

September 18, 2020

Chairman Terry Canales
Members of the Committee
Texas House Committee on Transportation
Texas Capitol Station
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Re: Comments on Interim Charge 1B

Dear Chairman Canales and members of the House Committee on Transportation:

I write to you on behalf of the Greater Houston Partnership and the Houston business community, which together spans the 12-county greater Houston region. We strive to make the nearly 12,000 square miles of our coastal, urban and rural region a global hub for Texas industry and trade and one of the best places to live, work and build a business.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments regarding the Committee's Interim Charge 1B, which directs the Committee to:

- Review SB 282 and SB 962, which relate to the funding for the State Highway Fund.
- Study the current mix of user fee-based funding for the state highway system, including registration fees, tolls, and fuel tax, and determine if current funding generated is sufficient to maintain cost demands.
- Examine whether current legislative appropriations, including projections for Proposition 1 (severance tax) and Proposition 7 (sales tax) funds, are keeping pace with Texas' highway funding needs to accommodate population and economic development growth. And;
- Make recommendations for additional methods of funding or innovative tools that the state could utilize to deliver road infrastructure projects.

With a regional GDP of approximately \$480 billion and a regional population of 7.2 million residents, growing to an estimated population of more than 11 million residents by 2040, it has been the Partnership's position that all tools remain at the state's disposal to adequately fund transportation infrastructure and keep pace with population and economic development growth.

The Partnership supports maintaining Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 funding dedicated for transportation infrastructure, allowing for tolling to remain an option to fund needed projects, and exploring additional methods of funding to support the State Highway Fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments and your work to ensure the funding needed to provide a transportation infrastructure network that keeps pace with the population and economic development growth of the state.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob Harvey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bob Harvey
President and CEO