



Rick Perry
Governor of Texas
December 2000 – January 2015

A Report to the Legislature

Rick Perry
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January 2015



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Through the first 14 years of the 21st Century, the State of Texas has transformed itself. Always a bastion of unbounded potential, the Lone Star State has embraced the cutting edge of technology in sectors big and small, and today is known as a national leader in biotechnology, diverse energy production, and high-tech goods and services.

Putting an emphasis on the sound conservative values our state was built upon, and embracing the values of the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, Texas has freed the people of our state to pursue their dreams, safe in the knowledge that they won't be overtaxed, over-sued or over-regulated by their government. The Texas Model has attracted entrepreneurs from across the country and around the world, with our population increasing by more than 5 million people since I took office.


More than anything else, our approach has meant quality jobs for Texans, with Texas employers creating almost a third of all net new private-sector jobs in the United States since 2000. Beyond the stats, that means better lives for Texas families, and more opportunities for young Texans entering the workforce. We've expanded opportunities for them in education, with more STEM Academies and charter schools available for high school students, new universities and medical schools established for those seeking higher degrees, and historic increases in financial aid.

From the Rio Grande Valley to the northern plains, and from the shipping channels of Houston to the mountains of El Paso, Texas has succeeded in an unprecedented fashion, setting the example of what states across our country can achieve with the right policies and priorities. This report highlights some of what we have accomplished together since 2000, and I hope it will provide inspiration for what we can continue to accomplish in the years and decades ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Perry". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rick Perry





**“From humble beginnings often
come the most vivid of dreams.
Our commitment...our mission...
must be to advance those dreams.”**

– Governor Perry, State of the State Address, 2001





Gov. Perry in Edinburg during signing ceremonies for 2013's Senate Bill 24, which created a new university and medical school in South Texas. The creation of The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley is just one of the major advancements in higher education since 2001.

Knowledge Economy

It has been said that for the jobs of the future, knowledge will be more valuable than raw labor; what you can accomplish with the sweat of your brow will pale against what you can accomplish with the power of your mind.

Forget about that future ... because it's already here.

The jobs of today are challenging employees to work and think more creatively and more quickly, demanding more education and training than ever before.

And Texas has changed with the times.

Once a state known mostly for ranch-hands and roughnecks, Texas is now home to a more nimble, diversified economy that is tapping the awesome talents of all of our citizens to lead the country—and the world—in exciting new directions.

While Texas certainly remains extremely proud of our continuing role as America's energy leader, today we're as likely to be home to a new biotech startup as a new oil rig, and we can boast innovative approaches to both natural gas recovery and state-of-the-art vaccine production.

Texas has always been a natural fit for people who think along the cutting edge, because no other state frees them to pursue their dreams quite like the Lone Star State. We realize that freedom breeds innovation, and over the years we have cultivated a climate where entrepreneurs can take larger risks with less red tape and less government intrusion, while allowing them to keep more of the return when their venture succeeds.

For this reason, Texas has become one of the leading high-tech job creators in the country, and we've invested in programs to attract the world's top researchers to help ensure the next revolutionary, world-changing idea will be conceived and developed within our state's borders.

That's true whether it's the energy pioneers who have untapped decades worth of energy production in the shale fields across our state, the researchers attacking cancer in laboratories at the University of Texas' M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, or scientists developing and producing new vaccines at Texas A&M.

Of course, attracting researchers from across the world isn't enough; we also need to help more Texas students prepare for the knowledge-based jobs they'll need to fill. A summary of our accomplishments that helps us continue to build a knowledge economy in Texas:

- Texas became a national leader in the adoption of college-ready curriculum standards that ensure students are ready for college classrooms and laboratories.
- Under a 2005 Initiative, more than 40,000 Texas high school students are studying at one of 70 T-STEM campuses, aggressively pursuing careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.
- We've invested in our existing universities to expand research opportunities and conduct clinical trials, through institutions like the Houston Methodist Research Institute and the Texas A&M Institute for Preclinical Studies in College Station.
- We've given Texas students more opportunities to pursue world-class educations closer to home, through the creation of the new University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.
- And we've established new medical schools, which will bolster research and encourage our best and brightest young physicians to stay here in Texas.

This dedication to a new way of doing things has attracted a slew of forward-thinking visionaries to our state. Companies as diverse as Facebook, Apple, Google, Samsung and SpaceX have all chosen Texas for major ventures, and that's just a handful of the notables who are now making the Lone Star State their home.

The future of Texas is bright, but the roadmap to that future is growing increasingly complex. Much like the pioneers who tamed the rugged land that eventually became our state, Texans are ready to forge ahead and meet whatever challenges that present themselves, and we will continue to demonstrate the bold leadership that has made our state an unmatched success nationwide.

State of Texas Economy

How Texas Measures Up With the Country

2,083,700 Jobs Created

IN THE PAST 10 YEARS FROM JUNE 2004 TO JUNE 2014



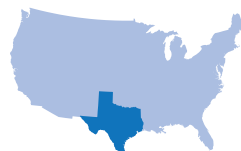
MORE THAN CALIFORNIA, NEW YORK & FLORIDA COMBINED

Employment Grew 3 Times Faster than CA, NY, FL, IL or PA

IN THE PAST 10 YEARS



EMPLOYMENT GREW BY 21% IN TEXAS



29% of Nation's Net New Jobs

WERE CREATED IN TEXAS OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS

TEXAS ACCOUNTS FOR 8% OF TOTAL U.S. POPULATION



146,000 Housing Permits Issued

IN 2013; LEADING THE NATION

15% OF ALL NEW HOUSING PERMITS NATIONWIDE



\$51,181 Average Annual Wage

PER WORKER IN 2013

95+% OF ALL JOBS PAID ABOVE MINIMUM WAGE IN 2013



No. 1 Exporting State in Nation

FOR THE PAST 12 YEARS

ELECTRONICS ARE LEADING PRODUCT EXPORT

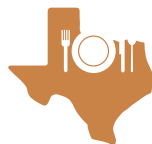
Top 5 Sectors for Job Creation IN THE PAST 10 YEARS



