

Statement of the
Institute for Justice, Castle Coalition, National Taxpayers Union,
Americans for Tax Reform, Property Rights Alliance,
Texas Conservative Coalition
in support of HJR 14 and HB 417

Eminent domain reform is imperative. We urge you to consider the recommendations in this letter, and to take the necessary steps that will give our citizens the reform they have been demanding since *Kelo v. City of New London* was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2005.

- SB 18 must be strengthened by the House before passage. The Senate version no longer includes key language that defined “public use” and addressed the central issue of *Kelo* directly. **Amend SB 18 with language, similar to Florida, that prohibits the transfer of property acquired by eminent domain for 15 years** (with limited exceptions for incidental leases and road projects).
- SJR 42 is a constitutional amendment that claims to address eminent domain abuse, but in fact it would make the situation worse by allowing a city’s subjective determination about a project’s “purpose” to determine whether eminent domain is permissible. **Vote NO on SJR 42.**
- HJR 14 is a strong constitutional amendment that squarely addresses the central issues of *Kelo*. **Vote YES on HJR 14.**
- HB 417 is an important bill that would stop cities from declaring entire areas blighted in order to take land for private redevelopment. By forcing cities to condemn on a parcel-by-parcel basis, HB 417 is an important step toward ending abuse that is occurring in El Paso. **Please urge the House Calendars Committee to bring the bill to the floor this week. Vote YES on HB 417.**

We believe that these measures are crucial if Texas is to once and for all solve its *Kelo* problem. Eminent domain abuse is a problem that affects all Texans, but it disproportionately impacts lower-income individuals, minorities, and small business owners. No one is asking for anything other than that the constitutional right to be secure in our homes and businesses be upheld. The people of our great state deserve nothing less.

Thank you.

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