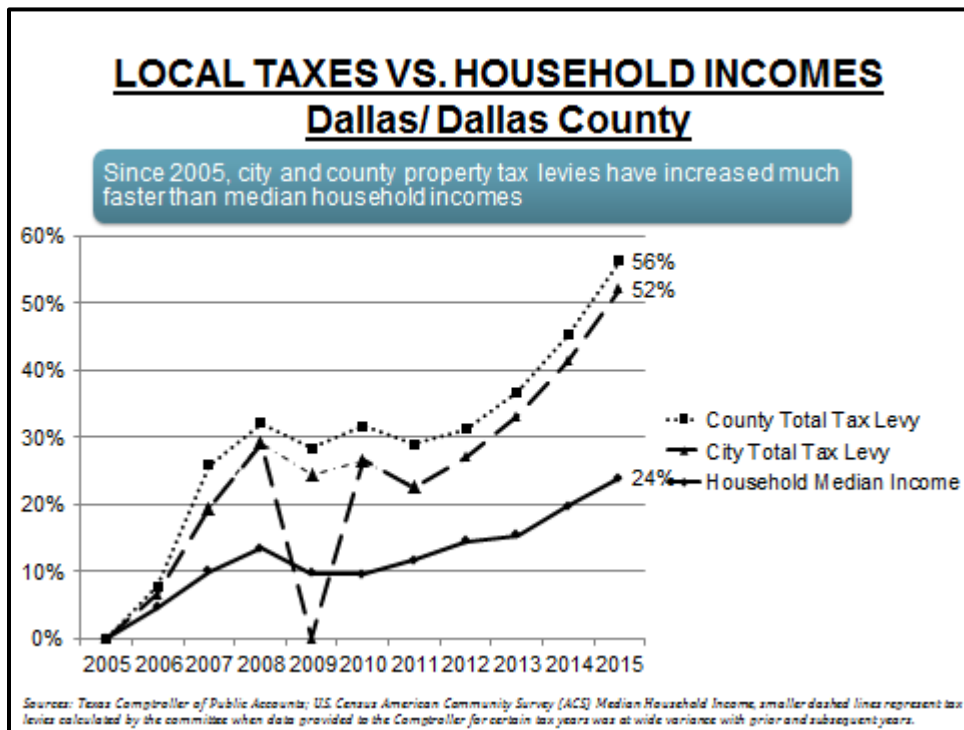
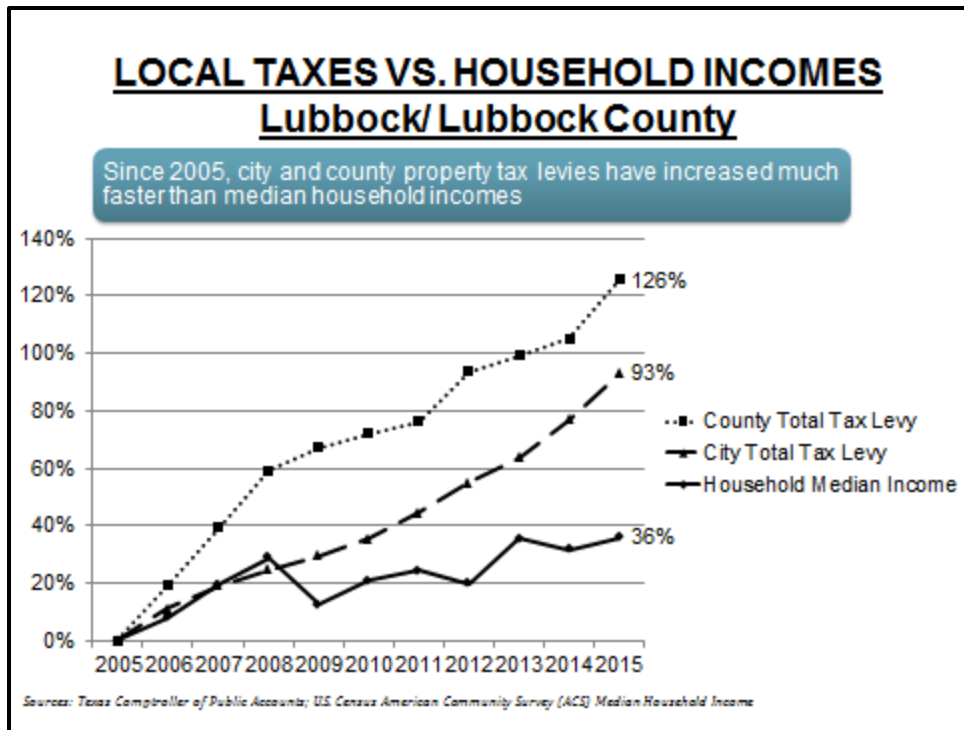
Appendix C: Total tax levies compared to household median income for selected cities and counties 2005 to 2015



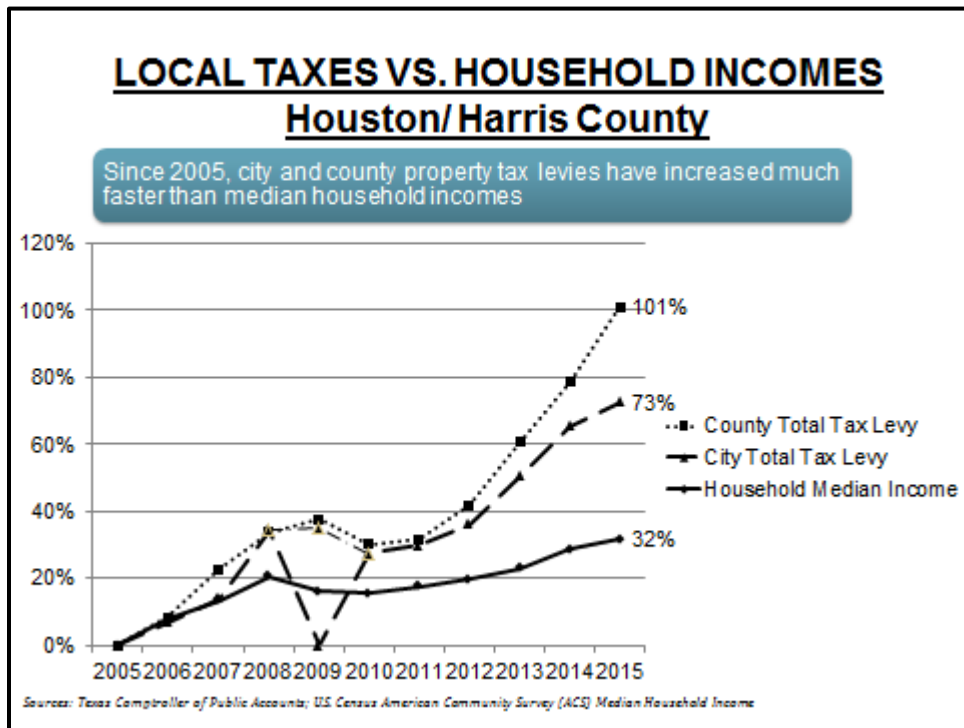
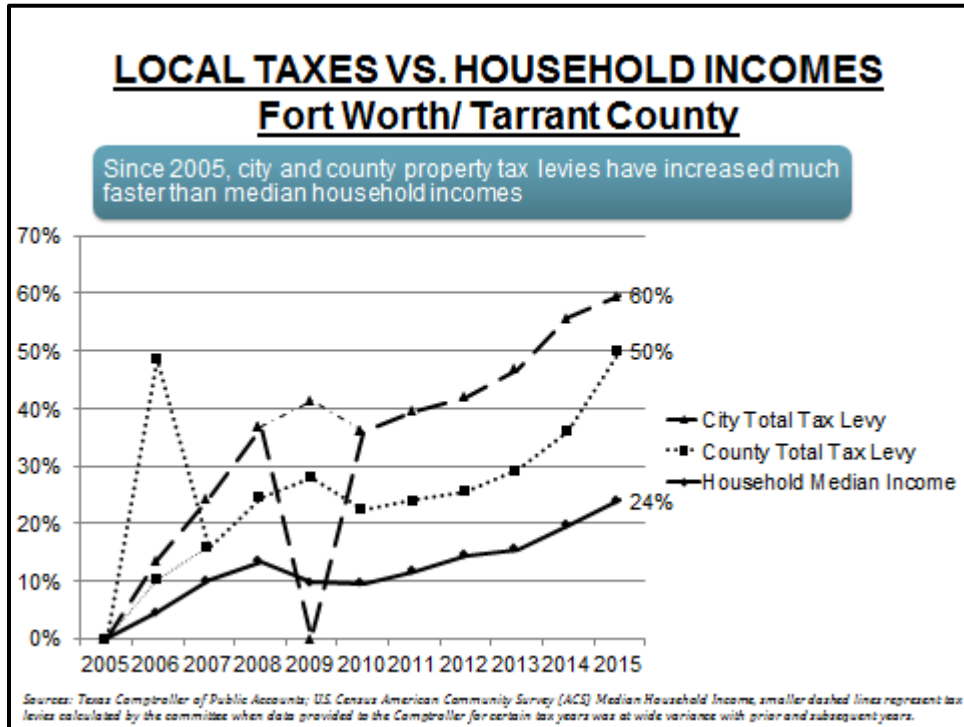
Appendix C: Total tax levies compared to household median income for selected cities and counties 2005 to 2015