BUSINESS SERVICES



HEALTH CARE



HOSPITALITY



GOVERNMENT



RETAIL

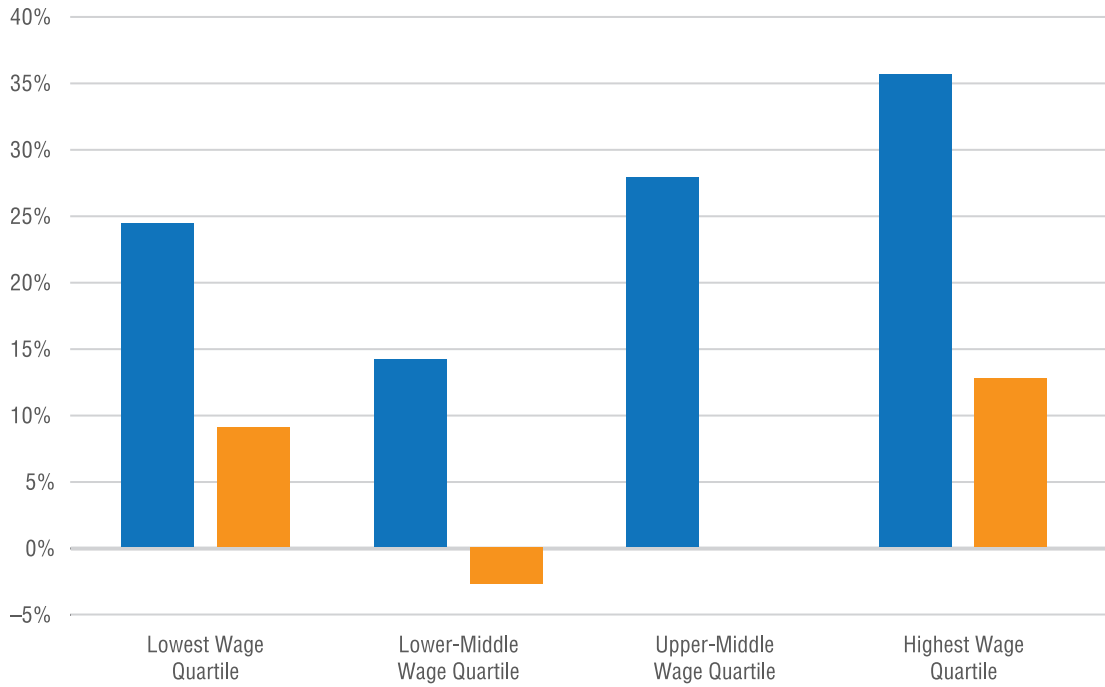


12th Largest Economy in the World

IF TEXAS WERE A NATION

LARGER THAN SPAIN OR SOUTH KOREA

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, and U.S. Census

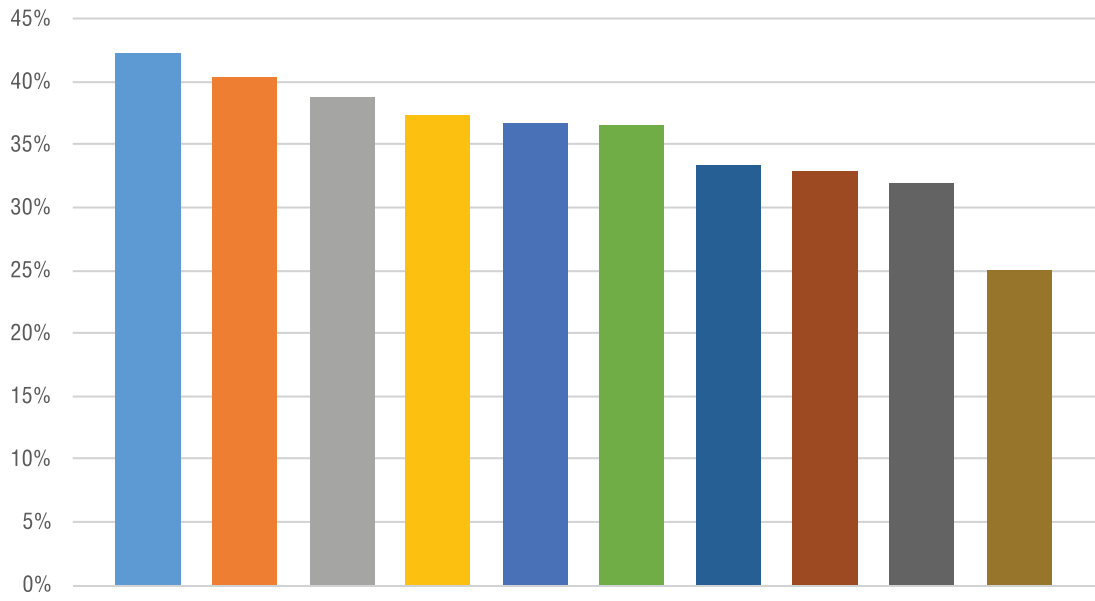


Texas Leading Job Growth Across All Wage Levels: Percentage of Change in Employment by Wage Quartile from 2000–2013

Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Current Population Survey Merged Outgoing Rotation Groups 2000, 2013

Texas Leads Big States in Wage Growth: Percentage of Private Sector Average Weekly Wages from Third Quarter 2001 to Third Quarter 2013

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

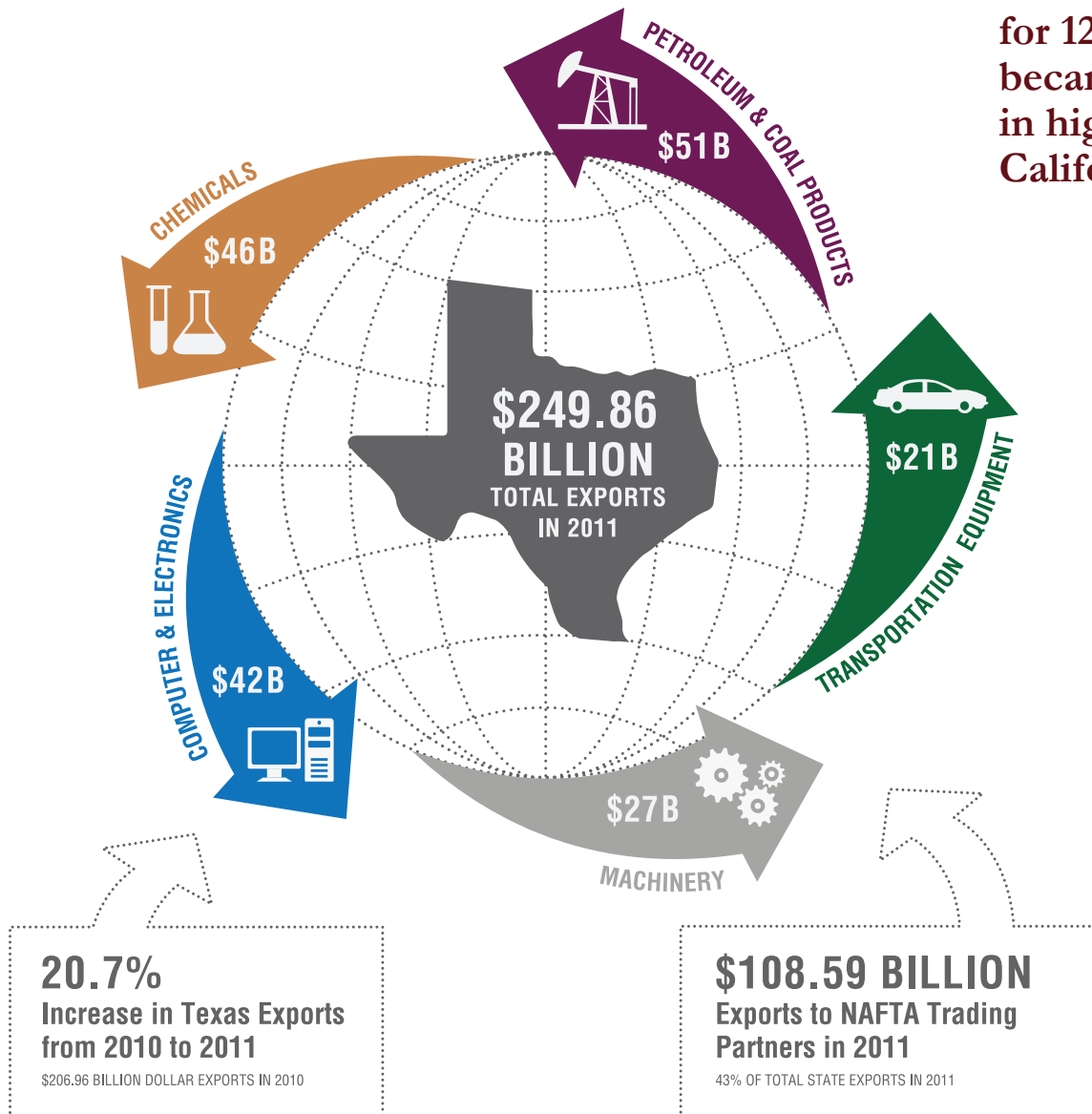


- Texas
- Pennsylvania
- California
- Florida
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Illinois
- Georgia
- Michigan

