

Representing over 2,000
Actively Concerned Members in Harris & Galveston Counties

ISSUES STATEMENT

CLEAR LAKE AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

January, 2005



The Clear Lake Area borders Galveston Bay and encompasses nine cities, over 200,000 residents, in southeastern Harris and northern Galveston counties: Clear Lake City (Houston), Clear Lake Shores, El Lago, Kemah, League City, Nassau Bay, Seabrook, Taylor Lake Village and Webster.

79th Texas Legislative Session

Agenda:

- ☆ Aerospace
- ☆ Economic Development
- ☆ Education
- ☆ Environment & Natural Resources
- ☆ Health Care
- ☆ Insurance Reform
- ☆ Marine Industry
- ☆ Texas Homeland Security
- ☆ Tourism

home of

NASA/Johnson Space Center

Space Center Houston

Bayport

Clear Lake, "Boating Capital of Texas"

Texas Air National Guard, Ellington Field

Statement Underwritten by:
Waldron & Schneider L.L.P.

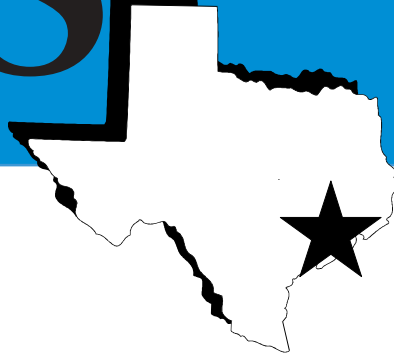
Prepared by:
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Chairman, Tony Resendez
Waldron & Schneider L.L.P.



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AEROSPACE

Technology Outreach Program. Brings the benefits of space technology and expertise to small businesses.

Texas Aerospace Scholars. Programs that promote academic excellence and high-tech career interests among middle school teachers, high school juniors and community college students based on science, math, engineering and technical education disciplines.

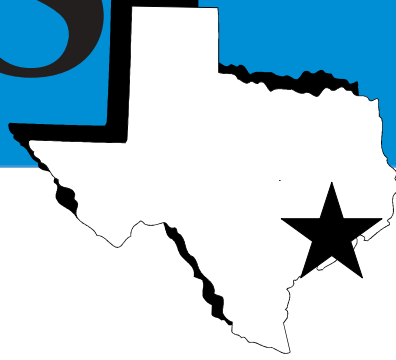
Space Shuttle Return to Flight. Approval of state Resolutions and/or Proclamations supporting, **the Vision for Space Exploration and full funding for NASA.**



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Texas Enterprise Fund. Endorse the refunding of the Texas Enterprise Fund as proposed by the Texas Legislature. The \$295 million fund will be distributed in order to promote greater opportunities for jobs and capital investment, particularly in the State's cluster business sectors.

Texas Emerging Technology Fund. Endorse the creation of the Texas Emerging Technology Fund as proposed by the Texas Legislature. The \$300 million fund will be distributed in order to promote greater opportunities for innovation, research, and jobs within the emerging technology industry.

Worker's Compensation Reform. Support Texas Worker's Compensation Reform that ensures large and small businesses have a system that is efficient, cost effective and provides quality care to injured workers.

Telecommunications. Support legislative efforts that replace the outdated regulations on wireline phone companies with new rules that are based on free-market policies. In addition, we believe that updated state regulations on telecommunications should not exceed those put in place by the federal government. In this way, Texas will encourage new investment and job-creation and spur new and innovative telecommunications services in our state.



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EDUCATION

Accountability. Support academic accountability for students and both academic and fiscal accountability for teachers, principals and other school administrators.

Charter schools. Support expansion of the current limit on open enrollment charter schools in Texas and support uniform administrative criteria.

Educated workforce. Support education and job-training programs that equip students with specific skills needed for the workplace. Also, support excellence in the basics.

Employer driven workforce system. Support efforts that encourage a broader, more significant and substantial business presence in the planning, delivery, oversight and use of the new Texas Workforce System.

Federal block grants. Support efforts to fund state workforce programs through federal block grants with maximum flexibility on the use of the funds.

Higher Education. Full funding of existing debt service and increased funding for the Higher Education Fund. Support for Full Formula Funding and State-Funded Pay Increases for University Employees. Support for Special Item Funding: Houston Partnership for Environmental Studies - The Environmental Institute of Houston (EIH) is the coordinating entity for environmental activities between UHCL and the University of Houston, which focuses on environmental education, research, and public outreach.

Increased competition. Support expansion of programs that creates competition, and in turn, improves performance and decrease administrative costs of public schools.

(Education continued on back)

Literacy. Support legislation that results in Texas students acquiring necessary reading skills at grade level by the third grade.

Public School Finance Reform. Develop a consensus on specific reforms that will continue to raise standards and achievement levels, encourage innovation and choice, and create the kind of robust accountability system that rewards good schools and blows the whistle on failure. Create a finance plan that reduces the impact of recapture, puts new money into public schools to ensure schools can meet the higher accountability standards set by the state, is appropriately funded by business as well as homeowners, and reduces property taxes.

School choice. Every child in Texas should have an opportunity to receive a high quality education of which public education is the foundation. Accordingly, there should be implementation of proven initiatives and innovations that improve the academic performance of students attending Texas public schools. School choice is one such program that deserves piloting and evaluation. Therefore, we support implementation and evaluation of a well-designed pilot program, allowing students in low performing public schools to attend public or qualified private schools of their choice. The pilot program must be of sufficient magnitude to assess the impact a choice program would have on the students and the public school system.

