



THE TEXAS STATE CHAMBER

TAB's purpose is to champion the best business climate in the world, unleashing the power of free enterprise to enhance lives for generations.

Pro-Business • Pro-Texas  
*for 100 years*

March 29, 2023

Re: Support of HB 9 and HJR 125 by Representative Ashby

Dear Chairman Hunter and members of the State Affairs Committee:

My name is Megan Mauro, and I am testifying in support of HB 9 on behalf of the Texas Association of Business. TAB is the State Chamber of Commerce and the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers. We represent members across every industry sector and size, and our local chamber partners across the state. TAB's purpose is to "champion the best business climate in the world, unleashing the power of free enterprise to enhance lives for generations".

Last session broadband was a top priority issue for TAB. Access to reliable, high-speed internet is critical to commerce, public safety, economic opportunity, and educational access.

We thank the members of this committee, Representative Ashby, the members of Legislature, Governor, and Comptroller for also prioritizing expanding broadband access across the state and for passing HB 5 last session, which has been monumental for the state of Texas.

With Texas now home to more than 30 million people and leading the nation in population and job growth, broadband remains a priority work in progress even with a significant influx of federal funds.

Texas will need local, state, federal and private sector funding to connect all the homes and businesses of our state. TAB strongly supports HB 9 to further invest in broadband development and fill gaps created by federal funding restrictions.

Ensuring Texas's broadband development program is fully funded will continue to improve online access to government services, telework, telemedicine, and rural economic development. When we meet with chambers across the state, we hear about the importance of access to broadband, especially in rural areas. The comptroller's office has done a phenomenal job standing up the Broadband Development Office and this legislation will continue to make sure Texas has accessible and affordable broadband access.

On behalf of the state chamber of commerce, we thank Representative Ashby and the members of this committee for your commitment to this important issue and for allowing us to comment today.

Sincerely,

Megan Mauro  
SVP, Policy & Advocacy  
Texas Association of Business