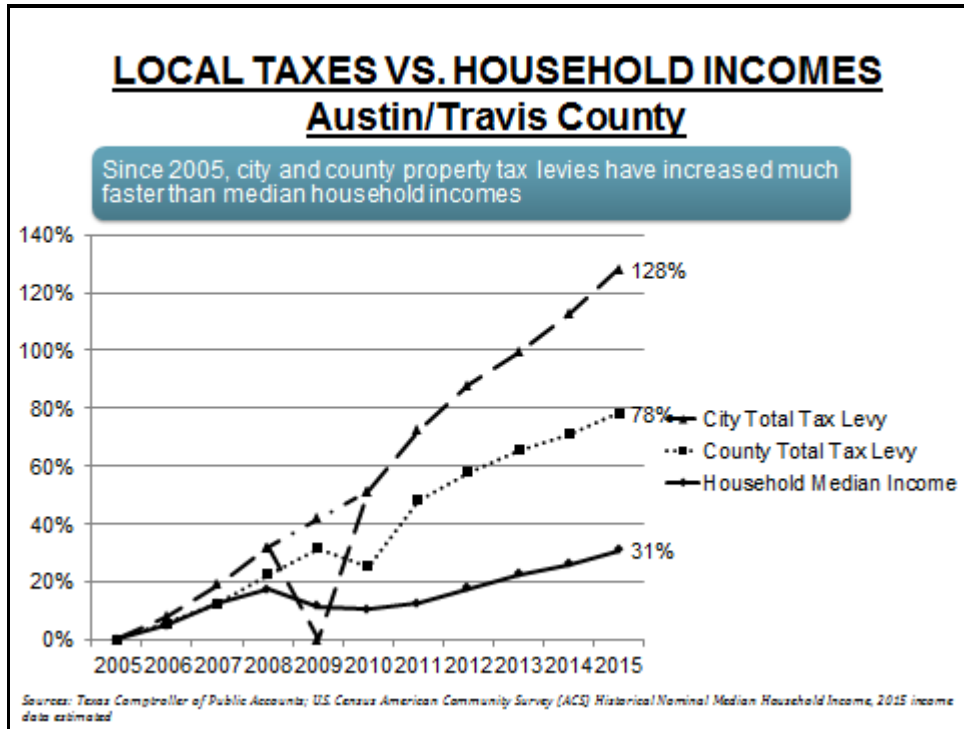
Appendix C: Total tax levies compared to household median income for selected cities and counties 2005 to 2015



Appendix C: Total tax levies compared to household median income for selected cities and counties 2005 to 2015



Appendix C: Total tax levies compared to household median income for selected cities and counties 2005 to 2015



APPENDIX D: WITNESS LISTS

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

December 7, 2015 2:30 PM

Property Tax Reform and Relief

ON:

Ashley, Phillip Associate Deputy Comptroller (Texas Comptroller), Austin, TX

Esparza, Mike Director, Property Tax Assistance Division (Texas Comptroller of Public
Accounts), Austin, TX

Rose, Connie Team Lead (Comptroller)

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

January 27, 2016 10:30 AM

Property Tax Reform and Relief

ON:

Adams, Jesse R. Consultant (Taxpayers), San Antonio

Alter, Kenneth (Common Sense)

Amezquita, Michael Chief Appraiser Bexar Appraisal Dist. (also providing written testimony) (Bexar Appraisal Dist.)

Arechiga, Jason V.P. of Affordable Development (The NRP Group), SA, TX

Bast, Cynthia Attorney (affordable housing complex owners)

Beebe, Matt Entrepreneur (also providing written testimony) (Self), SA, TX

Bellamy, Russell Retired M.I.S. Technology (also providing written testimony) (Prop. Tax Payers of Bexar Co.), SA, TX

Berlanga, Michael CPA/Real Estate Broker (Self; Clients)

Berlanga, Theresa Senior Citizen (also providing written testimony) (Self), San Antonio, TX

Brooks, Roy Retired Public School Teacher (Self), SA

Calvert, Tommy County Commissioner (Bexar County, Pct. 4), SA, TX

Cartwright, Debbie Lawyer (HCAD), Austin, TX

Casallero, Scott Vice Chairman of the Public Policy Committee, Realtor (also providing written testimony) (Texas Association of Realtors), SA, TX

Craymer, Dale President (also providing written testimony) (Texas Taxpayers & Research Association), Austin, TX

Dennis, Mary M. Mortician (Mayor City of Live Oak - TML - President - Elect)

Diharce, David Small Business Owner (U.S. 281 North Opposition to Annexation), SA, TX

Esparza, Mike Director, Property Tax Assistance Division (Comptroller of Public Accounts), Austin, TX

Finger, Jack M. Self-Employed (Self), San Antonio, TX

Flores, Juan Health Professional (Self), San Antonio, TX

Gerami, Wayne Nonprofit Affordable Housing (Austin Habitat for Humanity), Austin, TX

Gorzell, Ben Chief Financial Officer (City of San Antonio), San Antonio, TX

Graeber, Kenneth Property Tax Consultant (also providing written testimony) (Texas Association of Property Tax Professionals), Houston

