



August 10, 2020

Dear Mayor Brown and City Council Members,

Attached please see the letter sent to the Governor of Texas by the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce thanking him for adding Property Tax Relief to the agenda for the Special Session and further asking for his support of HB 117. This legislation, introduced by State Representative Mayes Middleton, will provide meaningful appraisal relief. Similar letters of support are being sent by many of our City's business organizations and citizens and we are hopeful the City will take a leadership role in this important effort by sending supporting correspondence as well.

As you also heard in testimony from our Chairman, Terrilyn Tarlton, and Advocacy Co-Chair Theresa Elliott at last month's Council meeting, we will be asking City Council (and other County and School Board representatives) to adopt a lower tax rate to combat the most recent unprecedented increases in property values by the Central Appraisal District. These new valuations, if taxed at the current tax rates, will have devastating effects on our residents and business alike.

While we all support essential services provided by the City, you must consider that your constituents are suffering from the impacts of COVID along with the excessively high property valuations and other taxes across the board. We are all tightening our belts and creatively managing our own resources and expenses with less revenue, and we expect no less of our City leaders. It is crucial that our government representatives adopt tax rates that reflect no increases in the amount of taxes their constituents pay. Even with the adoption of a lower tax rate, the City will still be receiving additional revenues from new properties that have been added to the tax rolls.

We appreciate your support in this crucial issue and trust that with careful examination of the City's expenses and efficiencies, a lower tax rate reflecting no increases in your constituents' billings is achievable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Conner".

Steve Conner
Co-Chair Advocacy Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Theresa Elliott".

Theresa Elliott
Co-Chair Advocacy Committee



August 4, 2021

The Honorable Greg Abbott
State of Texas
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Governor Abbott:

On behalf of the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce and our more than 800 members, I want to thank you for adding Property Tax Relief to your "call" during the special session.

As you are aware, property tax reform from the 86th Legislative Session primarily impacted local taxing entities and the need for voter approval beyond certain tax rate increases. However, the need for appraisal reform remains, and property owners in every corner of our state are now bearing the brunt of dramatic value increases through what is commonly referred to as "appraisal creep."

Several bills were filed during the 87th Legislature that could have helped slow "appraisal creep" and its resulting tax liabilities upon Texans statewide but as you know, they passed the House but never made it to the Senate. In the upcoming Special Session, a newly introduced piece of legislation, House Bill 117 by Mayes Middleton, creates an increased the margin of error of the Property Value Study—a driving source of higher appraised property values. We respectfully ask for your full support of this bill.

Property tax rate reform was partially achieved in 2019. However, in order to deliver meaningful appraisal relief, we need HB 117 to be passed. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gina M. Spagnola".

Gina M. Spagnola
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Theresa Elliott".

Theresa Elliott
Advocacy Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Connor".

Steven Connor
Advocacy Co-Chair