



## **Texas on the Brink**

### *How Texas Ranks Among the 50 States*

**February 2005~Second Edition**

Ours is a great state. Since 1836, Texas has been built by those who believe that any Texan should have the opportunity to rise as high and far as their spirit, hard work and talent might carry them. Texans work hard to educate their children and are full of hope for a prosperous future, which is the heart of the American Dream. Today, that dream is distant, and our state is at a crossroads.

Many believe that the 78th Regular Legislative Session marked the passage from compassionate conservatism to just plain old mean spirit. In the aftermath of the Session, some public officials claimed that they had dealt with our budget shortfall in a way that “meets the basic needs of Texans,” and had done so without raising taxes. In reality, our leaders made a choice to value tax cuts over kids, and budget cuts over the elderly. Public education has been under-funded for years, services for many of the most vulnerable Texans have been devastated, and cuts to research programs at Texas universities and health science centers threaten to make them noncompetitive. Major costs have been shifted to local communities and taxpayers. Middle class students are now paying \$263 million in new tuition, and billions of federal dollars that would otherwise come to our state stayed in Washington D.C. Funding is so inadequate that litigants in major lawsuits against the state argue that key state agencies cannot provide even basic services required under federal and state law.

In 2003, Texas ranked 49th in state spending per capita and on tax revenue raised, with average state government spending nationwide 46 percent higher than in Texas. The state's rankings are the expected outcome of an inadequate, outdated and terribly regressive tax system; one that taxes those least able to pay the most. As long as Texas ranks near the bottom in the amount of state revenue raised and services offered, Texas will continue to rank near the bottom of the nation on key performance measures.

Simply put, our future prosperity depends on investment in low and middle income working families. Unless we as leaders of this great state make the necessary and critical investment in the education, health and safety of our people, we will leave a legacy of the first generation in Texas history to be less prosperous than the one before.

## State Rankings

### State Government Taxes and Spending

(50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶ Tax Revenue Raised <sup>1</sup>	49th
▶ Sales Tax Dependence <sup>2</sup>	2nd
▶ Property Tax Collected per Person <sup>3</sup>	16th
▶ Total General Expenditures <sup>4</sup>	49th
<i>Per Capita Spending on:</i>	
▶ Public Health <sup>5</sup>	45th
▶ Mental Health <sup>6</sup>	46th
▶ Education <sup>7</sup>	32nd
▶ Parks and Recreation <sup>8</sup>	48th
▶ Police Protection <sup>9</sup>	35th
▶ Government Administration <sup>10</sup>	50th
▶ Environmental Protection <sup>11</sup>	46th
▶ Water Quality <sup>12</sup>	49th
▶ Highways <sup>13</sup>	44th
▶ State Arts Agencies <sup>14</sup>	49th

**Education** (50th-lowest, 1st=highest)



▶ High School Graduation Rate <sup>15</sup>	50th
▶ Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Scores <sup>16</sup>	48th
▶ Secondary Teachers with Degrees in the Subjects they Teach <sup>17</sup>	45th
▶ State Aid per Pupil <sup>18</sup>	39th
▶ Average Teacher Salaries <sup>19</sup>	32nd
▶ Percentage of Adults with at Least a Bachelor's Degree <sup>20</sup>	25th
▶ Percentage of Low Income Students in Public Schools <sup>21</sup>	11th

**State of the Child** (50th=lowest, 1st=highest)



▶ Child Population Growth <sup>22</sup>	1st
▶ Percentage of Uninsured Children <sup>23</sup>	1st
▶ Percentage of Children Living in Poverty <sup>24</sup>	4th
▶ Percentage of Two-Year Olds Not Fully-Immunized <sup>25</sup>	6th
▶ Spending on Child Protection <sup>26</sup>	48th

**Health Care** (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶ Percentage of Population with Health Insurance <sup>27</sup>	50th
▶ Percentage of Insured Low-Income Children <sup>28</sup>	50th
▶ Percentage of Poor Covered by Medicaid <sup>29</sup>	48th
▶ Percentage of Population with Employer-based Health Insurance <sup>30</sup>	45th
▶ Rate at which Citizens Receive Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Abuse Problems <sup>31</sup>	45th
▶ Percentage of Adults who are within Recommended Weight Levels <sup>32</sup>	42nd