Top Five Texas Exports in 2011 by Industry Sector and Value-Add

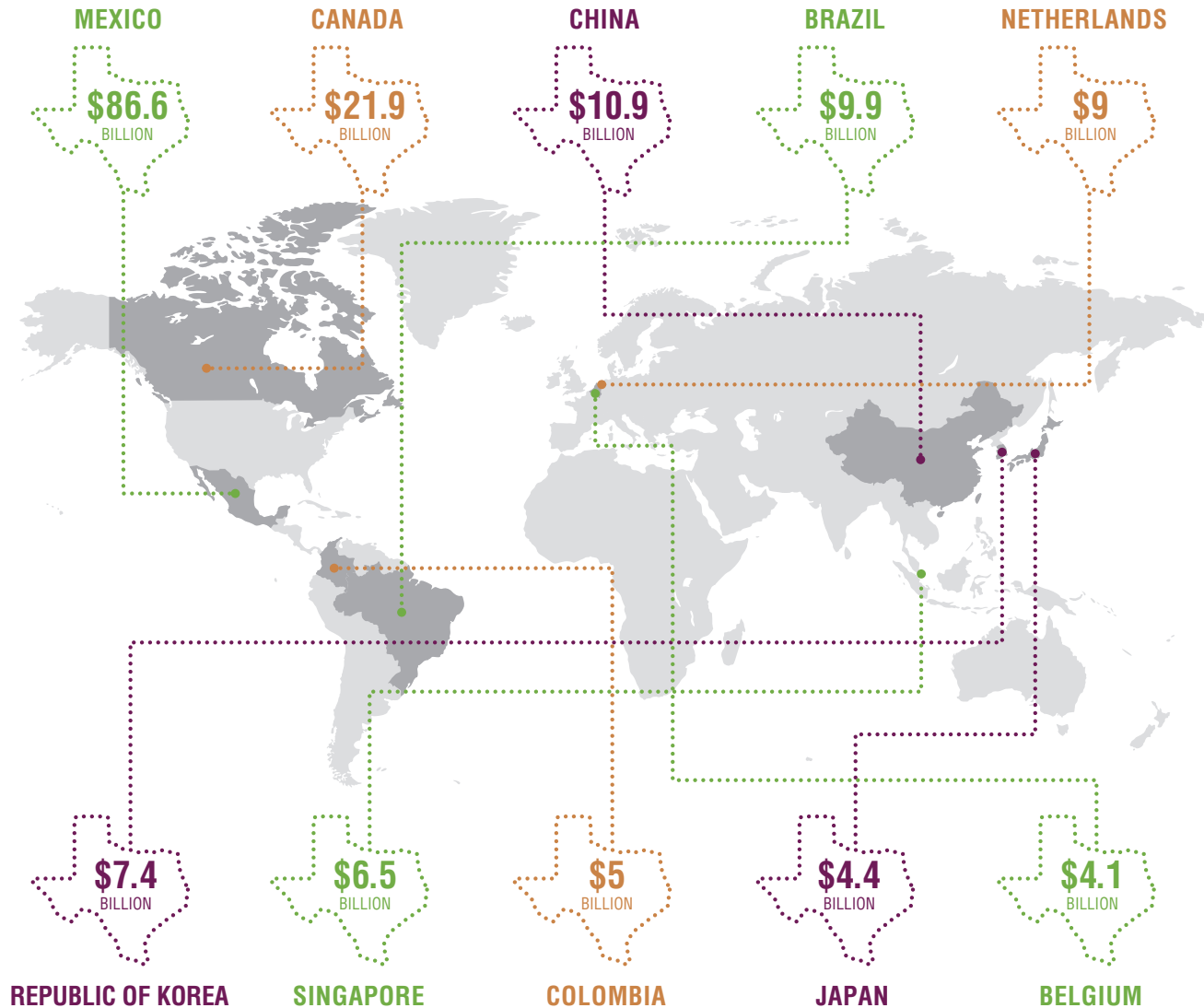
“Texas is the leading exporter in the United States, and has been for 12 years now. We also recently became the nation’s top exporter in high-tech goods, moving past California for that distinction.”

– Gov. Perry



State of Texas Exports

Top Destinations for Exports in 2011




Sources: Office of the Governor, Economic Development & Tourism; Federal Reserve Bank (Dallas)

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JOINT SESSION
STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS
THE HONORABLE RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR OF TEXAS





“By responsibly balancing our budget, and taking innovative measures to create jobs, we will address the most urgent needs of both the present and our future.”

– Governor Perry, State of the State Address, 2003



Seguin
Welcomes

CATERPILLAR®



Gov. Perry speaks at the groundbreaking for Caterpillar's manufacturing facility in Seguin, January 2009. Companies such as Caterpillar have chosen to expand or relocate in Texas, creating thousands of jobs for Texans and attracting millions of dollars in capital investment to our state.

Investing in Texas

Job creation has been Texas' major focus for more than a decade.

As a result, Texas has become the nation's leading example of how to foster an environment that allows the private sector to create jobs. Since 2000, Texas employers have added almost 2 million jobs, across all major industries, and across all income brackets. In fact, without Texas' job creation, middle income job growth in the United States would be at a net negative today, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

That's because, when employers inside and outside Texas think about expansion or relocation, they know few places can match our state's economic climate and workforce.

That quickly puts Texas at the top of the list when it comes time to select a new destination. Texas has seen major expansions or relocations from world renowned employers like Toyota, Samsung and Caterpillar, as well as a host of smaller employers.

And every one of the quality jobs we land means better lives for the people of Texas, and more opportunities for their families.

- The Texas workforce of more than 13 million people is largest in state history and the second largest in the nation.
- Despite a population surge of 21 percent since 2000, Texas has been below the national unemployment average for seven years.
- Almost a third of the net new jobs created in the nation since 2001 have been created in Texas.
- In 2013, more than 95 percent of all Texas jobs paid above minimum wage.
- Texas ranks third among states in personal income growth since 2000.

We also utilized some important tools to help close the deal on major projects, and to help craft a new kind of economic climate for cutting-edge companies.

Texas Enterprise Fund

Created in 2003, the Texas Enterprise Fund (TEF) has successfully helped Texas edge out other states for \$24 billion in capital investment, and helped generate nearly 77,000 jobs. The fund

is used as a deal closer when one Texas site is going up against a site, or sites, outside of Texas, and use of the fund requires unanimous agreement between the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House.

The Texas Legislature has continued to see the value of this fund since its inception, implementing improvements to the process to ensure the fund continues to operate as transparently and effectively as possible. As such, it's proven to be an extremely important tool in attracting new employers to the state.

Texas Emerging Technology Fund

The Texas Emerging Technology Fund (TETF) has played a critical role in keeping some of our most innovative ideas in the state, and contributed greatly to research efforts at our state universities and the significant growth of our technology sectors.

After seeing ideas born in Texas labs and universities leaving the state to pursue venture capital funding along the coasts, the TETF was created to provide critical, early-stage funding to help keep these fledgling enterprises right at home, with the goal of nurturing these ideas from the laboratory to the marketplace all within our borders.

As an additional component, TETF grants helped Texas universities successfully compete for billions in research funding by attracting some of the best and brightest researchers pushing boundaries in high-demand fields.

As of December 2014, the fund has:

- Invested more than \$202 million in 142 early-stage companies.
- Distributed more than \$220 million to Texas universities in the form of grant matches and research superiority funds.
- Leveraged almost \$2.8 billion in additional, non-state funding.

The state holds an interest in the companies we invest in, with the portfolio holding a value of more than \$221 million as of August 2013.

Education

That employers like Samsung, Toyota and Apple choose to relocate or expand in Texas is testimony to the strength of our strong job creation climate, but it's also a credit to the hard-working people of Texas, who stand well-prepared and ready to fulfill the needs of any employer.

To help meet those needs, Texas has worked to improve our public school system from top to bottom, introduced initiatives to make a college degree more accessible for more students, and sought ways to ease their debt burden once they graduate.

The first step was the most simple: We challenged our students to do better.

We did that by raising our standards to among the most stringent in the country, and placing a greater emphasis on the subjects that will be most important in the years to come: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

And Texas students rose to the occasion:

- The class of 2013 graduated at a rate of 88 percent—an all-time high for Texas students and the second-highest rate in the nation.
- Texas led the nation in graduation rates among African-Americans—at a rate 15 percent higher than the national rate—and was second among Hispanic students (at a rate 11 percentage points higher than the U.S.).
- Students classified as “economically disadvantaged” graduated at an 85 percent rate, best in the country and 13 percentage points better than the nation as a whole.
- Participation in Advanced Placement exams skyrocketed 270 percent.
- Participation in college readiness tests – the ACT and SAT – shows that a growing percentage of students are putting them-

selves in position to continue their education after high school graduation. In 2013, 49 percent more students took the SAT than in 2000, and 62 percent more students took the ACT.

