

April 5, 2023

Senate Natural Resources and Economic Development

Against SB 1419 (Birdwell) relating to limitations on the use of public money under certain economic development agreement or programs adopted by certain political subdivisions.

Chairman Birdwell and Members of the Committee,

My name is Glenn Hamer and I am respectfully testifying in opposition of SB 1419 on behalf of the Texas Association of Business, which is the Texas State Chamber of Commerce. TAB represents members across every industry sector and size, and our local chamber partners across the state. We are also the state affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers.

To date, Texas has deliberately planned to diversify and strengthen our Texas economy to ensure Texas is a favorable place for company investment and economic growth. Our pro-business regulatory climate, with no income tax, a robust infrastructure, and diverse workforce have made Texas a national and global economic powerhouse. The economic development tools that we have in place seal the deal.

We have reached the point where we are the top economy in the country, and localities in other states are becoming more aggressive and creative. We strongly believe that our communities are better off with these investments, and we must be very careful with how we interfere with the tools that were established to get us to where we are today. We support transparency, local input, and the flexibility that these programs currently have.

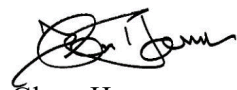
Adding limitations on the amount of time a project can qualify for these programs, and discontinuing the use of ad valorem taxes for local economic development will diminish the competitiveness of these agreements. We ask that both of those terms be reconsidered.

Because of local and state economic development tools such as 380, 381, and 312, Texas repeatedly wins awards for being the best place to do business in the country. We have won the Governor's cup 19 times - an award that recognizes the nation's top-performing state for job-creating business relocations and expansions.

We have the 9th largest economy in the world, and we have been the largest exporter in the country for the past 20 consecutive years. Again, this is due to the decisions made by leaders like each of you on how we can best deploy the tools necessary to continue to attract investment in our communities.

Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Business Community. I look forward to working with the members of this committee and the Legislature on this issue and others.

Sincerely,



Glenn Hamer
President/CEO

Texas Association of Business