- ▶ **Percentage of Adults who Meet Recommended Levels of Daily Physical Activity<sup>33</sup>** 40th
- ▶ **Percentage of Population with Access to Primary Care<sup>34</sup>** 33rd
- ▶ **Prevalence of Obesity<sup>35</sup>** 12th

***Health and Welfare (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)***



- ▶ **Poverty Rate<sup>36</sup>** 7th
- ▶ **Percentage of Population that Goes Hungry<sup>37</sup>** 2nd
- ▶ **Percentage of Population that is Malnourished<sup>38</sup>** 3rd
- ▶ **Amount of Welfare and Food Stamp Benefits Paid<sup>39</sup>** 47th
- ▶ **Amount of Monthly Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Benefits Paid<sup>40</sup>** 49th
- ▶ **Minutes of Daily Care by Registered Nurses for Nursing Home Residents<sup>41</sup>** 46th
- ▶ **Compliance with the Supreme Court Olmstead Decision Declaring that Unjustified Institutionalization of a Disabled Person is Discrimination.<sup>42</sup>** 37th

***Health Professionals per Capita***

*(50th = lowest, 1st = highest)*



- ▶ **Physicians<sup>43</sup>** 40th
- ▶ **Dentists<sup>44</sup>** 41st
- ▶ **Pharmacists<sup>45</sup>** 44th
- ▶ **Psychologists<sup>46</sup>** 39th

***Women's Issues (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)***



- ▶ **Overall Birth Rate<sup>47</sup>** 2nd
- ▶ **Teenage Birth Rate<sup>48</sup>** 2nd
- ▶ **Number of Women Receiving**



***Environment*** (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



- ▶ **Amount of Toxic and Cancerous Manufacturing Emissions<sup>64</sup>** 1st
- ▶ **Number of Clean Water Permit Violations<sup>65</sup>** 1st
- ▶ **Number of Environmental Civil Rights Complaints<sup>66</sup>** 1st
- ▶ **Number of Hazardous Waste Spills<sup>67</sup>** 2nd
- ▶ **Number of Hazardous Waste Sites on the Environmental Protection Agency's National Priorities List<sup>68</sup>** 9th
- ▶ **Amount of Ozone Pollution Exposure<sup>69</sup>** 2nd
- ▶ **Per Capita Consumption of Energy<sup>70</sup>** 6th
- ▶ **Per Capita Consumption of Electricity<sup>71</sup>** 1st
- ▶ **Open Space Protection<sup>72</sup>** 46th

***Workforce*** (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



- ▶ **Unemployment Rate<sup>73</sup>** 9th
- ▶ **Average Hourly Earnings<sup>74</sup>** 46th
- ▶ **Income Distribution Equality<sup>75</sup>** 43rd
- ▶ **Government Employee Wages and Salaries<sup>76</sup>** 50th
- ▶ **Workforce Education<sup>77</sup>** 43rd
- ▶ **Percentage of Adults with Internet Access<sup>78</sup>** 32nd
- ▶ **Percentage of Workforce Represented by a Union<sup>79</sup>** 48th
- ▶ **Number of Job-Discrimination Lawsuits<sup>80</sup>** 1st

***Cost of Living*** (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶	<b>Home Ownership Rate<sup>81</sup></b>	<b>45th</b>
▶	<b>Homeowner's Insurance Affordability<sup>82</sup></b>	<b>50th</b>
▶	<b>Auto Insurance Affordability<sup>83</sup></b>	<b>39th</b>
▶	<b>Residential Electric Bill Affordability<sup>84</sup></b>	<b>50th</b>

