

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A BAN ON TAXPAYER-FUNDED LOBBYING

WHEREAS, taxpayer-funded lobbying occurs when local governments, political subdivisions, school districts, or associations use public tax dollars to hire in-house lobbyists, retain outside lobbyists or lobbying firms, pay lobbying fees, fund lobbying activities, or support associations that are funded through taxpayer dollars (via membership dues or other public payments) and that themselves utilize in-house lobbyists or retained outside firms to engage in lobbying the Texas Legislature; and

WHEREAS, this practice is often used to influence lawmakers in favor of anti-taxpayer policies, including greater government power, expanded bureaucracy, increased corporate welfare and crony economic development programs, heavier regulatory burdens on businesses, special loopholes or exemptions, and higher taxes, while opposing pro-taxpayer reforms, creating an unethical system of government lobbying government for more government at the taxpayer's expense; and

WHEREAS, taxpayer-funded lobbying creates a vicious cycle in which local political subdivisions collect taxes from taxpayers, then use those tax dollars to hire lobbyists who travel to Austin to influence lawmakers for policies that often increase taxes on taxpayers—a function local officials could perform themselves; and

WHEREAS, thousands of local governments—including cities, counties, school districts, and special districts—engage in taxpayer-funded lobbying, with local governments collectively spending upwards of \$100 million in taxpayer dollars in direct contract lobbying to lobby state lawmakers during the 89th legislative session and recent sessions, nearly double earlier amounts such as the nearly \$41 million spent in 2017; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2023 Pew Research Center study, more than 7 out of every 10 Americans (73%) believe lobbyists and special interest groups have too much power and influence over lawmakers, while recent polling ranks the lobbying profession among the least trustworthy overall; and

WHEREAS, a 2020 Republican Primary Ballot Proposition successfully passed by over 94% of Republican primary election voters in favor of banning the practice; and

WHEREAS, at the 2024 Republican Party of Texas State Convention, grassroots delegates voted to select "Ban Taxpayer-Funded Lobbying" as one of the top eight Legislative Priorities for the 89th Legislature, with strong support reflecting widespread grassroots demand to prohibit the use of tax dollars for lobbying by political subdivisions, school districts, and government associations; and

WHEREAS, during the 89th legislative session, bills to ban the practice passed out of the Texas Senate three times (SB 19 in the regular session, SB 12 in the first special session, and SB 13 in the second special session), often in clean form without harmful amendments after

addressing prior dilutions; additionally, despite ultimately dying in the House State Affairs Committee without a hearing or a vote, the companion House bill HB 186 in the second special session, secured co-sponsorship from 72 House co-authors; and

WHEREAS, Governor Greg Abbott explicitly included legislation banning taxpayer-funded lobbying on his agendas for both special sessions of the 89th Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the State Republican Executive Committee (SREC) of the Republican Party of Texas passed resolutions on March 22, 2025, condemning the Senate amendment to SB 19 that gutted the ban on taxpayer-funded lobbying while commending defending senators, and on October 7, 2025, condemning repeated obstruction of the measure and ultimately calling on Gov. Abbott to call for a third special session to include the ban and property tax relief, and noting such inaction violates RPT rules and grassroots priorities, thereby affirming the issue as a top Legislative Priority; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Republican Party of Texas strongly supports and calls for the enactment of a full and comprehensive ban on all forms of taxpayer-funded lobbying, prohibiting the use of any public tax dollars by political subdivisions, school districts, associations, or other entities that derive funding from taxpayers to hire lobbyists, pay lobbying fees, or fund lobbying activities in any manner, and that such legislation be advanced without loopholes, carve-outs, or dilutions that would allow the practice to continue under alternative structures; and that the Republican Party of Texas call upon all Republican legislators to prioritize and advance legislation achieving a clean and enforceable ban, support the convening of special sessions if necessary to secure passage, decline influence from taxpayer-funded lobbying organizations and their PACs, and work to hold accountable any who obstruct or dilute this grassroots priority; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Republican Party of Texas make banning taxpayer-funded lobbying a top Legislative Priority ahead of the 90th Legislative Session, consistent with the Party's platform opposition to tax-funded lobbying (Plank 212 of the 2024 RPT Platform) and its commitment to limited government, fiscal responsibility, and protecting Texas taxpayers from having their own money used to lobby against their interests; and that the Republican Party of Texas call upon all Republican legislators to prioritize and advance legislation achieving a clean and enforceable ban; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the _____ County/Senate District # _____ Convention Resolutions Committee from Precinct # _____ with the recommendation that it be passed and sent to the State Convention Platform Committee of the Republican Party of Texas.