

# Press Release

---

July 31, 2017

## **More than fifty top Houston business leaders voice opposition to ‘bathroom bill’**

**Greater Houston Partnership, executives say bill will harm Texas’s reputation and impact economic growth**

AUSTIN, TX – Earlier today, the Greater Houston Partnership delivered a letter on behalf of more than 50 Houston-area business leaders expressing their opposition to the “bathroom bill” currently being considered by the Texas Legislature.

“We support diversity and inclusion, and we believe that any such bill risks harming Texas’ reputation and impacting the state’s economic growth and ability to create new jobs,” the leaders wrote in a letter to Texas Governor Greg Abbott.

The business leaders represent some of the largest employers in Houston including senior executives from the energy, manufacturing, banking, legal and professional service sectors along with several small-and-mid-size companies.

Citing “smart, pro-growth public policy” that Texas has enjoyed for several decades, the executives write that the Texas “business environment is the envy of states across the country.” They continued: “In addition to our economic success, Texas has become well-known for its excellent quality of life and our welcoming, inclusive spirit – attributes that have helped draw talented individuals to the state from across the nation and around the globe.”

The executives then concluded: “Innovative companies are driven by their people, and winning the talent recruitment battle is key. Any bill that harms our ability to attract top talent to Houston will inhibit our growth and continued success – and ultimately the success of our great state.”

**The full text of the letter follows (.pdf version available [here](#)):**

Dear Governor Abbott,

Texas has worked for decades to establish its reputation as a great place to do business. Through smart, pro-growth public policy, the state has succeeded, and our business environment is the envy of states across the country. In addition to our economic success, Texas has become well-known for its excellent quality of life and our welcoming, inclusive spirit – attributes that have helped draw talented individuals to the state from across the nation and around the globe.

As members of Houston’s business community, we write to express our concern with the proposed “bathroom bill” being considered in this special legislative session. We support diversity and inclusion,



and we believe that any such bill risks harming Texas’ reputation and impacting the state’s economic growth and ability to create new jobs.

Innovative companies are driven by their people, and winning the talent recruitment battle is key. Any bill that harms our ability to attract top talent to Houston will inhibit our growth and continued success – and ultimately the success of our great state.

We appreciate your leadership in Texas and urge you avoid any actions, including the passage of any “bathroom bill,” that would threaten our continued growth.

Sincerely,

Houston Business Leaders

List of signatories:

Jeff	Shellebarger	President Chair	Chevron North America E&P Greater Houston Partnership
Marc	Watts	Vice Chair	Greater Houston Partnership
Bob	Harvey	President and CEO	Greater Houston Partnership
Blake	Pounds	Managing Director, Houston	Accenture
Steve	Stephens	CEO	Amegy Bank
Thomas	Perich	Chairman	Andrews, Kurth, Kenyon LLP
Eduardo	Aguirre	Chairman and CEO	Atlantic Partners Group LLC
Andrew	Baker	Managing Partner	Baker Botts LLP
Manolo	Sanchez	Chairman	BBVA Compass
Steve	Pastor	President Petroleum	BHP Billiton Petroleum
John	Minge	Chairman and President	BP America, Inc
Patrick C.	Oxford	Chairman	Bracewell LLP
Thad	Hill	President and CEO	Calpine Corporation
Ric	Campo	Chairman and CEO	Camden Property Trust
David	McClanahan	Retired President and CEO	CenterPoint Energy
Tony	Chase	Chairman and CEO	ChaseSource
Ryan	Lance	Chairman and CEO	ConocoPhillips
George A.	DeMontrond, III	President	DeMontrond Automotive Group Inc.
Deborah	Byers	Houston Office Managing Partner	Ernst & Young LLP
Linda	DuCharme	President	ExxonMobil Global Services Company
Charles C.	Foster	Chairman	Foster LLP
Paul	Hobby	Founding Partner	Genesis Park LP
Daniel M.	Gilbane	President - Gilbane Southwest	Gilbane Building Company
Deborah	Cannon	Former Chair	Greater Houston Partnership

Earl	Hesterberg	President and CEO	Group 1 Automotive
Welcome	Wilson, Sr.	Chairman	GSL Welcome Group, LLC
Jeffrey A.	Miller	President and CEO	Halliburton
Lynne	Liberato	Partner	Haynes and Boone LLP
Jim	Postl	President	James Postl Interests
Dan	Bellow	President - Houston	JLL
Gina	Luna	CEO	Luna Strategies
David	Taylor	Managing Partner – Houston	Locke Lord
Wayne	McConnell	Managing Partner	McConnell & Jones LLP
Carrin	Patman	Board Chair	METRO Board of Directors
Kenneth	Guidry	President	PKF Texas
Massey	Villarreal	President and CEO	Precision Task Group Inc
Duke	Austin, Jr.	President, CEO and COO	Quanta Services
David	Leebron	President	Rice University
Andy	Waite	Co-President	SCF Partners
Tom	Ryan	Chairman and CEO	Service Corporation International
Bruce	Culpepper	President	Shell Oil Company
Lisa	Davis	CEO Global Energy, Member of the Managing Board	Siemens AG
John	Nau	President and CEO	Silver Eagle Distributors LP
Donna	Sims-Wilson	President	Smith Graham & Company
Dave	Dunlap	President and CEO	Superior Energy Services
Fernando	Assing	President and CEO	Tesco Corporation
Fred	Zeidman	Treasurer and CFO	Texas Heart Institute
Alan	Thomson	Senior Partner and Managing Director	The Boston Consulting Group
Earl	Shipp	Vice President, Gulf Coast Operations	The Dow Chemical Company, Freeport
Kevin	Roberts	President, Southwest	Transwestern
Bobby	Tudor	Chairman	Tudor, Pickering, Holt & Co.
Anna M.	Babin	President and CEO	United Way of Greater Houston
Mark	Kelly	Chairman	Vinson & Elkins LLP
Laura	Bellows	President and Chairman of the Board	W. S. Bellows Construction Corporation
Denis C.	Braham	Attorney at Law	Winstead PC

###

Greater Houston Partnership works to make Houston one of the world's best places to live, work and build a business. It represents 11 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker and Waller. With more than 1,200 member organizations, the Partnership represents approximately one-fifth of the region's workforce. Visit the Partnership at [www.houston.org](http://www.houston.org).