Judson, Jeff Public Policy Consultant (also providing written testimony) (Self), San Antonio, TX

Kahn, W. Barry Developer (also providing written testimony) (Self; TX Assn of Affordable Housing Providers, TX Assn of Builders), Hou, TX

Kecseg, Ross Journalist, Non-Profit (Texans for Fiscal Responsibility), Addison

LeBas, James fiscal analyst (AECT, TXOGA, TAM, and Chemical Council), Austin, TX

Martin, Bob CPA (Homeowner - Taxpayer Assn of Bexar Co), SA, TX

Martinez Jr., Carlos A. Banking (also providing written testimony) (International Bank of Commerce), San Antonio, TX

Messick, Bill Field Studies, Property Tax Assistance Division (Comptroller of Public Accounts), Austin

Michel, Lorri (also providing written testimony) (Texas Association of Property Tax Professional), Austin, TX

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

January 27, 2016 10:30 AM

Moore, Jason Commercial Construction (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Moreno, Celina attorney (Texas Latino Education Coalition), San Antonio, TX

Morse, Catherine General Counsel & Sr Director of Public Affairs (Samsung Austin Semiconductor)

Muhlenberg, E. J. Property Owner (Partnership- JJJJ Enterprises LTD)

Oldham, Julie Iris Political Activist (Self)

Parker Jr., Allan E. Attorney, President (The Justice Foundation)

Pena, Derek property tax consultant (O'Connor & Associates), San Antonio, TX

Perez, Richard Chamber of Commerce President/CEO (also providing written testimony) (San Antonio Chamber of Commerce)

Popp, Jim Attorney (Popp Hutcheson & Tax Equity Council), Austin

Quintero, James Analyst (also providing written testimony) (Texas Public Policy Foundation)

Ross, Marc Property Manager (also providing written testimony) (Self; Texas Apartment Association)

Sander, Lindsay Consultant (Self), Austin

Sculley, Sheryl City Manager (City of San Antonio), San Antonio, TX

Shoemaker, David Senior Policy Analyst (also providing written testimony) (Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief)

South, Brent Chief Appraiser (Texas Association of Appraisal Districts), Greenville, TX

Stewart, Todd Atty (Harris Co. Appr. Dist.)

Syamken, Scott Vice President, USAA (USAA)

Uresti, Albert Bexar County Tax Assessor-Collector (also providing written testimony) (Bexar County Tax Office), SA, TX

Venable, Peggy policy dir, AFP (also providing written testimony) (Americans for

Prosperity), Austin, TX

Walker, Ashley Field Director (Americans For Prosperity)

Registering, but not testifying:

ON:

Alejos, George Real Estate Broker (Self)

Collins, Patricia C.P.A. (City of Universal City), Universal City, TX

Contrevas, Gloria Real Estate/Commercial Property (Self), SA, TX

Corsen, Bradley S. Attorney-Real Estate Transactions (Self)

Crigler, Marya Chief Appraiser (Travis CAD)

Greener, Patrick Annual Fund Coordinator, UIN (My home and taxes)

Jordan, David City Councilman (Leon Valley, TX)

McCarthy, Dennis Property Owner (Self), SA, TX

Sabom, Rob Automotive Sales & Service (San Antonio Auto Dealers), SA, TX

San Miguel, Olga Retired (Self), Alamo Heights, TX

Simpson, Martie Finance Director, GNB (City of New Braunfels)

Taylor, Ken City Manager (City of Universal City), U.C., TX

Wayman, Scott City Manager, City of Live Oak (City of Live Oak)

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

January 27, 2016 10:30 AM

Providing written testimony:

ON:

Kuenstler, Kelly City Manager (Leon Valley, TX)

Landman, Cheryl Mayor (Fair Oaks Branch)

Toudouze, Chuck Various Small Bus/Real Estate (My family & peers), San Antonio, TX

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

February 11, 2016 9:00 AM

Property Tax Reform and Relief

ON:

Cartwright, Deborah Lawyer (Harris County Appraisal District), Austin, TX

Dickens, Jay Real Estate Investor (Self)

Dunson, Stephen Intergra Tax, Inc. (Self), Ft. Worth, TX

Elizondo, Mary VP. Finance & Admin. Services (South Texas College)

Garza, Eric Texas Coalitions Director, The LIBRE Initiative (Self)

Garza, Rolando Chief Appraiser (Hidalgo County Appraisal District)

Gomez, Frutosa Chief Appraiser Cameron Appraisal Dist. (Cameron Appraisal Dist.)

Gonzales, Veronica Vice President of Gov't & Community Relations, UTRGV (UTRGV),
Edinburg, TX

Gray, Jim City Manager (City of Ingleside)

Jones, Ken Council of Governments (also providing written testimony) (Lower Rio
Grande Valley Development Council), Weslaco

Martinez, Jorge Field Director for the Libre Initiative (The Libre Initiative)

McClagherty, Fern OWLS - LTC Instructor (OWLS - taxpayers), Edinburg, TX

Messick, Bill Appraisal (State Comptroller/P.T.AD)

Montesdeoca, Richard Retired (OWLS), Edinburg

Neal, Lloyd Nueces County Judge (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Perkins, Peter L. Mayor (also providing written testimony) (City of Ingleside, TX)

Phipps, Marcus REALTOR (Texas Association of Realtors), Harlingen

Rameriz, Josue Policy Analyst (Disaster Recovery Step Tax Increase)

Ramirez, Maria Landlady (Self)

Rhyne, Marilyn retired (OWLS - taxpayers), Edinburg, TX

Shoemaker, David Senior Policy Analyst (also providing written testimony) (Select

Committee)

Traver, Frank Retired C.P.A. (Self), McAllen, TX

Van Pelt, Jeffrey Manager (also providing written testimony) (Comptroller of Public Accounts), Austin, TX

Villarreal, Martin Chief Appraiser for Webb County (also providing written testimony) (Webb County Appraisal District), Laredo, TX

Villarreal, Jr., Pablo (Paul) Hidalgo County Tax Assessor-Collector (also providing written testimony) (Hidalgo County), Edinburg, TX

Yzaguirre, Tony Tax Assessor Collector (Cameron County)

Registering, but not testifying:

ON:

Camarillo, Rick Administrative Assistant (Cameron County Tax Office)

Damen, Jason American Electric Power (American Electric Power)

Garcia Jr., Jesse Tax Collector Chief Deputy (Cameron County), Bro., TX

Howell, Chelsea Libre Initiative (Libre Initiative)

Lara, Eli Libre Field Director (Self)

Navaro, Alex Libre (libre)

Popp, Jim Attorney (Popp Hutcheson Tax Equity Council)

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

February 11, 2016 9:00 AM

Rios, Elisa Libre Initiative (Libre Initiative)

Sanchez, Randy Contractor (Libre Initiative)

Providing written testimony:

ON:

Tagliabue, Tom Director, Intergovernmental Relations (City of Corpus Christi), CC, TX

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

March 21, 2016 11:00 AM

Property Tax Reform and Relief

ON:

Addison, Tim County Commissioner/Farmer (also providing written testimony) (Yoakum County), Plains, TX

Alderson, Melinda Retired Attorney (Self), Lubbock, TX

Allred, Don County Judge & Tax Payer (Oldham County), TX

Bellsnyder, Suzanne City of Spearman, City Manager (Self)

