

Texas on the Brink

How Texas Ranks Among the 50 States

February 2005~Second Edition

Ours is a great state. Since 1836, Texas has been built by those who believe that any Texan should have the opportunity to rise as high and far as their spirit, hard work and talent might carry them. Texans work hard to educate their children and are full of hope for a prosperous future, which is the heart of the American Dream. Today, that dream is distant, and our state is at a crossroads.

Many believe that the 78th Regular Legislative Session marked the passage from compassionate conservatism to just plain old mean spirit. In the aftermath of the Session, some public officials claimed that they had dealt with our budget shortfall in a way that “meets the basic needs of Texans,” and had done so without raising taxes. In reality, our leaders made a choice to value tax cuts over kids, and budget cuts over the elderly. Public education has been under-funded for years, services for many of the most vulnerable Texans have been devastated, and cuts to research programs at Texas universities and health science centers threaten to make them noncompetitive. Major costs have been shifted to local communities and taxpayers. Middle class students are now paying \$263 million in new tuition, and billions of federal dollars that would otherwise come to our state stayed in Washington D.C. Funding is so inadequate that litigants in major lawsuits against the state argue that key state agencies cannot provide even basic services required under federal and state law.

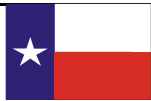
In 2003, Texas ranked 49th in state spending per capita and on tax revenue raised, with average state government spending nationwide 46 percent higher than in Texas. The state's rankings are the expected outcome of an inadequate, outdated and terribly regressive tax system; one that taxes those least able to pay the most. As long as Texas ranks near the bottom in the amount of state revenue raised and services offered, Texas will continue to rank near the bottom of the nation on key performance measures.

Simply put, our future prosperity depends on investment in low and middle income working families. Unless we as leaders of this great state make the necessary and critical investment in the education, health and safety of our people, we will leave a legacy of the first generation in Texas history to be less prosperous than the one before.

State Rankings

State Government Taxes and Spending

(50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶ Tax Revenue Raised ¹	49th
▶ Sales Tax Dependence ²	2nd
▶ Property Tax Collected per Person ³	16th
▶ Total General Expenditures ⁴	49th

Per Capita Spending on:

▶ Public Health ⁵	45th
▶ Mental Health ⁶	46th
▶ Education ⁷	32nd
▶ Parks and Recreation ⁸	48th
▶ Police Protection ⁹	35th
▶ Government Administration ¹⁰	50th
▶ Environmental Protection ¹¹	46th
▶ Water Quality ¹²	49th
▶ Highways ¹³	44th
▶ State Arts Agencies ¹⁴	49th

Education (50th-lowest, 1st=highest)

▶ High School Graduation Rate ¹⁵	50th
▶ Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Scores ¹⁶	48th
▶ Secondary Teachers with Degrees in the Subjects they Teach ¹⁷	45th
▶ State Aid per Pupil ¹⁸	39th
▶ Average Teacher Salaries ¹⁹	32nd
▶ Percentage of Adults with at Least a Bachelor's Degree ²⁰	25th
▶ Percentage of Low Income Students in Public Schools ²¹	11th

State of the Child (50th=lowest, 1st=highest)

▶ Child Population Growth ²²	1st
▶ Percentage of Uninsured Children ²³	1st
▶ Percentage of Children Living in Poverty ²⁴	4th
▶ Percentage of Two-Year Olds Not Fully-Immunized ²⁵	6th
▶ Spending on Child Protection ²⁶	48th

Health Care (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)

▶ Percentage of Population with Health Insurance ²⁷	50th
▶ Percentage of Insured Low-Income Children ²⁸	50th
▶ Percentage of Poor Covered by Medicaid ²⁹	48th
▶ Percentage of Population with Employer-based Health Insurance ³⁰	45th
▶ Rate at which Citizens Receive Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Abuse Problems ³¹	45th
▶ Percentage of Adults who are within Recommended Weight Levels ³²	42nd

- ▶ **Percentage of Adults who Meet Recommended Levels of Daily Physical Activity³³** 40th
- ▶ **Percentage of Population with Access to Primary Care³⁴** 33rd
- ▶ **Prevalence of Obesity³⁵** 12th

Health and Welfare (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



- ▶ **Poverty Rate³⁶** 7th
- ▶ **Percentage of Population that Goes Hungry³⁷** 2nd
- ▶ **Percentage of Population that is Malnourished³⁸** 3rd
- ▶ **Amount of Welfare and Food Stamp Benefits Paid³⁹** 47th
- ▶ **Amount of Monthly Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Benefits Paid⁴⁰** 49th
- ▶ **Minutes of Daily Care by Registered Nurses for Nursing Home Residents⁴¹** 46th
- ▶ **Compliance with the Supreme Court Olmstead Decision Declaring that Unjustified Institutionalization of a Disabled Person is Discrimination.⁴²** 37th

Health Professionals per Capita

(50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



- ▶ **Physicians⁴³** 40th
- ▶ **Dentists⁴⁴** 41st
- ▶ **Pharmacists⁴⁵** 44th
- ▶ **Psychologists⁴⁶** 39th