School to Career. Support this valuable program to make students aware of the world of work.

Teacher Shortage. Support aggressive implementation of alternative teacher certification programs that streamline the ability of individuals to enter teaching.

Teacher training and criteria-based curriculum. Support certification and training for teachers on the use of technology and use of allotments.

Two-Year Higher Education. Restore funding to community and technical colleges. Fully fund employee benefits for community and technical college faculty and staff.



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ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Cool Roofing – Commercial Standard Revisions. To reduce the usage of hot, energy wasting roofing materials, the legislature is encouraged to amend state wide commercial roofing standards. Thus legislative action to advance roofing standards should include implementation of a Solar Reflectance Index that combines high albedo and emittance levels

Maintain Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP). Continued legislative funding of TERP at approximately \$150 million for 2006-2007. In addition, due to the 8-hour ozone standard taking effect nationwide in 2005, it is important that TERP continue and is funded throughout 2012.

Support TCEQ Appropriations Request for Research. 2006-2007 TCEQ appropriation must provide no less than \$1.5 million for Refinement and enhancement of Modeling to Demonstrate Attainment with the Clean Air Act in the state's non-attainment areas (Rider #17), no less than \$5 million for an Air Quality Field Study known as TxAWS II (Exceptional Item #3), and approximately \$6.2 million to the Texas Environmental Research Consortium in accordance with Section 12 of HB 1365 of air quality research. It must also provide no less than \$5.075 million to fund Air quality Planning activities in Austin, Corpus Christi, Longview-Tyler-Marshall, San Antonio, and Victoria (Rider #8), including using the results of previous assessment and planning activities by implementing control measures such as public education and outreach for the purpose of reducing emissions that contribute to identified air quality problems and those activities necessary to implement SIP submittals, ozone "flex" programs, early action compacts and other voluntary programs. And the 2006-2007 appropriations must include no less than \$5.6 million for Local Air Pollution Grants Allocation to fund grants or cooperative agreements with eligible local air pollution programs in the state's non-attainment areas.



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HEALTHCARE

Access. Increase access and choice of healthcare programs by supporting market-driven health policies that maximize consumer and public benefit and allow for the continuation of employer-sponsored voluntary health care coverage. Programs should be explored that would allow employers selection of the highest quality benefits and the lowest, most competitive prices.

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)/Medicaid Restoration. Appropriations to fully restore CHIP/Medicaid coverage.

Fraud and abuse. Eliminate waste, fraud and abuse in public and private sector health programs.

Increase the Number of Registered Nurses Working in Texas.

Mandated benefits. Assure that the high cost of mandated benefits, services and other requirements to employers and employees are fully considered in legislative decision-making.

Market flexibility. Ensure market-based solutions and approaches are used in our health care system. Support making coverage more affordable by monitoring and opposing health insurance regulations that increase the costs and undermine the concept of a free market for contractual medical services.

Medical innovation. Encourage medical and health benefit plan flexibility and innovation to maximize consumer choice. Continue to allow employers to voluntarily provide health care coverage to their employees.

Patient Safety. Ensure patient safety and control costs by reducing the number of medical errors. Promote affordable, quality and safe health care.

Uninsured. Support targeted, market-based reforms that enhance the employer-based system to provide affordable access to quality care. Encourage greater voluntary participation on behalf of individuals by expanding access and choice.



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MARINE INDUSTRY

Environmental Balance. Support helping boaters find the balance between their needs and the environment.

Economic Impact. Support encouraging recognition by government of the economic impact of Clear Lake's boating industry.

Boater Education. Support for continued efforts to encourage mandatory boater education.

Wallop-Breaux Aquatic Resources Trust Fund. Support Wallop-Breaux Aquatic Resources Trust Fund for marine related issues.

Licensing. Opposition of boater licensing.

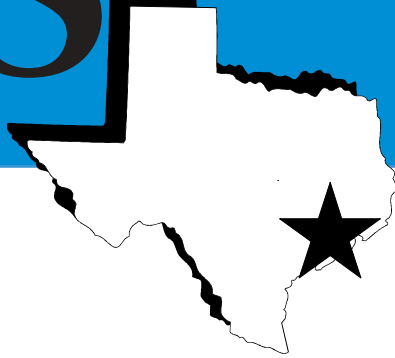
Marine Taxes. Opposition of legislation that would place additional taxes on marine interests (examples: sales tax on slip rentals, property tax on pleasure boats, additional taxes on recreational equipment).



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TEXAS HOMELAND SECURITY

Security. Support that the Legislature is urged to act positively on legislation that provides for the funding and organizational structures necessary to provide prudent security to Texas citizens and our legal guests.

Boarder Protection. Support that the state's borders be protected.

Emergency Response. Support that emergency responders, police and criminal intelligence organizations at all levels within the state be trained and equipped to prevent terrorists and organized groups of any description from doing harm in our state.



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TOURISM

Texas Department of Economic Development. Support the retention of tourism under the auspicious of the Texas Department of Economic Development (TxED).

Tourism Caucus. Support for the newly formed state legislative tourism caucus to facilitate establishment and maintenance of a cohesive group of legislators who have a common interest in tourism issues.

TxED Budget Rider. Support for an Amendment to TxED Budget Rider to eliminate cap on expenditures that the state can make to promote tourism at predetermined levels, regardless of amount of state hotel occupancy tax revenues that are collected for that purpose.



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