And Texas is not resting on its laurels. In 2013, changes were implemented to give students more flexibility in choosing their curriculum without sacrificing our high academic standards, to improve the way students achieve technical certification, and to give students more options by expanding the number of public charter schools.

When it comes to higher education, we've expanded options online, to give college students more flexibility to pursue their degrees around the demands of jobs and family.

We've expanded the number and quality of our universities—creating four new universities, including the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in 2013—and put more of our universities on the path to Tier 1 status.

We also promoted the creation of \$10,000 degree programs, giving students an affordable option to pursue degrees in careers that are highly in demand. And, in another move to help buffer the strain of skyrocketing tuition costs, we gave incoming students the option of freezing their tuition rates for four years at the rate they pay as freshmen.

Again, Texas is the best place in the country to live, work, raise a family and grow a business; to maintain that level of excellence, we must remain committed to providing the kind of education that will lift Texas—and Texans—to even greater heights.



Gov. Perry visits with students at Cornelius Elementary School in Houston in May of 2009. Students across Texas have risen to the challenge of more rigorous curricula, and are embracing their future by studying STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), which are vital to future jobs.



Gov. Perry joins officials in Lockhart for an October 2012 ribbon cutting marking the completion of the final 41 miles of SH-130. Texas has added extensively to its highways without raising taxes, and has passed measures providing additional money for roads and to fully fund our state water plan for the next 50 years.

Infrastructure Improvements

Texas' continued prosperity, growth and job creation are all made possible by our ability to effectively transport goods from place to place, to connect our international ports with factories, and vice-versa, and to ensure we have the water and electricity necessary for commerce and for quality of life.

Over the past decade, we've taken major steps to improve the flow of traffic, both to sustain our economic success and also to enhance the safety and quality of life for Texans who depend on our roadways every day.

We've streamlined the environmental impact study process, expanded the use of public-private partnerships and given more say to local authorities to determine the best ways to meet each community's needs.

As a result, from 2001 to 2012, we added 6,660 lane miles to the state highway system, more than any other state.

Among some of the highlights:

- The I-69 Corridor is connecting communities from South to East Texas, and all points in between. Where possible, construction is expanding existing highways from two lanes to four. Already, much of I-69 is at Interstate standards, with more miles still coming online.
- We are expanding the heart of the I-35 corridor from four to six lanes, running from Williamson County to Hillsboro.
- In North Texas, I-35E is being dramatically improved through a \$4.8 billion rebuild of the entire 28-mile corridor, which will include toll lanes featuring dynamic pricing that varies based on time of day.

We also established an inventive new funding mechanism, approved by voters in November 2014, that will free up roughly a billion dollars more a year to help build and maintain roads across our state.

Of course, adding road lanes only addresses one aspect of Texas' infrastructure.

When it comes to water, Texas has also been a leader in developing and implementing strategies to ensure families and businesses have access to clean, reliable water supplies. During the 2013 Legislative Session, we passed a measure that will fund the Texas State Water Plan for the next 50 years.

In terms of electricity generation, Texas has adopted an "all of the above" strategy that is helping meet the energy needs of a population that's growing by a 1,000 people a day. In addition to traditional sources like coal and natural gas, Texas has invested in renewable sources like solar, biomass and wind. In fact, Texas has already installed more wind power capacity than any other state ... and all but five countries.

Whether getting the most from "traditional" sources of energy, or embracing the next generation of production, Texas stands ready to power the demands of big employers and small families alike for many more years to come.

Smart Regulations, Cleaner Air

Texas stands as an enduring and compelling argument against those who believe a healthy economy and clean environment can't coexist.

Since 2000, Texas has been America's epicenter for job creation, while serving as a shining example of how to keep employers growing and creating jobs. Over that time, our population increased by more than 5.6 million people.

Despite this exceptional growth, the air Texans breathe today is significantly cleaner than it was in 2000.

- Nitrogen oxide levels decreased by nearly 62.5 percent between 2000 and 2013.
- Ozone levels dropped 24 percent—12 percent better than the national average—during the span.
- According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Texas has reduced carbon dioxide levels by 65 million metric tons, or 9 percent, between 2000 and 2011.

What was our formula? We used to the same grounded, conservative values that have made our economy rock solid, utilizing the power of competition and the private sector to scrub the air, rather than relying on draconian, “one size fits all” mandates from on high.

To start, Texas put in place a series of incentives and sensible regulatory policies to make it financially beneficial for companies to refit their older facilities or build new ones altogether.

While Washington relies on mandates like those in the federal Clean Air Act, it also allows older plants to be “grandfathered” in, without requiring or encouraging upgrades to air quality equipment. That's why aging, inefficient facilities in other parts of the country continue to chug along, spewing out pollution using environmental technology many decades old.

Thanks to the Texas system of incentivizing the path to clean-

er air, no facilities in Texas have “grandfathered” status, since they had already made responsible improvements resulting in both better air quality and a thriving economy for Texans.

We've also invested in new, environmentally sound energy technologies, including solar, biomass and wind—installing more wind power than any other state, and all but five countries.

Our “all of the above” energy portfolio is also creating jobs, with Texas ranking eighth in the nation in the creation of next-generation energy jobs.

It's part of our commitment to a smart, predictable regulatory structure that both protects Texans and the Texas environment, while promoting job growth across all sectors.

While other states have subjected entrepreneurs to massive bureaucracies and ensnared them in months—if not years—of unnecessary red tape, we've streamlined the process, so that in Texas, they can accomplish in weeks what might take months to accomplish elsewhere.

That means less money going into the regulatory process, and more money going to new hires and responsible industrial practices and equipment.

Which, in short, means more jobs – more quickly – for more Texans.

We all want a clean environment. In Texas, we're making that possible, and protecting jobs and families at the same time.



The winds of West Texas are powering homes and businesses alike, as part of Texas' commitment to an "all of the above" energy portfolio. Investments in cutting-edge energy sources represent just a part of why Texas has made its air significantly cleaner than it was in 2000, despite a population that's growing by 1,000 people a day.



The investiture of Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht and Justice Jeff Brown, administered by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia in a formal ceremony November 11, 2013, in the Texas House Chamber. Texas has revamped its court system to be fairer and more streamlined.

Fairer Courts

Anyone who has ever launched and grown a business knows that time can be every bit as valuable as money.

Extended, pointless court trials cost a great deal of both.

That's why Texas has aggressively transformed our legal system to fight frivolous lawsuits and runaway jury awards that were threatening to crush small businesses and were driving doctors out of the state.

In 2011, we passed a law that gave lawsuit defendants and trial judges a variety of tools designed to expedite justice and reduce the number of frivolous lawsuits.

- Texas judges now have the ability to dismiss frivolous lawsuits immediately, with the prevailing party able to recover their attorney's fees from their opponent.
- Judges can immediately ask an appeals court to clarify a question of law that can decide a case, eliminating the need to play out an entire, costly trial before a higher court can decide it.
- Civil cases involving less than \$100,000 can be expedited, cutting down on court time and costs in smaller cases.
- Parties rejecting fair settlements in favor of seeking a "home run" judgment at trial can be penalized for dragging the case out.

These measures mean much less time and money wasted in court, resources that can be invested instead into new hires and new equipment.

Combined with our low taxes, reasonable regulation and world-class workforce, our reformed court system adds to the allure of our state when major employers looking to expand or relocate.

Our reforms also helped more people have more access to quality doctors.

In 2003, the skyrocketing cost of malpractice insurance—driven ever higher by the mounting costs of litigation and staggering awards in non-economic damages sought by unscrupulous lawyers—was driving many doctors out of business, or causing them to flee to less litigious places.


Not only were doctors leaving the state, or closing up shop, the doctors who did remain in practice were cutting back on providing any treatments that could be considered "high risk." That left entire counties without emergency treatment doctors, cardiologists or obstetricians.