Women's Issues (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



- ▶ **Overall Birth Rate⁴⁷** 2nd
- ▶ **Teenage Birth Rate⁴⁸** 2nd
- ▶ **Number of Women Receiving**

	Prenatal Care⁴⁹	37th
▶	Rate of Women Ages 50-65 who Receive Mammograms⁵⁰	45th
▶	Rate of Women Ages 18-64 who Receive Pap Smears⁵¹	47th
▶	Women's Well-Being⁵² (measured by health and well-being, employment and earnings, social and economic autonomy, reproductive rights)	45th

Diseases (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶	Risk for Heart Disease⁵³	6th
▶	Prevalence of Infectious Diseases⁵⁴	8th
▶	Prevalence of Diagnosed Diabetes⁵⁵	8th
▶	Diabetes Death Rate⁵⁶	8th
▶	Rate of Disease per 100,000 People⁵⁷	9th

Access to Capital (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶	Percentage of Home Refinance Loans that are Subprime-mortgage Loans (generally 3 to 4 percentage points or more higher than a comparable prime market loan)⁵⁸	1st
▶	Households with Savings Accounts⁵⁹	41st
▶	Households with Checking Accounts⁶⁰	43rd
▶	The Total Assets of Banks, Trust Companies, and Savings Institutions Located in the State⁶¹	45th
▶	Amount of Money that Banks Located in the State Collect through Deposits in Relation to the Amount of Money the Banks Re-channel Back into Communities Through Loans⁶²	47th
▶	Average Consumer Credit Score⁶³	50th

Environment (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)

▶	Amount of Toxic and Cancerous Manufacturing Emissions ⁶⁴	1st
▶	Number of Clean Water Permit Violations ⁶⁵	1st
▶	Number of Environmental Civil Rights Complaints ⁶⁶	1st
▶	Number of Hazardous Waste Spills ⁶⁷	2nd
▶	Number of Hazardous Waste Sites on the Environmental Protection Agency's National Priorities List ⁶⁸	9th
▶	Amount of Ozone Pollution Exposure ⁶⁹	2nd
▶	Per Capita Consumption of Energy ⁷⁰	6th
▶	Per Capita Consumption of Electricity ⁷¹	1st
▶	Open Space Protection ⁷²	46th

Workforce (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)

▶	Unemployment Rate ⁷³	9th
▶	Average Hourly Earnings ⁷⁴	46th
▶	Income Distribution Equality ⁷⁵	43rd
▶	Government Employee Wages and Salaries ⁷⁶	50th
▶	Workforce Education ⁷⁷	43rd
▶	Percentage of Adults with Internet Access ⁷⁸	32nd
▶	Percentage of Workforce Represented by a Union ⁷⁹	48th
▶	Number of Job-Discrimination Lawsuits ⁸⁰	1st

Cost of Living (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶	Home Ownership Rate ⁸¹	45th
▶	Homeowner's Insurance Affordability ⁸²	50th
▶	Auto Insurance Affordability ⁸³	39th
▶	Residential Electric Bill Affordability ⁸⁴	50th

Public Safety (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶	Number of Executions ⁸⁵	1st
▶	Number of Gun Shows ⁸⁶	1st
▶	Rate of Incarceration ⁸⁷	2nd
▶	Total Crime Rate ⁸⁸	5th
▶	Violent Crime Rate ⁸⁹	11th
▶	Murder Rate ⁹⁰	15th
▶	Rate of Firearm Deaths per 100,000 Population ⁹¹	33rd
▶	Number of Registered Machined Guns ⁹²	1st
▶	Number of Deaths Attributed to Floods ⁹³	1st
▶	Number of Highway Fatalities ⁹⁴	2nd
▶	Number of Road-Rage Traffic Fatalities ⁹⁵	2nd
▶	Number of Alcohol-Related Traffic Deaths as a Percentage of Highway Fatalities ⁹⁶	9th

Democracy (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)



▶	Percentage of Eligible Voters that are Registered ⁹⁷	44th
▶	Percentage of Eligible Voters that Go to the Polls ⁹⁸	47th



Other Facts

Child Abuse and Neglect

- In 2003, about 50,000 Texas children were victims of abuse and neglect.⁹⁹
- On average in 2004, each Child Protective Services investigative caseworker had 61 cases.¹⁰⁰ Texas caseloads are twice the national average.¹⁰¹ Accreditation agencies and professional groups recommend 12-18 cases per worker.¹⁰²
- On child protection, Texas only spends \$110 per child. The national average is \$167 per child.¹⁰³

Children and Families

- In 2002, 151,464 Texas children were considered “At Risk” (having a significant impairment due to a mental disorder) and eligible for services through the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. However, only 26% of at risk, eligible children were served in 2002.¹⁰⁴
- 29% of two-year olds in Texas are not fully immunized, whereas 20% are not at the national level.¹⁰⁵
- About seven percent of Texas children are living in extreme poverty (income below 50% of the poverty level), compared to five percent on the national level.¹⁰⁶
- The average Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance for a family is \$127 per month in