Bennett, Ricky Oil & Gas (Self), Lubbock, TX

Bolls, Jr., Downing A. Taylor County Judge (Taylor County)

Davis, David C. Haskell County Judge (Haskell County)

Decker, Lauren Echos ranching (also providing written testimony) (Texas SW Cattle Raisers)

Fredrickson, Daron Property Tax Consultant (Texas Oil & Gas Association), Gainesville, TX

Harpole, Paul Mayor of Amarillo (also providing written testimony) (City of Amarillo)

Hurst, Britt Retired Police (Self)

Kearney, Charlie Real Estate Broker (Lubbock Asso. of Realtors)

Keister, Ronnie Lubbock County Tax Assessor (Self)

Kelly, Charles Banking (also providing written testimony) (City of Perryton), Perryton, TX

Klein, Todd R. Consultant & Insurance Rep. (Private Citizen)

Landis, David City Manager (also providing written testimony) (City of Perryton), Perryton, TX

Lewis, Gregory D Retired (Self)

Lowry, Jeffrey Real Estate Broker/Property Mgmt. (Self; Madera Companies and Texas

Apt. Assoc.), LBK, TX

Norman, Lee County Judge (Garza County)

Painter, Gary Sheriff Midland County (Sheriffs)

Radloff, Tim Chief Appraiser/Administrator (Lubbock Central Appraisal District),

Lubbock, TX

Ratliff, Carolyn (also providing written testimony) (Donnie Week Estate)

Ritchie, Dara RN, parent of teens/young adults (Self)

Rogers, Robert small business owner General Steel Warehouse (also providing written testimony) (Self), LBK, TX

Shoemaker, David Policy Analyst (also providing written testimony) (Select Committee for Property Tax Reform and Relief)

Speer, Cara Social Worker (NASW-TX)

Ward, Mikel retired (taxpayers)

Winegarner, Josh Director of Government Relations (Texas Cattle Feeders Association),

Amarillo, TX

Wright, Brian Ranch Manager (also providing written testimony) (Self), Mason, TX

Registering, but not testifying:

ON:

Bruegel, Jon Door Company (Self)

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

March 21, 2016 11:00 AM

Meyer, Rob Business Owner (Self)

Shreck, Brian Research Associate at Texas Tech (Self)

Providing written testimony:

ON:

Cartrite, Lynn Retired (Self)

Karr, Douglas L. self employed (Self)

Young, Kevin Clergy (Texas Impact - Austin)

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

April 27, 2016 8:00 AM

Property Tax Reform and Relief

ON:

Aaron, Tracy Mansfield Police Chief (City of Mansfield), Mansfield, TX

Ames, John R. Tax Assessor/Collector (Dallas County Tax Office), Dallas

Berhe, Lemlem Pharmacist (also providing written testimony) (TOP), Duncanville

Blaylock, William VP, Texas Instruments (also providing written testimony) (Texas Instruments), Dallas

Branham, Beverly general Pest (also providing written testimony) (Self; me & my neighborhood area residences), Ft Worth, TX

Caraway, Reverend Mel United Methodist Pastor (also providing written testimony) (The Board of Directors, Texas Impact)

Chandler, Clayton City Manager (also providing written testimony) (City of Mansfield)

Davis, Kent Attorney at Law (Self), NRH, TX

Dritt, John SR Manager Property Tax (Southwest Airlines), Dallas, TX

Dunson, Stephen Property Tax Consultant (Self), Ft. Worth, TX

Eastland, Bill Accountant (Self), Arl., TX

Eichler, Russell Property Tax Consultant (All of my clients)

Fabry, Thomas Citizen (also providing written testimony) (Frisco Tax Payers), Frisco, TX

Frankland, Kimberly Retired business owner (Self)

Frazier, R. Olen Chair of Tarrant Appraisal Review Board (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Garcia, Commissioner Dr. Elba County Commissioner (also providing written testimony) (Dallas County Commissioners County), Dallas, TX

Gilmore, Thomas J. Public Sector Sales (also providing written testimony) (City of Lewisville (City Councilman), Lewisville, TX

Harman, Sandy Pharm Tech (knowledge on issues regarding prop tax), Allen, TX

Haverlah, Ryan D City Official (Budget Dir./ Asst. to the City Mgr) (City of Copperas Core), Copperas Core, TX

Hedtke, Amy Mom (Self)

Hensley, Paul Chief Financial Officer (HOLT CAT), San Antonio, TX

Hill, Laura Mayor Southlake (Southlake), Southlake, TX

Hixson, Raymond (Self)

Holloway, Karen Real Estate Investor/Rancher (also providing written testimony) (Self), Rockwall, TX

Horn, Mary Denton County Judge (also providing written testimony) (Denton County), Denton

Hurley, Bob Atascosa County Judge (also providing written testimony) (Atascosa County)

Irby, Harriet Mae Small residential SF Landlord (Self)

Johnson, Jr, Malvin G. taxpayer (also providing written testimony) (all taxpayers who think they pay too much)

Kecseg, Ross Journalist - Public Policy (Texans for Fiscal Responsibility)

Klement, Leon County Commissioner (Cooke County)

Lane, Bill Attorney - Deputy City Manager (Mansfield Texas)

LaRosiliere, Harry Mayor (City of Plano), Plano, TX

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

April 27, 2016 8:00 AM

Law, Jeff Chief Appraiser - Tarrant Appraisal Dist. (Tarrant Appraisal District), Ft. Worth

Losada, Gary Retired (Self), Southlake, TX

Mattingly, Ian Property Management Executive (Self; Texas Apartment Association & myself), Dallas, TX

Mays, Wes Coppell City Council (also providing written testimony) (City of Coppell),
Coppell, TX

McAllister, Frank D. Rancher (Self), Menard, TX

McKechnie, Randy Property Tax Consultant (also providing written testimony) (Self),
Arl, TX

Michel, Lorri lawyer (TAPTP), Austin

Nolen, W. Kenneth Chief Appraiser (Dallas Central Appraisal District), Dallas

Norred, Warren V. atty (Self)

Openshaw, Michael Taxpayer (Database Develope (also providing written testimony)
(Self)

Palmer, Joe Logistics (Self), Burleson, TX

Patrick, Dan Lieutenant Governor (Self)

Pennington, Paul Property Consultant (also providing written testimony) (PE Pennington
& Co Inc)

Phillis, Peter Deputy City Manager (City of Mansfield, Texas)

Piziali, Andrew retiree (Self)

Rawlings, Mike Mayor, City of Dallas (City of Dallas), Dallas

Ripp M.D., Thomas V. Medical Doctor (Texas Organizing Project)

Ross, Mike Assistant Fire Chief (City of Mansfield Fire Dept.), Mansfield, TX

Sandlin, Bennett Executive Director (also providing written testimony) (Texas Municipal
League)

Serralde, Daniel North Texas Field Director (The Libre Initiative)

Shoemaker, David Senior Policy Analyst (also providing written testimony) (Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief)

Siegel, Constance Social Worker (NASW)

Slyke, Don Van Retired (Self)

Stanley, Tracy tax agent, realtor, arbitrator (also providing written testimony) (Self),
Arlington, TX

Stapleton, Georgia retired (also providing written testimony) (our property rights)

