



## **Conservatives Issue Plan to Grow the Economy, Create Jobs** ***Jobs for Texans Plan a Stark Contrast to the Federal Stimulus***

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Contact: Brent Connett, 512-474-1798

[Austin, Texas] – In light of the unemployment data released last week, conservative state legislators announced their plan to stimulate growth in the Texas economy. Although Texas remains better off economically than the rest of the nation, the most recent unemployment figures illustrate the imperative for a targeted and responsible state-level plan to grow the economy and create jobs.

State Representative Linda Harper-Brown (R-Irving) stated: “Given the growing rate of jobless in Texas – two full percentage points higher than this time last year -- it is imperative that the Texas Legislature take a direct and responsible approach to job growth.” Rep. Harper-Brown continued: “We must focus our efforts on tax reform, job retention, and workforce development programs that have proven to work.”

The “Jobs for Texans” policy plan issued by the Texas Conservative Coalition (TCC) takes three approaches to helping workers and businesses:

1. Reducing the tax burden on businesses.
2. Retaining jobs in Texas through targeted incentives.
3. Investing in workforce development.

Harper-Brown added: “With all the talk about the mammoth government stimulus package whose impact is purely speculative, we believe it is essential that the Legislature impact the state economy by doing what we know is proven to work.”

On March 26, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) reported that Texas’ seasonally adjusted nonagricultural employment fell by 46,100 in February. Revised data showed Texas employers lost 55,900 jobs in January. Texas recorded a net loss of 62,600 in the past 12 months, compared with job losses of 4.2 million nationwide during the same period. The Texas unemployment rate is up slightly from 6.4 percent in January and 4.5 percent in February 2008.

State Representative Phil King (R-Weatherford) added: “So far, Texas has weathered the current economic crisis relatively well thanks to sound tax policies and targeted job growth programs put in place over the last six years.” Rep. King continued: “Texas actually created 393,300 jobs over the past two years, which is 124,300 more jobs than the Obama administration estimates will be created or saved by the federal stimulus over the next two years.”

Rep. King added: “But we refuse to remain idle. Our Jobs for Texans economic recovery plan is to limit taxes and make targeted investments in proven job training programs that give unemployed Texans the support they need to get back to work.”

State Representative Bill Callegari (R-Katy), an engineer from Katy, underscored that tax relief is the single best way to relieve the burden on Texas businesses: “While intended to reduce school property taxes, the current franchise tax couldn’t have hit at a worse time. Just as the nation was sliding into recession in December 2007, Texas businesses were forced to pay for this new tax that is an administrative and fiscal nightmare. By significantly lowering the franchise tax, we can allow businesses to make the investments and take the risks that will create jobs for Texans.”

State Representative David Swinford (R-Dumas), who is taking the lead on a new workforce program, said, “The strength of our economy relative to the rest of the nation is a testament to our low-tax policies and smart workforce development programs. To give workers the best chance of getting back to work as quickly as possible, we must fully fund job training programs that deliver a real return on investment for the Texas economy and our workers.”

State Representative Dan Flynn concluded: “We know tax cuts, workforce development programs and targeted incentives work. Our job is to make sure the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature takes the necessary steps to help Texas employers and workers in these troubling economic times.”

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