So during the 2003 Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature capped non-economic damages at \$250,000 per defendant, or up to \$750,000 per incident, while placing no cap on more easily determined economic damages, such as lost wages or cost of medical care due to injury. We also required plaintiffs to provide expert witness reports to support their claims within four months of filing suit or drop the case. That fall, the people of Texas passed a constitutional ballot measure authorizing these changes.

Texas has more than 35,000 newly-licensed doctors thanks to these reforms, with significant gains in communities that had been traditionally medically underserved. Many of them are taking on those "high risk" specialties, with Texas nearly doubling its supply of emergency care doctors since 2003.

In short, we've reformed our courts so that the aggrieved can get justice, but people looking to cash in on "get rich quick" lawsuits at the expense of Texas jobs and access to health care are out of luck.





“ Our challenge is to make sound,
strategic investments that stand the
test of time. ”

– Governor Perry, State of the State Address, 2005





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SALES
SERVICE
SUPPLY

Gov. Perry discusses the state's competitive jobs climate and the importance of small business during a speech in February 2011 at Ols Maintenance Supply in Houston. Keeping state taxes low and our budgets under control have been key components in the creation of a successful jobs climate.

Low Taxes

Texas bases its policies upon a basic principle: That people can do more, and do better things, when they keep more of their own money.

We believe government must perform several core functions, and that government shouldn't tax any more than absolutely necessary to effectively and efficiently perform those functions.

Our dedication to that fundamental principle is why we fight so intensely against the notion of raising taxes as a way to avoid tough decisions, or to try and tax-and-spend their way out of an economic downturn.

We know any short-term benefits to raising taxes would be more than offset in the long term by the devastating effects high taxes would have on our economic climate and the people who live and work in our state.

Our commitment to low taxes is one of the most attractive aspects of our economic climate for companies looking to expand or relocate. On top of that, we continue to be one of just a handful of states with no personal state income tax.

That commitment will not change anytime soon. If anything, we've worked to roll back taxes even further wherever feasible.

Among some of the measures we've passed since 2000:

- In 2006, we passed the largest school property tax rate decrease in the state's history, cutting rates by a third.
- We reformed our business tax extensively, lowering all rates and protecting our small businesses by making the first \$1 million in revenue deductible (up from the previous, temporary deduction of \$300,000).
- We eliminated the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund, saving Texans more than \$600 million in taxes on their phone bills.

- In 2008, we suspended the Unemployment Insurance Replenishment Tax, saving 370,000 employers \$90 million.

We've also expanded sales tax holidays on school items, and provided extensive property tax breaks to our disabled veterans and their spouses.

The upside is that every dollar that isn't sent to Austin can be used to grow an employer's business, create a job or be invested in the causes and passions Texans believe in, ranging from churches to the arts.

That's a large reason why Dallas is home to the largest Fine Arts District in the United States, why Austin is home to world-renowned events like Austin City Limits Music Festival and South By Southwest, and why, on any given night in Houston's Theater District, more theater seats are available than anywhere else in the country outside of New York City.

Keeping taxes low broadens opportunities, and enriches experiences for Texas families.

Without question, it must continue to be Texas' main point of emphasis.

Fiscal Conservatism

If the past decade showed us anything, it demonstrated in clear terms the difference between fiscally-conservative states and those with high taxes and spending.

Put simply, fiscally responsible states like Texas thrived, while states like California and Illinois struggled mightily.

In freer-spending states, we've seen government officials commit every penny they can lay hands on, in an ill-advised attempt to be all things to all people. As they inevitably find out, though, there could never be a period of prosperity strong enough, or long enough, to indefinitely support that level of spending.

All too soon, these states find themselves facing impossible conflicts between promises and reality, and they usually resort to the very worst thing you can do when trying to grow an economy: higher taxes.

Since high taxes are the surest way to put the brakes on economic momentum, this leads to a shrinking economy, which leads to less revenue on hand to meet state needs. So they raise taxes again.

It's a vicious cycle, one that crushes cities and communities, and devastates families and job creators.

In Texas, meanwhile, we follow the simple rule, "Don't spend all the money."

That's been our mantra both through periods of prosperity and national recession, and by keeping ourselves focused on the essential functions of government, we've kept taxes low and built an economy solid enough to withstand national and global economic shifts.

During the 2013 Legislative Session, not only did we cut taxes and balance our budget, we finished with cash on hand to deal with unforeseen events.

The benefits of our conservative fiscal approach are far ranging.

- While other states scrambled to make ends meet, Texas had nearly \$2.6 billion left over for FY 2014-2015.
- With the federal government trillions in debt, Texas' Rainy Day Fund has a balance of \$8 billion, even after we made historic investments in water and roads.
- Texas has achieved the highest credit rating from all three major credit agencies.

The Rainy Day Fund, in particular, gives Texas a necessary cushion for any unexpected natural or economic disaster, and we've consistently resisted calls to use it for ongoing state expenses.

In short, we're committed to spending responsibly, and to protecting future generations against the burden of staggering state debt throughout their lifetimes.


We also can confidently tell any employer thinking about relocating or expanding in Texas that they can expect our state to keep taxes low, regulations reasonable and courts fair, well into the future.

That confidence in our state means more jobs and more opportunity for hardworking Texans and their families.



During an April 2012 Houston speech, Gov. Perry talks about the state's need to continue its commitment to fiscal conservatism in preparation for the 2013 Legislative Session. Every hard-earned Texas taxpayer dollar must be carefully scrutinized, with government spending only the minimum necessary to provide essential functions.





“When it comes to criminal justice, I believe we can take an approach to crime that is both tough and smart.”

– Governor Perry, State of the State Address, 2007





The National Association of Drug Court Professionals honors Gov. Perry with its Governor of the Year Award in April 2014, in recognition of his longtime support of specialty court programs. These programs have helped rehabilitate drug users, reduce recidivism and drive down crime rates in Texas to historic lows.

Criminal Justice

Nobody wants to see a person's potential destroyed by drug abuse. Nobody wants to see a young life needlessly wasted behind bars.

While Texas has a strong tradition of being a law-and-order state, we're also a state that sees the need for smart, common-sense laws, and a court system with the flexibility to recognize the difference between violent, hardened criminals and non-violent individuals fighting personal demons.

Violence and lawlessness cannot go unpunished, but we have an opportunity to help those who still have a strong chance to pull their lives together and become productive citizens.

That's why Texas has been a national leader in the institution and use of drug courts. By intervening in people's lives before they get too far out of control, these courts help keep offenders out of jail, at home taking care of their families, and—most importantly—in recovery.

Make no mistake, there's nothing easy about drug courts. Participants have to undergo intensive substance abuse rehabilitation, mental health treatment and submit to extensive random drug testing. These courts are only for those who truly want and need the help.

Similar approaches have helped people deal with family issues, and specialty courts for veterans have helped those who may be struggling with post-combat stress and difficulties adjusting to civilian life.

These specialty courts represent a chance to turn their lives around, and for some, a chance is all they need.

According to the National Association of Drug Court Professionals:

- Specialty courts cut re-arrest rates by up to 26 percent.

- For every dollar invested in specialty courts, the state realizes an average savings of \$2.21.

- These courts provide a net economic benefit of up to \$13,000 per participant for their communities.

Beyond the statistics, however, are the lives and families that are forever changed by this program. These courts provide a critical opportunity for those willing to work hard and remain committed to regaining control of their lives.

Since 2001, specialty courts have blossomed in our state, growing from just nine to more than 150. And now we're seeing this successful formula replicated across the country.

Instead of warehousing offenders for years or decades, more Texans are being steered away from a life of crime and back into productive lives. That's a win for everyone.

That's part of the reason Texas has been able to close prisons instead of building new ones for the first time in our history.

Texas is rightfully well-known for our commitment to law enforcement, but specialty courts give us an innovative and efficient way to help people and enforce the law without compromising our values.

Border Security

As a border state, Texas has always had a unique and storied relationship with Mexico, from common commercial interests to families who can proudly trace their lineage along both sides of the border.

