



CITY OF HOUSTON

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Mayor

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March 30, 2021

The Honorable Joe Deshotel
Chairman, House Land and Resource Management Committee
Texas House
Austin, Texas 78711-2068

Re: HB 3633

Dear Chairman Deshotel,

As we all know, Texas is one of the fastest-growing states in America. As a result, we just can't build roads fast enough to keep up. As soon as they're built, they seem to be immediately clogged with traffic. We aren't going to be able to build our way out of this problem. Of course, this growth is a blessing, but it comes with some complications. The I-45 corridor between Houston and Dallas is one of the most congested corridors and needs to be addressed.

High-speed rail is a solution whose time has come. It will cost the taxpayers of Texas nothing and will give Houston, North Texas and our entire state a competitive advantage over our competitors. No other state will be able to offer the same confluence of economic factors associated with this high-speed transportation amenity. It will create 10,000 jobs each year during construction and an estimated 1,000 new, highly-skilled jobs.

House Bill 3633 would establish an elaborate, lengthy review process via the High Speed Rail Legislative Review Committee that would consider awarding franchises for high-speed rail. This process would stop the Texas Central rail project and make any future high-speed rail project in Texas very, very unlikely. The state already has processes in place to facilitate public review of potential projects, and they don't discriminate against rail.

It makes no sense to create a separate bureaucracy specifically for passenger rail. Why aren't other forms of transportation subjected to such bureaucratic review? Further, this legislation would duplicate review that is facilitated by federal experts, which also benefits from public input.

Texas prides itself on being a business-friendly state. But this legislation wantonly adds unnecessary bureaucracy and will deter investors from Texas. HB 3633 is a transparent attempt to sabotage this unique transportation and economic opportunity for Texas. I urge you to vote against HB 3633.

Sincerely,

Bill Kelly
Director of Government Relations