Wengerts, Houston Ranching (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Whitley, Judge Glen Tarrant County Judge (also providing written testimony) (Tarrant County), FW, TX

Wilder, Anthony Mayor Pro Tem (also providing written testimony) (City of Carrollton)

Williams, W. Jeff Mayor (also providing written testimony) (City of Arlington),
Arlington, TX

Wilson, Dennis D. Law Enforcement, Sheriff (Limestone County, Sheriff Assoc. of Texas),
Groesbeck, TX

Wommack, Paula Realtor (also providing written testimony) (Myself - 2003 President),
Arlington

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

April 27, 2016 8:00 AM

Wright, Ron Tax Assessor - Collector (also providing written testimony) (Tarrant County),
Ft. Worth

Registering, but not testifying:

ON:

Acuff, Sylvia Medical Sales (Self)

Albertson, Sharron retired teacher (Self), Plano, TX

Allgood, Katie Special Projects Coordinator (City of Hewitt), Hewitt, TX

Armfield, Ruth Real Estate Broker (Armfield Realty - Myself), Hickory Creek, TX

Baker, Donna home owner (Property Tax)

Blackstone, Phil Retired (Self)

Blackwell, Clifford Finance Director (City of Bedford TX)

Brown, Brianna Director (TOP Texas Organizing Project)

Browning, Chris (Homesteader)

Canon, Kelly facilities space planning (Self), Arlington, TX

Caruthers, Clay Assistant City Manager (City of Hurst)

Cox, Teresa Insurance Broker (Texas Organizing Project)

Devine, LMSW, Estella Social Worker (property owner), Arlington, TX

Dodson, George Computer Consultant (Self)

Felan, George D. Realtor (Self), Ft. Worth

Ford, Bradley Deputy City Manager (City of Burleson), Burleson, TX

Franke, Rob Mayor (City of Cedar Hill), Cedar Hill

Hall, Jennifer Tarrant Co. Republican Party Chair (TCGOP)

Hancock, Donna Gwin IT Professional (Self), Fort Worth

Harless, Barbara retired (No Texas Citizens Lobby), Murphy, TX

Hart, Bob City Manager (City of Kennedale), Kennedale

Hart, David Realtor (Self; Home Owner)

Jackson, Tim Homebuilder (Texas Association of Builders), Fairview, TX

Jolly, Jamee CEO, Chamber of Commerce (Plano Chamber of Commerce), Plano, TX

Knight, Marcus E. Mayor - City of Lancaster (City of Lancaster)

Kubiak, Bill J. Retired (Self)

Lambertsen, David Economist (All patriots)

Lummus, Michael Student (School of Social Work UT Arlington/NASW)

Malouf, Matt Real Estate Development (Self), Dallas

Meza, Terry Attorney (HD105), Irving

Mitchell, Monte Mark physician, Attorney, custom home builder, small business owner
(Self), Ft Worth, TX

Moore, Brandon Vice Chair (Tarrant County Republican Party)

Morgan, Kate Journalist (Self; Launch OFW)

O'Day Sr., Garland Property Tax Consultant (Self)

Ortiz, Diana G. City of Grand Prairie CFO (City of Grand Prairie)

Peabody, Susan project mgr (Self), Grapevine, TX

Ward, Oscar Retired (City Council - Irving, TX)

Watts, Chris Mayor Denton Texas (City of Denton)

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

April 27, 2016 8:00 AM

Wilson, Henry Retired; Hurst City Council (City of Hurst), Hurst, TX

Wilson, Sharen Criminal District Attorney (Self)

Zimmerman, Bill Pilot (Self), Southlake, TX

Providing written testimony:

ON:

Bovos, Aaron J. Chief Financial Officer (City of Fort Worth)

Durr, Rodney Lead Pastor, Grand Prairie Family Church (Grand Prairie Family Church)

Flemming, Jerry City Manager (City of Iowa Park), Iowa Park, TX

Gulley, Kiyundra President (Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce), Dallas, TX

Hale, Angela Consultant (City of McKinney, McKinney Chamber, MEDC), McKinney

Lawrence, Donna Property Tax Mgr - Denbury Resources (Self; Interested Taxpayer),
Plano, TX

Miles, Adam City Manager (City of Hewitt)

Price, Mayor Betsy Mayor of Fort Worth (City of Fort Worth)

Sheetz, Samuel Deputy Policy Director (Americans for Prosperity - TX)

Shetter, Ken Mayor (City of Burleson), Burleson, TX

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

May 10, 2016 9:00 AM

Property Tax Reform and Relief

ON:

Adair, Bob tax analyst (also providing written testimony) (TTARA), Houston, TX

Alexander, Russell Property Tax Consultant (also providing written testimony) (Self),
Bellaire, TX

Bassett, Steve CPA School District (Fort Bend ISD)

Belt, Robert CPA - Auditor for cities, counties, and schools (Belt Harris Pechacek),
Houston, TX

Bentley, Geri Mayor Pro Tem (League City)

Betancourt, Tammy CEO Houston Boma (Houston Boma), Houston, TX

Carter, James Appraiser/ Expert Witness (also providing written testimony) (Property
Evaluation Services/ O'Connor & Associates), Houston

Casale, Bob Real Estate (Self)

Cox, Braden Director US State Public Policy (also providing written testimony) (Amazon)

Craymer, Dale President (also providing written testimony) (Texas Taxpayers & Research
Association), Austin, TX

Diaz, Lisa (My family), Houston, TX

Forbes, Dean P. Retired (Self)

Galbraith, Patricia Managing Tax Director (AECT), Metairie, LA

Gonzalez, Jose Carlos Employee Benefit Administration (also providing written
testimony) (Self; Family/ Community)

Hart, Coach Dan Retired Coach (Kinkaid) (also providing written testimony) (Taxpayers
For Equal Appraisal (Posse)), Ho., TX

Hartman, Al Commercial R.E. (Hi-Reit)

Henley, Terry GE Retired - Engineer (also providing written testimony) (City of Meadows

Place (small cities)), Meadows Place, TX

Hogue, Tiffany (also providing written testimony) (Texas Organizing Project)

Hotze, Bruce R. (Let the People Vote Houston)

Hunt, Lisa Rector, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (also providing written testimony) (My Parish)

Hunt, Stacy G. Apartment Development & Mgt (Self; My firm (Greystar) and the Texas Apt. Assn.)