But, along the more than 1,200 miles we share with Mexico are those who seek to exploit gaps in federal security in order to commit crimes, spreading fear, pain and misery to Mexicans and Americans alike.

Washington has long neglected to provide sufficient resources to protect Texans from these threats, giving drug traffickers, human traffickers and international cartels far too much leeway to slip back and forth, undetected.

While border security is a national responsibility, it's a Texas problem, one that we've taken aggressive measures to deal with over the past 14 years.

Over the years, we've invested nearly \$500 million in border security, including the following measures:

- Increased aviation resources, including helicopters, to spot illegal activity from the air.
- Added state-of-the-art patrol boats to police the waters.
- Added communications equipment to increase cooperation between federal, state and local resources, leading to more efficient and effective operations.
- Launched Ranger Recon Teams, consisting of highly-skilled Texas Rangers and Texas National Guard counterdrug forces. The units, designed to quickly reach remote areas, are supported by the Operation Border Star Unified Command, which includes Texas sheriffs, Highway Patrol strike teams and Department of Public Safety aviation resources.
- Increased numbers of state law enforcement officials, increasing boots on the ground in the area.

We also implemented tougher anti-trafficking laws, and devoted resources to examining the causes of human trafficking operations along the border, allowing us to better understand the scourge of trafficking and punish those who commit these heinous acts.

In 2014, when the federal government's misguided immigration policies led to thousands of undocumented migrants and unaccompanied alien minors flooding across the border, Texas moved quickly to fill in the gaps created by the added strain on federal resources.

We mounted a surge of law enforcement, deploying DPS officers to affected areas to combat criminal activity. Shortly thereafter, Texas deployed up to 1,000 National Guard troops to the border to support DPS operations. This combination led to an increase in drug seizures in the region, while greatly reducing the amount of attempted border crossings and overall criminal activity along the border.

There is no magic formula for securing the border, but Texas has demonstrated it can be done. Washington just needs the will to put the right plans in place.

Without border security, there can be no national security. And until Washington begins to take seriously its responsibility to secure our borders, Texas will continue to lead the way forward to protect our citizens.



Gov. Perry tours the Rio Grande River near McAllen on a Texas Department of Public Safety watercraft. Over the past 14 years, Texas has invested nearly \$500 million in border security measures, updating equipment, adding patrol craft, and increasing the number of boots on the ground.



In Texas, we hope for the best, but prepare for the worst. Extensive planning and preparation has helped minimize the devastation created by natural disasters, like hurricanes. Here, members of Texas Task Force 1's urban search and rescue team respond to flooding during the aftermath of Hurricane Rita in September 2005.

Emergency Response

While Texas is a place of great natural beauty, we know all too well that nature can turn dangerous with little notice. With a state as large as ours, we must be prepared for a wide variety of threats, both natural and manmade: hurricanes along the coast, tornadoes in the panhandle, and wildfires and accidents just about anywhere.

Over the past 14 years, we've enhanced and expanded our abilities to respond to disasters wherever they may happen, with an emphasis on planning ahead and moving swiftly to save lives and protect as much property as possible.

Among the steps we've taken:

- We adopted the National Incident Management System which coordinates disaster response through local, state and federal levels.
- We frequently test, review and improve our plans, with the assistance of multiple agencies at the state and local levels and some of the most capable emergency responders in the country.
- We've worked extensively with the private sector, creating partnerships to help ensure Texans will have access to fuel, water, prescription medications and other emergency goods should the need arise.

So, when disaster did strike—as it did with Hurricane Ike, a Category Four monster storm that struck our coastline in 2008—Texas was prepared. Using previous studies, we implemented contra-flow techniques that allowed for better evacuation routes on Texas highways. We established comfort stations to aid drivers with disabled vehicles during evacuations, improving the speed and flow of evacuation efforts. What that meant was, when the storm did hit, residents were safely away.

When wildfires ravaged Central Texas in 2011, first responders were quick on the scene to make sure that the flames were contained. Thousands of Texans also rallied around the affected

community and helped relief efforts in the region in any way they could.

In 2014, Texas faced an entirely new type of threat. Following the first case of Ebola in the United States at a Dallas hospital, we created the Texas Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response, which delivered a series of productive recommendations to ensure our best possible response to any future deadly viruses that may threaten Texas residents. The recommendations they've provided will make our state safer into the future, and provide an important roadmap for other states as they create their own emergency preparedness plans.


The common thread linking all of our emergency response efforts is the dedication of our first responders—the brave men and women who selflessly run toward danger when everyone else is heading to safer ground.

These outstanding individuals stand as a stalwart example of the proud Texas tradition of “neighbor helping neighbor,” and are always ready to do their part to save their fellow Texans.

Without their courage and extensive skills, even the best emergency plans aren't worth the paper they're printed on.

In Texas, we hope for the best, but we prepare for the worst. Our years of hard work will help ensure that we are prepared to protect our communities no matter what the threat.





“ Good is a state where people are free to worship their God in the manner of their choosing, passing to their children an inheritance of sound values and living out their lives in peace. ”

– Governor Perry, State of the State Address, 2009





In March 2011, Gov. Perry is joined by legislators to sign concurrent resolutions asserting states' rights under the 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The resolutions claim sovereignty for Texas under the 10th Amendment, and assert that the 10th Amendment limits the scope of federal power.

10th Amendment

Having witnessed firsthand what happens when a distant ruler grows out of touch with local needs, our founding fathers were adamant that protection against federal overreach be built into the Bill of Rights. Hence, the 10th Amendment was born.

“The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”

That’s pretty straightforward language, clearly establishing that in the United States, our founding fathers believed states were in a better position to do the business of day to day governing. They believed states were better positioned to understand the wants and needs of their communities, and more nimble at reacting to changing situations.

They believed the states should play the primary role in shaping their own destiny.

Texas has always believed local people are in a better position to understand and solve local problems, which is why we’ve fiercely preserved independence—from people making their own decisions regarding their health care to the way their children are raised and what they are taught in our schools.

That’s also why we’ve worked so hard to fight back against the unprecedented federal intrusion into our lives over the past several years.

From unconstitutional mandates on individual Texans to attempts to hijack our school curriculum, Washington has made clear it is more interested in wresting control away from states and individuals than in effective governing.

Texas has fought back against these intrusions, both because the policies they imposed were bad for the state and for Texans, but also because state freedoms are an essential component for the creation of a stronger country.

Every function that Washington seizes control over is a lost opportunity. Our states are 50 laboratories of innovation, each working simultaneously to solve problems they may have in common with others. In any one of those 50 laboratories, people might develop a solution to a wide-spread challenge that’s significantly cheaper and more effective than anything Washington could cook up.

These innovative approaches can be shared, tweaked and personalized state-by-state.

Washington’s “My way or the highway” approach stops any such innovation dead in its tracks. It squanders the brainpower at work from coast to coast, and reduces states to nothing more than passive receivers, mindlessly following directions and waiting patiently in line for their handouts.

That’s not good for anybody, except possibly bureaucrats in control in Washington.

So Texas will continue to lead the fight to keep states relevant to governing, and fight to keep alive the ingenuity and spirit that have made America the most exceptional country in the world.

Diverse Appointments

Texas is a land of opportunity, a place where people who are willing to work hard and innovate can be successful, regardless of background, race or creed. That's important in an already diverse state with rapidly-shifting demographics.

Texans from diverse backgrounds play an important role in our communities, offices, hospitals, schools and churches. Just as significantly, they have played key roles in our state's government over the past 14 years, helping put Texas on the successful path that we all enjoy today.

I am proud to say that of the more than 7,300 appointments made by the Governor's Office since 2001, more than 2,600 were women, and more than 1,800 were minorities.