***Public Safety*** (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶	<b>Number of Executions<sup>85</sup></b>	<b>1st</b>
▶	<b>Number of Gun Shows<sup>86</sup></b>	<b>1st</b>
▶	<b>Rate of Incarceration<sup>87</sup></b>	<b>2nd</b>
▶	<b>Total Crime Rate<sup>88</sup></b>	<b>5th</b>
▶	<b>Violent Crime Rate<sup>89</sup></b>	<b>11th</b>
▶	<b>Murder Rate<sup>90</sup></b>	<b>15th</b>
▶	<b>Rate of Firearm Deaths per 100,000 Population<sup>91</sup></b>	<b>33rd</b>
▶	<b>Number of Registered Machined Guns<sup>92</sup></b>	<b>1st</b>
▶	<b>Number of Deaths Attributed to Floods<sup>93</sup></b>	<b>1st</b>
▶	<b>Number of Highway Fatalities<sup>94</sup></b>	<b>2nd</b>
▶	<b>Number of Road-Rage Traffic Fatalities<sup>95</sup></b>	<b>2nd</b>
▶	<b>Number of Alcohol-Related Traffic Deaths as a Percentage of Highway Fatalities<sup>96</sup></b>	<b>9th</b>

***Democracy*** (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶	<b>Percentage of Eligible Voters that are Registered<sup>97</sup></b>	<b>44th</b>
▶	<b>Percentage of Eligible Voters that Go to the Polls<sup>98</sup></b>	<b>47th</b>



## *Other Facts*

### *Child Abuse and Neglect*

- In 2003, about 50,000 Texas children were victims of abuse and neglect.<sup>99</sup>
- On average in 2004, each Child Protective Services investigative caseworker had 61 cases.<sup>100</sup> Texas caseloads are twice the national average.<sup>101</sup> Accreditation agencies and professional groups recommend 12-18 cases per worker.<sup>102</sup>
- On child protection, Texas only spends \$110 per child. The national average is \$167 per child.<sup>103</sup>

### *Children and Families*

- In 2002, 151,464 Texas children were considered “At Risk” (having a significant impairment due to a mental disorder) and eligible for services through the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. However, only 26% of at risk, eligible children were served in 2002.<sup>104</sup>
- 29% of two-year olds in Texas are not fully immunized, whereas 20% are not at the national level.<sup>105</sup>
- About seven percent of Texas children are living in extreme poverty (income below 50% of the poverty level), compared to five percent on the national level.<sup>106</sup>
- The average Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance for a family is \$127 per month in



Texas; the monthly national average TANF cash assistance is \$354.<sup>107</sup>

- The average monthly benefit for Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) recipients is \$27.92, whereas the national average monthly benefit for WIC recipients in 2004 was \$37.67.<sup>108</sup>

### Education

- Annual expenditures per pupil in Texas public schools are \$5,444. Annual expenditures per prisoner in Texas prisons is \$13,283.<sup>109</sup>
- 73% of Texas fourth grade students scored below the proficiency level in reading in 2003.<sup>110</sup>
- 67% percent of Texas fourth grade students scored below the proficiency level in mathematics 2003.<sup>111</sup>
- The national high school drop-out rate is 9.8%;<sup>112</sup> the high school drop-out rate in Texas is 38% - 45% for African-American students, 24% for white students, and 50% for Hispanic students.<sup>113</sup>
- In 2003, the national combined SAT score was 1026, whereas for Texas, it was 993.<sup>114</sup>
- Eight institutions in the University of California System are ranked in the top 85 of U.S. News and World Report's national rankings of public universities. The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University at College Station are the only Texas public institutions of higher education on the list and neither is ranked in the top 50.<sup>115</sup>
- While the percentage of Americans with high school diplomas has risen to 85%, Texas is still lagging with only 77% of Texans age 25 or older having a high school diploma.
- Nationally, 24% of the population has a bachelors degree or higher; In the Lower Rio Grande Valley the percentage of the

population with this level of education is 13%.<sup>116</sup>

- Nationally, 7.5% of the population has less than a ninth grade education; in Texas 11.5% of the population has less than a ninth grade education.<sup>117</sup>

### **Elder Abuse and Neglect**

- On average in 2004, each Adult Protective Services caseworkers carried 60 cases.<sup>118</sup> Accreditation agencies and professional groups recommend 12-18 cases for each worker.<sup>119</sup>
- According to a 2002 U.S. House of Representatives report, 86% of nursing homes in Texas did not meet federal standards governing quality of care;<sup>120</sup>
- 94% of nursing homes did not meet minimum staffing levels;<sup>121</sup> 39% of facilities had a violation that caused actual harm to nursing home residents or placed them at risk for death or serious injury;<sup>122</sup>
- The average nursing home in Texas provided just 21 minutes of daily care by registered nurses for each resident--less than half of the minimum required by the regulatory agency.<sup>123</sup>
- In 2004, the Austin American-Statesman reported that 84% of Texas nursing homes have been cited for fire safety deficiencies.<sup>124</sup>