Ingram, Robert Tax Consultant (500 client)

Johnson, Cheryl E Galveston Co. Tax Assessor Collector (also providing written testimony) (GCTO & Co. Citizens)

Kennedy, John Senior Analyst (also providing written testimony) (Texas Taxpayers & Research Association (TTARA)), Austin

Khan, W Barry Developer (also providing written testimony) (Self; TAAHP, TAA and Texas Builders)

Larsen, Yvonne Sales & Director-elect Seinna Mud 10 (Self)

Laymon, Aaron Real Estate Broker (also providing written testimony) (Self; Fort Bend & Harris County property owner)

Lehmann, David R. Lobbyist (The Taxpayers of Texas)

Lewis, Mike President, Lewis Food Town (Lewis Food Town), Houston, TX

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

May 10, 2016 9:00 AM

McCloskey, Scott Electrical Engineer (also providing written testimony) (Self), Sugar Land, TX

Meyer, Tony (Self)

Miller, Bert Business Owner & Mayor of Navasota (City of Navasota), Navasota

Moore, Steve Apartment Owner (AMG. inc)

Morris, Malcolm attorney (also providing written testimony) (Self; Reverend John R. Bisagao), Ho., TX

Mosbacher, Jerry Hospice (also providing written testimony) (Self; Many other Taxpayers), TX

Norman, Scott Executive Director (Texas Association of Builders), Austin, TX

Olson, Franklin (also providing written testimony) (The Metropolitan Organization)

Osenbagh, John C. real estate/property tax (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Patel, A. Childcare Center (Self)

Pederson, Rick (also providing written testimony) (Self), Fulshear, TX

Quintero, James Analyst (also providing written testimony) (Texas Public Policy Foundation)

Sharp, Kathryn VP of Tax for Stage Stores (also providing written testimony) (Self; Stage Stores), Houston, TX

Shipp, Earl Vice President, Gulf Coast Operations (also providing written testimony) (DOW Chemical - also TTARA, TCC & TAM), Freeport, TX

Shoemaker, David Senior Policy Analyst (also providing written testimony) (Select Committee for Property Tax Relief and Reform)

Spears, John Stephen retired (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Stalinsky, Cheryl Retired Economic Development Dir (Self)

Staples, Todd President (Texas Oil & Gas Association), Austin, TX

Stiefer, Sands L. Chief Appraiser, Harris Co. Appraisal District (also providing written testimony) (Self; Harris CAD)

Stone, Dawn (also providing written testimony) (Self), Conroe, TX

Sullivan, Mike Harris County Tax Assessor- Collector (Self), Houston, TX

Thompson, Jessie (Self)

Turney, Bill Retired (Self)

Valenta, John Property Tax Manager (TXOGA/ TTARA), Houston, TX

Wald, Jerome S. Retired state employee (Self)

Walla, Allison HR - Delta Refractions, INC. (also providing written testimony) (Weston Lakes)

Weisfeld, Sheldon Real Estate Investments (also providing written testimony) (Self; SADANA Global, WEKAN developments)

Welling, Fred Real Estate Developer (Self)

Whitehead, Glen Chief Appraiser (Fort Bend Central Appraisal District), Rosenberg

Williams, Kenneth Veterinarian (Retired) (also providing written testimony) (Self), Houston, TX

Wilson, William C. Retired (Self), Cypress, TX

Wright, Mary Ann CFO & Mustang Cat (Mustang Cat (Caterpillar Dealership))

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

May 10, 2016 9:00 AM

Registering, but not testifying:

ON:

Ball, Barbara Housewife (Weston Lakes)

Boyer, Lance Regional Security Advisor (Self), Katy, TX

Brown, Allen Taxpayer (Allen Brown), Kingwood, TX

Clayton, Rhonda Retired Educator (Weston Lakes), Katy, TX

Dalwadi, Sumit Hospitality Management & Development (Dalwadi Hospitality Management)

Doherty, Joanne Retired (Self), Burton, TX

Evans, Brad Realtor (Luckey Lane Properties)

Fairfield, Stephen community developer (Covenant Community Capital), Houston

Fite, Walter Retired (Self), Missouri City, TX

Ford, J Steve Real Estate (Affordable Housing), Houston

Friedberg, Andrew S. Mayor (City of Bellaire)

Hoelscher, Dennis Business Information Systems (Self), Richmond, TX

Kilday, Les Apartment Developer (Affordable Housing), Sugar Land

Kline, Sue Retired (Weston Lakes)

Lindsey (USA RET) 30 yrs, Col. Terry Engineer, Home Owner, Business Owner (Self; Homeowners), Houston, TX

Lofton, Mattie retired - Texas Retired Teachers (Weston Lakes), Fulshear, TX

Martin, Robert E. CPA (Self), Houston, TX

Moufon Jr., Jerry Business (City of Deer Park)

Owen, Allen Mayor Missouri City (Missouri City)

Patel, Ajay Hotel Owner (Pika Hotels/THLA)

Peck, Karen Attorney; also Vice President, Spring Branch ISD Board of Trustees (Spring

Branch ISD Board of Trustees), Houston, TX

Pennington, Robert City Finance (City of Cleveland)

Polasek (Mayor of Victoria), Paul Self Employed (Self)

Robinson, Mike Real Estate Developer (Affordable Housing)

Russell, Gerald Retired (Self)

Scarborough, Jim Real Estate Developer (Taxpayer)

Scarborough, Daphne retail/metal fabricator (myself as a sale proprietor), Houston, TX

Schei, Inger Lise Home (Grayson Lakes, Katy 77494 TX), Katy, TX

Sheffield, Heather Social Media Consultant (Spring Branch Speaks)

Singh, Roy Retired (Self), Houston, TX

Stafford, Brad City Manager (City of Navasota), Navasota, TX

Strausand, Ben Banker (Self)

Stripling, Hortense Retired HR Professional (Weston Lakes), Weston Lakes, TX

Walker, Carl Oil & Gas Industry - Property Tax (TXOGA/TTARA), Houston, TX

Wolff, Ed Realtor (Self & Clients), Houston, TX

Wyatt, Jerry Councilman, Missouri City, TX (Missouri City)

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

May 10, 2016 9:00 AM

Providing written testimony:

ON:

Bechtel, Michael Mayor (City of Morgan's Point), Morgan's Point, TX

Berry, Kenneth Engineer (Citizens of San Patricia County)

Cernosek, Larry Automotive (Self; other small business), Deer Park, TX

Gay, Clifford Retired (Self), Richmond, TX

Guerra-Cardus, Laura non-profit child advocacy (Children's Defense Fund - TX), Austin,
TX

Hopkins, Earlene Retired educator public schools (Self; Weston Lakes)

Hyde, Walter (my family), Houston

McMahon, Rod Steel Business (North American Metals, Inc.), Houston, TX

Mutope-Johnson, Ayesha attorney (ret.), civic organizer (St. James Episcopal Church
Community Outreach), Ho., TX

Ramirez, Ricardo Intergovernmental Relations Manager (City of Sugar Land), Sugar Land,
TX

Smith, T. Randall Pastor (Texas Impact), Houston, TX

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

September 29, 2016 10:00 AM

Property Tax Reform and Relief

ON:

Altinger, Roland (Harris CAD), Houston, TX

Arceneaux, Denise retired teacher (Self), Bellaire, TX

Barzilla, Chris Chief Appraiser Waller CAD (Waller CAD), Hempstead, TX

Bhakta, Sal Hotel (PSB Hospitality), Seabrook, TX

Essary, Derry Former Mayor Bunker Hill (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Forbes, Dean P. Retired (Firethorn Subdivision), Katy, TX

Garcia, Bernardo Attorney (clients), Houston

Gates, Gwen Realtor (Self)

Gilchrist, Frank Real Estate (ME)

Greene, James "Doc" AV Business (Self)

Hart, Coach Dan Retired of HCAD (also providing written testimony) (Taxpayers For
Equal Appraisal)

Ingram, Keith Director of Elections (Texas Secretary of State, Elections Divisions), Austin,
TX

Jennings, Clayton Professional Engineer , Real Estate Investor (Texas Capital Venture
LLC), Houston, TX

Johnson, Cheryl E Galveston Co. Tax Assessor Collector (also providing written
testimony) (Self & Co. Voters)

