



SENATOR PAUL BETTENCOURT

DISTRICT 7

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Greater Houston Partnership Endorses Property Tax Relief for 1st Time, Supports SB 2 Calls for comprehensive reforms to improve accountability and proficiency in the property tax system

HOUSTON – Recognizing that the property tax burden on business and home owners in Texas is among the highest in the country, the Greater Houston Partnership has endorsed property tax reform and relief and passed a resolution to support Senate Bill 2 by Senator Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston). The Partnership highlighted that Senate Bill 2 would give taxpayers a greater voice in the rate-setting processes of the growing number of local taxing entities statewide, and that if passed, the bill would improve nearly every part of the process, including the overall timeline, appraisal and property valuation, rate- setting, and collection.

“The Greater Houston Partnership has a long-standing commitment to improving the Texas property tax system, and Senate Bill 2 does exactly that for all Texas taxpayers,” said Marc Watts, incoming Chair of GHP’s Board of Directors. **“SB 2, if passed, would improve nearly every part of the property tax system for business owners and home owners alike.”**

Senate Bill 2 will lower the growth rate of property taxes across the state by reducing the rollback rate from 8 to 4 percent. At least two of the major urban counties, Harris and Bexar, have property tax levy growth rates above 35 percent in just three years. As values go up, tax rates must come down.

“The Greater Houston Partnership is the largest business organization in Southeast Texas and a major voice for the State on economic issues,” said Senator Bettencourt. **“The recognition of the need for a property tax solution from a major business organization like GHP, and the fact that they are stepping out and supporting property tax reform and relief is something that speaks volumes.”**

As noted by the Greater Houston Partnership, taxpayers will have a greater voice as they will be voting in automatic tax rate ratification elections for all taxing entities, like counties, cities, and special districts, in November. The bill also creates a property tax advisory board to reprise the interim committee’s role to listen to taxpayer complaints and look at best practices at appraisal districts across the state.

“Because SB 2 is lowering the rate of growth, no logical argument can be made that it is lowering existing police, fire, or emergency system services,” said Senator Bettencourt. **“It is time for the opponents of SB 2 to start talking facts and to stop relying on scare tactics. Senate Bill 2 is about slowing the growth of tax bills and the growth of government in the future.”**

The Senate Finance Committee will hold public hearing on Senate Bill 2 on Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at the Texas Capitol. The hearing is scheduled to begin at 8:00 AM, and public testimony is welcome and likely will begin in the late afternoon.

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