Some of the most noteworthy include:

- Wallace Jefferson, the first African-American to serve as Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court. A man whose ancestor was sold as a slave on the steps of a county courthouse spent 12 years leading Texas' highest court.
- Nandita Berry, the first Indian-American named Texas Secretary of State. Berry arrived in Texas from India at the age of 21, with nothing but \$200 to her name. She went on to earn a law degree and become one of the most accomplished attorneys in the state.
- Eva Guzman, the first Hispanic woman nominated to the Texas Supreme Court. Guzman was an associate justice on the 14th Court of Appeals in Houston, and served as an adjunct professor at the University of Houston Law Center.
- Hope Andrade, Texas' first Hispanic Secretary of State. Andrade has also served in a variety of other capacities for the state, from the Texas Transportation Commission to the Texas Workforce Commission.

More important than numbers, however, is the positive impact each and every one of these appointees has had on the State

of Texas, bringing different perspectives and talents to their jobs in the pursuit of a stronger state for future generations of Texans.

They're also inspiring a new generation of leaders in our schools and communities, young people who see individuals from their own backgrounds getting involved and making good things happen. Through their fine example, minority appointees are cultivating the leaders of tomorrow all across Texas.

That's important, because the challenges Texas faces are vast and evolving, and we will need the skills and talents of every Texan on hand to continue to meet them head on and maintain this land of opportunity in our state.



Gov. Perry swears in Texas Supreme Court Associate Justice Eva Guzman, the first Hispanic woman to sit on the court. Guzman, along with former Chief Justice Wallace Jefferson, looking on, is among more than 1,800 minority Texans in key roles in state government.



Gov. Perry is joined in July 2013 by Texas legislators to sign House Bill 2, which protects unborn babies after the fifth month of a pregnancy and raises standards for women's health care in Texas. Texas has made a commitment to a "Culture of Life," which includes pregnancy resource centers and real options for women with unplanned pregnancies.

Culture of Life

For more than four decades, *Roe v. Wade* has been the law of the land in the United States of America.

While aspects of that ruling continue to be debated, Texas has refused to stand on the sidelines while abortions have already ended the lives of more than 54 million children in America since 1973.

We've worked to nurture and sustain a Culture of Life in Texas, a culture where children are protected, and united with families who want and love them.

We've also focused on protecting the health and safety of the women who find themselves facing a difficult, life ending decision.

Among the highlights:

- We banned the use of tax dollars for abortion procedures in the state of Texas.
- We required both parental notification and parental consent to their minor daughter's abortion, ensuring parents will be involved, ready to provide much-needed guidance and advice at the most critical of moments.
- We required physicians to perform a sonogram before an abortion to ensure a woman has all the facts before making her decision.
- We passed legislation requiring minimum standards for facilities providing abortions, in order to protect the health and safety of the women who use them.
- We passed legislation protecting unborn babies after the fifth month of a pregnancy—a point where studies have found that children can survive, and thrive, with appropriate care.

But a Culture of Life is about more than protecting the unborn.

A Culture of Life is about giving women in crisis pregnancies more options—true options—that do more than stop a beating heart.

The pro-life community across Texas has worked together to create important resources where women considering abortion can learn about adoption and receive important advice on how to have a healthy pregnancy and delivery.

By counseling women in crisis, volunteers across our state are increasing the likelihood that families desperate for a child will be connected with women willing to give the greatest gift of all ... the love of a child.

Through the adoption process and with continued community support, we can ensure each and every child is born to a loving home.

Second Amendment

In Texas, we believe in freedom, personal responsibility, and the God-given right to defend yourself and your family.

As a bastion of liberty, we believe in the Second Amendment as a way to protect the freedoms of the American people, and ensure their ability to protect their homes and enjoy the rich traditions of gun sports as they see fit.

Texas knows that keeping guns out of the hands of those who will use them properly and legally only makes it easier for predators to prey on the defenseless.

Even beyond personal protections, for many Texans, gun ownership is a family tradition dating back generations, a way for families to bond in the fields and woods of our state. It's a way to stay connected and form new friendships. It's also a way for cherished family heirlooms to be handed down from parent to child.

The outdoors is a way of life in Texas, and it's not a part of our lives that we take lightly.

That's why Texas has been among the strongest defenders of the Second Amendment when gun opponents seek to impose unnecessary and burdensome regulations upon law-abiding gun owners.

We've also ensured Texas has as many concealed handgun reciprocity agreements in place with other states as possible, up to 30 from the seven in place 14 years ago.

And, when other states turned on their gun manufacturers through misguided laws or just from public pressure, it's been Texas that has stood willing to welcome them.

Added to our low taxes, fair courts, smart regulations and world-class workforce, our state's dedication to the wisdom of the Second Amendment makes us a prime destination for these employers.

Indeed, several of these companies have relocated to Texas, and are now hard at work creating jobs in the Lone Star State.

Our message to them is simple: Texas is still a place that loves freedom, where people can pursue their dreams.



A video plays before Gov. Perry addresses the 2013 NRA Annual Conference in Houston. Gov. Perry highlighted the wisdom and importance of the 2nd Amendment to the Constitution, and extended a welcome to any gun manufacturer seeking to relocate to the Lone Star State.



Gov. Perry visits with Tuskegee Airman Thomas Ellis during the Governor's luncheon honoring World War II veterans on May 8, 2013 at the State Capitol. Texas has made a commitment to paying America's veterans back for their bravery and courage in defense of our nation.

Veterans

Texans have always been ready to answer the call to protect this great nation and defend its ideals around the world. From the beaches of Normandy, to the jungles of Vietnam, to the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan, Texans have stood willing at the forefront of the fight to protect our freedoms and against those who threaten them.

When they return home, these brave men and women in uniform deserve our eternal gratitude and, if necessary, a helping hand. While we can never adequately repay them for their selfless service, we've taken a number of steps over the past 14 years to show our thanks for the enormity of their dedication and sacrifice.

Often for our veterans, the biggest step is transitioning back into civilian life. That's why our commitment to veterans starts with providing them with the resources they need to make this transition, whatever their next step may be.

- To help make it easier for veterans to get a good education, we introduced in-state tuition for veterans who qualify for federal education benefits, as well as for their spouses and children.
- We started the College Credit for Heroes program, which allows veterans to gain college credit for the wealth of knowledge and experience they gained while serving. This program helps fast-track veterans' entry into the workforce by making sure they aren't taking classes for skills they've already mastered serving in the Armed Forces.
- To help returning veterans translate their skills to the workforce, we implemented a workforce development initiative and promoted a series of "Hiring Red, White and You" job fairs in communities across the state. These initiatives help pair employers and veterans, helping our nation's finest begin a career.
- We also provided full property tax relief to our veterans who are 100 percent disabled, and extended that exemption on to their surviving spouses.

Additionally, we've made sure that our men and women who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder upon returning home receive the care they need, by investing in cutting-edge facilities designed to treat a variety of mental illnesses.

Through the Texas Veterans Initiative, Texas will fund new programs that expand and evaluate community-based mental health programs for veterans and their families. These efforts will expand on our existing knowledge of mental illness, and hopefully will go a long way toward helping heal battle scars that aren't visible to the eye.

When shortcomings in the Veterans Administration were exposed and outrageous wait times revealed, we stepped forward to make sure Texas veterans were able to access the care guaranteed to them. To help accomplish this, we created the Texas Veterans Hotline, a valuable resource that helps guide veterans through the red tape of the VA. We also created a new Claims Processing Assistance Team to reduce the backlog of disability and health benefit claims, so our veterans can have their needs addressed more rapidly.

The more than 1.7 million veterans who call Texas home are a valuable and important part of the fabric of our state. These programs are a strong start to making sure we repay them for their invaluable service to our nation.

Arts in Texas

In Texas, we've learned that an amazing thing happens when taxes are low, and people get to keep more of their own money: the causes and passions they believe in benefit, too.

Our strong economic climate helps more people succeed in their entrepreneurial ventures, and our low taxes help them keep more of the proceeds of those ventures. Many reinvest that money in new equipment and new hires. And a lot of them decide to enrich their communities through the arts.

Thus, we've seen a flourishing of the cultural scene in cities large and small across the state, from poetry to plays. In Dallas, Houston, Austin and Fort Worth, the arts are playing a vital role in a tourism industry that brought in a record \$63.4 million last year alone.