Kemp, Gary self (My Tenants & My Partner)

Kushner, Marcia School Librarian/Educator (Self), Houston, TX

LeBas, James fiscal analyst (also providing written testimony) (Tx Chemical Council and
Tx Assn of Manufactures), Austin, TX

Lynn, Andrea Teacher - Director of the Gary J. Lynn Foundation (Self), Houston, TX

Millis, Mark W. CEO - The Millis Group, Inc. (also providing written testimony) (The Millis Group, Inc. - Personal), S.L., TX

Osenbaugh Sr., John C. property tax consultant (also providing written testimony) (Self), Hou., TX

Sarlls, Ed Engineer (Self), Katy

Smolensky, David Plumber (Self)

Spears, John Stephen Retired (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Stanart, Stan Harris County Clerk (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Vera, Alan D. Marketing Consultant (Self), Houston

Veseleny, Brenda Real Estate Broker (Self), Seabrook, TX

Vrshek, David P. Retired (Self)

Wardlaw, Laura Stay At Home Mom (Self)

Whitehead, Glen Chief Appraiser (also providing written testimony) (Fort Bend CAD), Rosenberg, TX

Wiener, Robert A. Geologist (Self), Houston

Wilson, Dave Electrician (Self), Hou, TX

Registering, but not testifying:

ON:

Bettancourt, Tammy CEO (Houston Building Owners & MGRS)

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

September 29, 2016 10:00 AM

Chailer, John D. Retired Engineer (Self), Houston, TX

Collins, Sean Inv. Adv. (Self), Missouri City

Ewing, Cordelia (Cordie) H. Account Executive - marketing (Myself as a Homeowner),
Houston, TX

Hearn-Hayes, Dr. Theresa Certified Mediator (District 150)

McMahon, Yvonne (Self)

Messick, Bill Area Manager, Field Studies (Comptroller of Public Accounts), Austin, TX

Smith, Mary Jane Homemaker/Consultant (Self), Houston

Vierra, Chris Spring Branch ISD Trustee / Taxpayer (Self)

Werling, Craig Retired (Self), Missouri City

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

October 3, 2016 10:00 AM

Property Tax Reform and Relief

ON:

Arbuckles, David S. (Self), Frisco, TX

Arrieta, Romeo Government Affairs Director, MetroTex Assn. Realtor (MetroTex Association of Realtors), Dallas, TX

Bao, Lily Realtor (Self)

Bender, Missy President (also providing written testimony) (Plano ISD Board of Trustees)

Billings, David AT&T (Tate City Council / self)

Binggeli, Brian Superintendent PISD (PISD), Plano, TX

Brown, Ben Retired Engineer (also providing written testimony) (Self)

Burgher, Jeff Prop. Tax Consultant (Self), Coppell

Butschek, Rachel Teacher (Self), Wylie, TX

Campbell Jr, William A. Property Tax Consultant (Self)

Caston, Kim President, Richardson ISD Board of Trustees (Richardson ISD Board of Trustees)

Chaddick, Connor Self employed, Real Estate Small Business (Chaddick Corp), Plano, TX

Daffin, Bo Chief Appraiser (also providing written testimony) (Collin CAD), McKinney

Dillavon, James CPA (Self), Plano, TX

Duke, Steve Auto Restoration (Self)

Fabry, Thomas Retired (also providing written testimony) (Responsible Spending Coalition), Frisco

Fisher, Debbie homemaker, tax payer, Council Member (also providing written testimony) (My family), Lucas, TX

Fortenberry, Stephen CFO (also providing written testimony) (Plano ISD), Plano

Frey, Beverly retired (Self), Plano

Giles, Mike Real Estate Investor (also providing written testimony) (Self), McKinney
Gonzalez, Daniel Consultant (Texas Association of Realtors), Austin
Haines, Matthew Property Manager (Myself / TAA / IRO)
Harkins, John Retired (Self)
Harless, Barbara retired (Self)
Harvey, Sophia Civil Engineer (Self)
Hodges, Howard President of Inflection Point LLC (also providing written testimony) (My Family), McKinney
Humphrey, Nancy member of Board of Trustees for Plano ISD (Plano ISD), Plano
Jacobs, Karen retired (Self)
Jain, Ravi K. Retired (Self)
Jaye, Olin Real Estate Broker (Collin Co. Realtors)
Jolly, Jamee President/ CEO (Plano Chamber of Commerce), Plano, TX
Jones, Michael C. unemployed (also providing written testimony) (the citizens of Texas), Plano, TX
Kingston, Philip City Council Dallas (City of Dallas)
Law, Jeffery Tarrant County Appraisal District (Self)
Long, Wendy (Self), McKinney, TX

WITNESS LIST

Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select

October 3, 2016 10:00 AM

Messer, Michael Accountant (Self), Plano, TX

Moebius, Carolyn Small business owner; Plano ISD Trustee (Self), Sachse

Noble, Candy (also providing written testimony) (Self), Lucas

Nolan, Ken Chief Appraiser Dallas CAD (Dallas CAD), Dallas, TX

Openshaw, Michael Property Tax Slave (Taxpayers), Plano

Peele, Kathleen A. S.V.P. Program Management & Mayor Pro Tem City of Lucas (Self)

Piziali, Andrew retired (Self)

Redman, Dianne Home Owner (Self), Lucas, TX

Reece, Douglas Real Estate Agent (Collin Co. Association of Realtors), Plano

Rhodes, Fran Retired Sales & Marketing (Self), Ft. Worth

Rockwood, Michael L. Retired (Self), Plano, TX

Rodriguez, Rebecca Salon & Wig Studio owner (personal property tax & HOA), Plano, TX

Rottenberg, Emily healthcare (myself, my neighbors, & the community), Frisco, TX

Scarce, Connie Retired (Self), Wylie

Schneider, Carl B. Retired - Education (McKinney Retired Teachers)

Self, Keith County Judge (also providing written testimony) (Collin County), McKinney

Shillig, Carter Retired (also providing written testimony) (Self), Plano, TX

Solomon, Yoram Plano ISD Trustee (Self)

Taylor, Carol Realtor (Self), Dallas, TX

Voigtsberger, Karl self employed (Self)

Wilder, Anthony software developer (Self; Carrollton Council member)

Wright, Ron Tarrant County Tax Assessor-Collector (Self), Ft. Worth

Registering, but not testifying:

ON:

Blois, James H. retired (Self), Plano

Flint, George B. Lawyer (Self; Collin County Republican Party)

Herald, Joey Real Estate broker (Self)

Lutek, Laura J. retired (Self)

Miller, Terri Retired (Self)

Nguyen, Linda A. teacher (myself, my family and friends & students of all ages), Plano,
TX

Olk, Jim Mayor (City of Lucas)

Rizas, Brenda IT (Collin County taxpayers), Lucas

Sheriff, Ray Business/Contractor/Retired (Home Owners), Plano

Ward, Kathy consultant (my mom), Plano, TX

Wilcox, Mike Engineer (Tax Payers - NWDFCD.ORG), Coppell, TX

Wright, Steven Construction/Remodeling Contractor (Self), Wylie, TX

Providing written testimony:

ON:

Brezina, Ben Assistant to the City Manager (City of Frisco / Mayor of Frisco), Frisco, TX

Merritt, Chandler City Government (City of McKinney), McKinney, TX

Smith, Aaron City Manager (City of Whitehouse TX), Whitehouse, TX

APPENDIX E: MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

Monday, December 7, 2015
2:30 PM
Capitol Extension, Room E1.012

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select was held on Monday, December 7, 2015, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.012, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Kelly Hancock
Senator Charles Perry

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.
Senator Van Taylor
Senator Carlos Uresti

The chair called the meeting to order at 2:35 PM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

Senator Bettencourt introduced committee staff.

