

2021



GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP

STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

EXECUTIVE PRIORITIES

ACCESS

The Partnership believes all Texans should have equitable access to the institutions that power a strong, diverse economy and create true opportunity for all. The business community recognizes our responsibility to help dismantle racial inequity and systemic racism, strengthen trust within our communities, and remove barriers to inclusivity and success. The Partnership supports policies related to equitable access to education, digital connectivity and health care.

Public Education A strong public education system is vital for the long-term prosperity of our region and state. In 2019, House Bill 3 significantly increased the state's investment in public education and directed considerable funding toward transformational initiatives many of which were directed toward underserved student populations. It is critical to protect these programs and maintain a well-funded, accountable and equitable public education system that serves all children and strengthens our talent pipeline.

Higher Education The Partnership supports policies that protect higher education funding and innovative programming options in the Houston region while increasing educational attainment rates, particularly in high-demand fields. The Partnership will also pursue policies that lead to more equitable access and attainment across the higher education ecosystem in Houston.

Digital Divide All Texans should have equitable access to digital connectivity that empowers their education, employment, health care, and the economy. The Partnership supports the creation of a statewide broadband plan that addresses the unique needs of communities across the state and establishes the framework to provide every household with the broadband connectivity required in the twenty-first century.

Health Care The Partnership believes in building a healthier Houston by protecting public health and improving our health care safety net. A healthier Houston is supported by policies that increase patient resources, secure sustainable funding and provide greater access to preventative care.

ENERGY COMPETITIVENESS

The Partnership is committed to ensuring Houston plays a key role in the global energy transition to a more efficient and sustainable, lower-carbon future and to accommodate global demand growth. Permitting, regulatory and energy infrastructure solutions are needed to strengthen Texas' energy competitiveness. To advance the energy transition, legislation should position the Houston region to lead the development of carbon capture, use, and storage (CCUS).

Permitting Texas' competitive advantage depends on the state addressing permitting issues hindering private investment in the energy economy.

Regulation The Partnership supports legislation to strengthen regulatory certainty and attract economic development in the industry, including policies related to CCUS projects.

Energy Infrastructure The Partnership supports policies that position Houston to develop technology and construct the infrastructure needed to advance the region's position as the Energy Capital of the World.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Partnership believes competitive economic development tools, including the Chapter 313 property tax abatement program, are critical to bringing new businesses to the region and growing our economy and should be reauthorized.

FLOOD RESILIENCE

The Partnership supports the state's ongoing role in improving Texas' flood resilience, leveraging the \$2 billion appropriation made during the 2019 legislative session to fund critical flood mitigation infrastructure.

LEGAL LIABILITY PROTECTIONS

The Partnership supports policies to address the concerns many business owners and health care professionals have about operating in a COVID-19 environment without appropriate legal liability protections.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Qualified and skilled workers are vital to the success of Houston's industries. The Partnership supports reskilling or upskilling workers and improving access to the workforce for Texans without a college degree.

RACIAL EQUITY AND JUSTICE

The Partnership believes Texas has a responsibility to address racial inequities and systemic racism by reforming broken systems, building up communities, offering support and removing barriers to success.

TRANSPORTATION

Economic prosperity relies upon the ability to efficiently move goods and people. The Partnership believes in maintaining transportation funding options.

EMINENT DOMAIN

The Partnership supports an agreement on eminent domain statutes that respects the rights of private landowners while meeting the infrastructure needs of the Texas energy industry.

METHANE EMISSIONS

The Partnership supports developing industry-led solutions for addressing methane emissions and flaring.