Among the highlights:

- Fort Worth lays claim to a vibrant arts scene, including a world-class Modern Art Museum, and Bass Performance Hall, one of the finest symphony halls in the world.
- Dallas is already home to the largest urban arts district in the country, and has built two new performing arts facilities over the past decade.
- Austin has bolstered its international reputation through events like the Austin City Limits Music Festival, South by Southwest and the Formula 1 United States Grand Prix.
- On any given night, more theater seats are available in Houston's Theater District than anywhere else in the country save New York City.
- Houston is also one of only a few cities with resident companies in the four disciplines of the performing arts: ballet, opera, symphony and theater.

All of that has been accomplished because people have been able to keep more of their money and invest it in the cultural

scene in cities across Texas.

If their money had been collected in taxes and sent to Austin, there would be less available to fund these incredible works of art.


These institutions are proof positive that it's not a government program, or handout, it's people accomplishing things on their own.

When people are given the freedom to explore their boundaries, and push the envelope, there's absolutely no limit to what they can accomplish.



Texas' commitment to letting people keep more of their hard-earned dollars, instead of raising taxes, has resulted in those dollars flowing to passion projects, including the arts. Across the state, new facilities, like Ft. Worth's Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass Performance Hall, are being used to expose new generations to the arts.





“The spirit of discovery and adventure that drove the earliest settlers still beats in the hearts of Texans everywhere, as they push past the known into the unknown, in the laboratory, in the marketplace and in our universities.”

– Governor Perry, State of the State Address, 2011





Gov. Perry tours Methodist Hospital in the University of Houston's Medical Center, visiting with world-renowned doctors and researchers in October 2012. Texas has transformed into a world-class research center, with cutting-edge ideas being developed and put to use right here in our state.

Research in Texas

Just a decade ago, Texas was far from a factor in biotech. It wasn't the first place to come to mind for excellence in medical research and cutting-edge studies.

While world-class research was already being conducted in our state, and world-changing discoveries already being made, those discoveries all too often moved to the coasts in search of venture capital and a strong existing technical infrastructure.

What Texas needed was a rich infrastructure that could support clinical studies and ensure Texas discoveries stayed right here in Texas, every step of the way, from the laboratory to the patient.

That took strategic, targeted investments:

- In 2005, Lexicon Genetics provided an important biotech foothold as Texas invested to keep its main project, the mapping of the mouse genome, in the state.
- The Texas Institute for Preclinical Studies, opened at Texas A&M in 2009, gave researchers the ability to test promising new treatments for diseases, like cancer, with animal subjects in a real-world setting.
- The Institute of Biomedical Research, was created with the Methodist Hospital Research Institute at the University of Houston to study treatments for atherosclerosis, type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's disease, Lou Gehrig's disease and depression.
- The Center for Innovation in Advanced Development and Manufacturing, at Texas A&M, stands ready to rapidly produce millions of doses of vaccine in the event of a viral outbreak.

Along with research already being conducted at places like UT's M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and the Galveston National Laboratory at UTMB, Texas has increasingly become home to promising treatments at every stage of the production cycle.

This has led to a surge in related employment, making Texas a national leader in the creation of biotech jobs.

Of course, developing treatments is only part of the equation. You need more people ready to provide treatment to these patients.

That's why we've focused on improving access to care across the state through initiatives like our tort reforms, passed in 2003, which have resulted in lower malpractice insurance rates and more than 35,000 newly-licensed doctors practicing medicine in Texas. Many of those doctors practice in specialties like obstetricians, emergency medicine, and others deemed "high risk."

We're also building new medical schools to train them, and since doctors are more likely to stay close to where they complete their education, that means more doctors in our state and healthier Texans.

Not only has our state secured status as a growing leader in biotech, we've charted a direction toward more access to quality healthcare, and a future that's as healthy as it is economically strong.

Mansion's Rebirth

On June 8, 2008, the Texas Governor's Mansion, which had served the people of Texas for 150 years, was gutted by an arsonist's attack.

In the early hours of that morning, as firefighters braved the flames to preserve as much of this state treasure as they could, its future was very much in doubt.

Thanks to the bravery of those firefighters, and the generosity of the people of Texas, today the Governor's Mansion stands once again as a symbol of our state's enduring pride, and our dedication to preserving and protecting our state's storied history.

While the beauty and the grandeur of the classic architecture remains, behind it is the heart of the most advanced, 21st century dwelling.

Among the renovations:

- A geexchange heating and cooling system, which uses cutting-edge technology to utilize the stable temperatures of the earth to absorb heat from the house during the summer, and provide heat to the house during winter. This energy-efficient climate control system qualified the mansion for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, as well as Austin Energy's Green Building rating.
- A state-of-the-art fire-suppression system, along with numerous security enhancements.
- New additions to the structure's west side, along with improvements to make the building compliant with ADA requirements.

Despite these improvements, the mansion still appears largely the same as it did in the vision of master builder Abner Cook. The iconic, 29-foot columns across the front porch were salvaged, as were parts of the classic "x-and-stick" porch railings.

What couldn't be salvaged in the building was painstakingly recreated and installed.

Since renovations were already underway at the time of the fire, most of the mansion's valuable treasures were safely in storage, and have been returned to their rightful places, such as:

- Sam Houston's bed;
- Stephen F. Austin's writing desk;
- Portraits of Gov. and Mrs. Pease, who were in office when the mansion was built in 1856; and
- Robert Jenkins Onderdonk's famous 1903 painting, "The Fall of the Alamo."

In the face of disaster, the Texas Governor's Mansion has been reborn, not just as good as it was, but better.

This gem of Texas history stands ready to serve the people of Texas for another 150 years and beyond.



Gov. Perry and First Lady Anita Perry announce the 156-year-old Texas Governor's Mansion has been fully restored in July of 2012. Gutted by fire, the Mansion has been rebuilt as a symbol of the old and new coming together in Texas. While the Mansion maintains its classic look, everything inside has been modernized and brought into the new century.



Gov. Perry helps break ground on the SpaceX Commercial Launch Facility located near Boca Chica Beach in September 2014. The facility, the result of years of cooperation between Texas and SpaceX, will launch commercial satellites into orbit.

Poised for the Future

From the days of the first oil strikes at Spindletop, through the heart of the Space Race with the Soviet Union, into the age of the microchip and beyond, Texas has always been about bold innovation.

That tradition continues today, as natural gas once thought to be beyond reach is being used to power homes and create jobs.

It continues in the labs of UT's M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and Texas A&M's Center for Innovation in Advanced Development and Manufacturing, as new treatments and cures are being developed and tested.

It continues in the rugged terrain outside Brownsville, where SpaceX is building its first commercial launch facility, and in the process reaching out to students in the area to obtain real-world experience of the final frontier.

It continues on the plains of West Texas, where new technology enables us to harness the wind for much-needed electricity.

And it continues in the potential greatness within every Texas student participating in a robotics competition as part of their STEM education.

Texas has always been a place where people look at what hasn't been accomplished and wonder why not? Where people are willing to put in the hard work and long hours to make something out of nothing, whether that be a family farm or a new video game.

The secret of Texas—what people sometimes call the “Texas Miracle”—isn't a miracle at all. The secret of Texas lies within the people who live here. Always has, and always will.


The only time the state truly succeeds is when government learns to get out of the way, and free the people of Texas to do what they do best: Create. Build. Invest. And succeed.

At the dawn of a new administration, the State of Texas is positioned for continued greatness, and the people of Texas will never let us down as long as we remember to secure the freedoms they need to make the very most of each and every opportunity.

When they excel, we all excel, and for 14 years, Texans have proven they will always be exceptional workers, thinkers, dreamers and innovators.

That's why Texas is the best place in the nation to live, work, play, build a business and raise a family. And that's why it always will be.





“Texas is not merely strong, but exceptional. We are a testament to the power of freedom... to the entrepreneurial spirit unleashed from government interference.”

– Governor Perry, State of the State Address, 2013





IN GOD WE TRUST