Senator Bettencourt laid out the committee rules. Senator Creighton moved adoption of the rules. Senator Hancock seconded the motion. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Bettencourt made opening remarks.

The Comptroller's office gave an overview of the property tax system. Witnesses testifying and registering are shown on the attached list.

There being no further business, at 3:55 PM Senator Paul Bettencourt moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair

Stephanie Hoover, Clerk

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

Wednesday, January 27, 2016

10:30 AM

University of Texas at San Antonio, Main Campus

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select was held on Wednesday, January 27, 2016, in the University of Texas at San Antonio, Main Campus.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senator Kelly Hancock
Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.
Senator Van Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Charles Perry
Senator Carlos Uresti

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:41 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

Senator Bettencourt made opening remarks.

Senator Lucio made opening remarks.

Testimony was heard on the following interim charges:

Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities.

Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners.

Witnesses testifying and registering are shown on the attached list.

President Ricardo Romo, University of Texas at San Antonio gave welcoming remarks.

Senator Lucio assumed the chair.

Senator Bettencourt resumed the chair.

The Chair moved that the public testimony be closed; without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Bettencourt announced that the next hearing will be held on February 11, 2016 in Harlingen, Texas.

There being no further business, at 4:35 PM Senator Bettencourt moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair

Stephanie Hoover, Clerk

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

Thursday, February 11, 2016

9:00 AM

Regional Academic Health Center, Harlingen, Texas

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select was held on Thursday, February 11, 2016, in the Regional Academic Health Center, Harlingen, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.
Senator Charles Perry
Senator Van Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Kelly Hancock
Senator Carlos Uresti

The chair called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

Senator Bettencourt made opening remarks.

Senator Lucio made opening remarks.

Senator Hinojosa attended the hearing and made opening remarks.

Veronica Gonzalez, Vice President of Governmental and Community Relations, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, gave welcoming remarks.

Testimony was heard on the following interim charges:

Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities.

Thursday, February 11, 2016

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Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners.

Witnesses testifying and registering are shown on the attached list.

The chair moved that the public testimony be closed.

There being no further business, at 1:58 PM Senator Paul Bettencourt moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair

Stephanie Hoover, Clerk

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

Monday, March 21, 2016

11:00 AM

Texas Tech University - International Cultural Center

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select was held on Monday, March 21, 2016, in the Texas Tech University - International Cultural Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Kelly Hancock
Senator Charles Perry
Senator Van Taylor
Senator Carlos Uresti

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.

The chair called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

Senator Bettencourt made opening remarks.

Senator Perry made opening remarks.

Robert Duncan, Chancellor, Texas Tech University System, gave welcoming remarks.

Testimony was heard of the following interim charges:

Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities.

Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners.

Witnesses testifying and registering are shown on the attached list.

The chair moved that the public testimony be closed.

Monday, March 21, 2016

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There being no further business, at 3:42 PM Senator Bettencourt moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair

Stephanie Hoover, Clerk

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

Wednesday, April 27,
2016

8:00 AM

University of Texas

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select was held on Wednesday, April 27, 2016, in the University of Texas at Arlington.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Kelly Hancock
Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.
Senator Charles Perry
Senator Van Taylor
Senator Carlos Uresti

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

The chair called the meeting to order at 8:08 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

Senator Bettencourt made opening remarks.

Senator Hancock made opening remarks.

Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick was present at the hearing and provided testimony.

Senator Konni Burton and Senator Don Huffines were present at the hearing.

Testimony was heard on the following interim charges:

Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities.

Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners.

Witnesses testifying and registering are shown on the attached list.

Senator Lucio assumed the chair.

Senator Bettencourt resumed the chair.

The chair moved that the public testimony be closed.

There being no further business, at 7:18 PM Senator Bettencourt moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair

Stephanie Hoover, Clerk

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

Tuesday, May 10, 2016

9:00 AM

University of Houston

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select was held on Tuesday, May 10, 2016, in the University of Houston.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Kelly Hancock
Senator Charles Perry
Senator Van Taylor
Senator Carlos Uresti

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.

The chair called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

Senator Bettencourt made opening remarks.

Senator Konni Burton, Senator Sylvia Garcia and Senator Larry Taylor were present at the hearing.

Testimony was heard on the following interim charges:

Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities.

Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners.

Witnesses testifying and registering are shown on the attached list.

At 11:59 AM Senator Uresti assumed the chair.

At 12:12 PM Senator Bettencourt resumed the chair.

Public testimony continued.

At 1:40 PM Senator Uresti assumed the chair.

At 2:12 PM Senator Bettencourt resumed the chair.

Public testimony continued.

The chair moved that public testimony be closed.

There being no further business, at 5:18 PM Senator Bettencourt moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair

Stephanie Hoover, Clerk

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

Thursday, September 29, 2016

10:00 AM

Houston Community College - West Loop Center

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select was held on Thursday, September 29, 2016, in the Houston Community College - West Loop Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Kelly Hancock
Senator Van Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.
Senator Charles Perry
Senator Carlos Uresti

The chair called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM. The following business was transacted:

Senator Bettencourt made opening remarks.

Dr. Cesar Maldonado, Chancellor at Houston Community College, made welcoming remarks.

Senator Joan Huffman and Senator Lois Kolkhorst were present at the hearing.

Testimony was heard on the following interim charges:

Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities.

Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners.

Witnesses testifying and registering are shown on the attached list.

Senator Hancock assumed the chair.

Senator Bettencourt resumed the chair.

Public testimony continued.

The chair moved that public testimony be closed.

There being no further business, at 4:12 PM Senator Bettencourt moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair

Stephanie Hoover, Clerk

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX REFORM & RELIEF, SELECT

Monday, October 3, 2016
10:00 AM
Collin College Spring Creek Campus

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Property Tax Reform & Relief, Select was held on Monday, October 3, 2016, in the Collin College Spring Creek Campus.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair
Senator Kelly Hancock
Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.
Senator Charles Perry
Senator Van Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Carlos Uresti

The chair called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

Senator Bettencourt made opening remarks.

Dr. Neil Matkin, President at Collin College Spring Creek Campus, made welcoming remarks.

Senator Van Taylor made welcoming remarks.

Senator Brian Birdwell, Senator Konni Burton and Senator Bob Hall were present at the hearing.

Testimony was heard on the following interim charges:

Study the property tax process, including the appraisal system, and recommend ways to promote transparency, simplicity, and accountability by all taxing entities.

Examine and develop options to further reduce the tax burden on property owners.

Witnesses testifying and registering are shown on the attached list.

Senator Hancock assumed the chair.

Senator Bettencourt resumed the chair.

Public testimony continued.

The chair moved that public testimony be closed.

There being no further business, at 5:09 PM Senator Bettencourt moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Paul Bettencourt, Chair

Stephanie Hoover, Clerk