### **The Uninsured**

- 22% of Texas children are without health insurance. The national average is 12%.<sup>125</sup>
- 5.1 million uninsured people live in Texas.<sup>126</sup>
- The state's uninsured rate is 23.5%, giving Texas the highest uninsured rate in the country.<sup>127</sup>
- Employer-based health insurance in the U.S. dropped from 60.9% in 2000 to 57.8% in 2001. Two-thirds of the decrease was due to workers losing coverage through their

employer.<sup>128</sup>

- Based on the 85 largest metropolitan areas in the country, El Paso has the highest number of uninsured residents.<sup>129</sup>
- Texas has the highest medical chiropractic costs per claim.<sup>130</sup>

### **Health Professionals**

- Texas has 162 physicians per 100,000 population; the national average is 198 per 100,000 population.<sup>131</sup>
- El Paso has 110 physicians per 100,000 population.<sup>132</sup>
- Texas has only 633 Registered Nurses per 100,000 population, significantly fewer than the national average of 798.<sup>133</sup>
- Texas has 37 dentists per 100,000 population; the national average is 48 per 100,000 population.<sup>134</sup>

### **Income Disparity**

- In 2000, the United States was the world's wealthiest nation and leading economic power, as well as the western industrialized nation with the greatest gap between the rich and poor.<sup>135</sup>
- The average income in the top fifth of income distribution in Texas is over twelve times greater than the average income in the bottom fifth.<sup>136</sup>
- Middle and low-income Texas families did not share equally in the economic boom of the eighties and nineties. Families that made \$36,000 and under only gained four percent, while families who made \$84,500 or more gained 33%.<sup>137</sup>
- The Lower Rio Grande Valley metropolitan area ranks last in the nation in per capita income, averaging only 45% of the U.S. per capita income.<sup>138</sup>

### **Taxation**

- Texas' tax system is listed as one of the "Terrible Ten" most regressive states in the nation.<sup>139</sup>

- Texas requires poor families, those in the bottom 20% of the income scale, to pay more than three times as great a share of their earnings in taxes as the wealthy.<sup>140</sup>
- Middle income families pay more than twice as high a share of their income in taxes as the wealthiest families.<sup>141</sup>
- Changes in state and local taxes over the past decade have made state tax systems even more regressive. Overall, low and middle-income taxpayers saw their burden grow, while the top-fifth wealthy Texans primarily received tax reductions.<sup>142</sup>

### **Obesity**

- 22.4% of 4th graders, 19.2% of 8th graders and 15.5% of 11th graders in Texas are overweight.<sup>143</sup>
- Overweight prevalence is highest in Texas among Hispanic boys (29.5-32.6%).<sup>144</sup>
- 70% of Texas youths do not attend physical education class daily.<sup>145</sup>
- Three of the top 10 “Fattest Cities in America” are in Texas, with Houston ranked number one, Dallas ranked number six, and San Antonio ranked number ten. El Paso is ranked number 11.<sup>146</sup>

### **Sexual Education**

- Texas does not require schools, nor does it provide state funds to give students information on HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, or pregnancy prevention education.<sup>147</sup>
- 51% of Texas high school students have had sexual intercourse. 38% of those students did not use a condom the last time they had intercourse. 88% of those students did not use birth control pills the last time they had sex.<sup>148</sup>
- Texas has no state law or administrative rule that addresses attendance for pregnant or parenting students, nor does the

state require districts to offer alternative programs for such students.<sup>149</sup>

### Transportation

- Traffic delays cost Texas urban drivers about \$5.5 billion per year.<sup>150</sup>
- Traffic delays in Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston cost each driver in those cities \$711 a year. In Austin, traffic delays cost each driver \$590 a year.<sup>151</sup>
- Traffic volume is growing 16 times faster than lane miles are added.<sup>152</sup>
- Every two minutes, someone is injured. The resulting economic loss to Texas is \$9.3 billion annually.<sup>153</sup>
- 3,725 people died on Texas highways in 2002.<sup>154</sup>

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