Texas; the monthly national average TANF cash assistance is \$354.¹⁰⁷

- The average monthly benefit for Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) recipients is \$27.92, whereas the national average monthly benefit for WIC recipients in 2004 was \$37.67.¹⁰⁸

Education

- Annual expenditures per pupil in Texas public schools are \$5,444. Annual expenditures per prisoner in Texas prisons is \$13,283.¹⁰⁹
- 73% of Texas fourth grade students scored below the proficiency level in reading in 2003.¹¹⁰
- 67% percent of Texas fourth grade students scored below the proficiency level in mathematics 2003.¹¹¹
- The national high school drop-out rate is 9.8%;¹¹² the high school drop-out rate in Texas is 38% - 45% for African-American students, 24% for white students, and 50% for Hispanic students.¹¹³
- In 2003, the national combined SAT score was 1026, whereas for Texas, it was 993.¹¹⁴
- Eight institutions in the University of California System are ranked in the top 85 of U.S. News and World Report's national rankings of public universities. The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University at College Station are the only Texas public institutions of higher education on the list and neither is ranked in the top 50.¹¹⁵
- While the percentage of Americans with high school diplomas has risen to 85%, Texas is still lagging with only 77% of Texans age 25 or older having a high school diploma.
- Nationally, 24% of the population has a bachelors degree or higher; In the Lower Rio Grande Valley the percentage of the

- population with this level of education is 13%.¹¹⁶
- Nationally, 7.5% of the population has less than a ninth grade education; in Texas 11.5% of the population has less than a ninth grade education.¹¹⁷

Elder Abuse and Neglect

- On average in 2004, each Adult Protective Services caseworkers carried 60 cases.¹¹⁸ Accreditation agencies and professional groups recommend 12-18 cases for each worker.¹¹⁹
- According to a 2002 U.S. House of Representatives report, 86% of nursing homes in Texas did not meet federal standards governing quality of care;¹²⁰
- 94% of nursing homes did not meet minimum staffing levels;¹²¹ 39% of facilities had a violation that caused actual harm to nursing home residents or placed them at risk for death or serious injury;¹²²
- The average nursing home in Texas provided just 21 minutes of daily care by registered nurses for each resident--less than half of the minimum required by the regulatory agency.¹²³
- In 2004, the Austin American-Statesman reported that 84% of Texas nursing homes have been cited for fire safety deficiencies.¹²⁴

The Uninsured

- 22% of Texas children are without health insurance. The national average is 12%.¹²⁵
- 5.1 million uninsured people live in Texas.¹²⁶
- The state's uninsured rate is 23.5%, giving Texas the highest uninsured rate in the country.¹²⁷
- Employer-based health insurance in the U.S. dropped from 60.9% in 2000 to 57.8% in 2001. Two-thirds of the decrease was due to workers losing coverage through their

employer.¹²⁸

- Based on the 85 largest metropolitan areas in the country, El Paso has the highest number of uninsured residents.¹²⁹
- Texas has the highest medical chiropractic costs per claim.¹³⁰

Health Professionals

- Texas has 162 physicians per 100,000 population; the national average is 198 per 100,000 population.¹³¹
- El Paso has 110 physicians per 100,000 population.¹³²
- Texas has only 633 Registered Nurses per 100,000 population, significantly fewer than the national average of 798.¹³³
- Texas has 37 dentists per 100,000 population; the national average is 48 per 100,000 population.¹³⁴

Income Disparity

- In 2000, the United States was the world's wealthiest nation and leading economic power, as well as the western industrialized nation with the greatest gap between the rich and poor.¹³⁵
- The average income in the top fifth of income distribution in Texas is over twelve times greater than the average income in the bottom fifth.¹³⁶
- Middle and low-income Texas families did not share equally in the economic boom of the eighties and nineties. Families that made \$36,000 and under only gained four percent, while families who made \$84,500 or more gained 33%.¹³⁷
- The Lower Rio Grande Valley metropolitan area ranks last in the nation in per capita income, averaging only 45% of the U.S. per capita income.¹³⁸

Taxation

- Texas' tax system is listed as one of the "Terrible Ten" most regressive states in the nation.¹³⁹

- Texas requires poor families, those in the bottom 20% of the income scale, to pay more than three times as great a share of their earnings in taxes as the wealthy.¹⁴⁰
- Middle income families pay more than twice as high a share of their income in taxes as the wealthiest families.¹⁴¹
- Changes in state and local taxes over the past decade have made state tax systems even more regressive. Overall, low and middle-income taxpayers saw their burden grow, while the top-fifth wealthy Texans primarily received tax reductions.¹⁴²

Obesity

- 22.4% of 4th graders, 19.2% of 8th graders and 15.5% of 11th graders in Texas are overweight.¹⁴³
- Overweight prevalence is highest in Texas among Hispanic boys (29.5-32.6%).¹⁴⁴
- 70% of Texas youths do not attend physical education class daily.¹⁴⁵
- Three of the top 10 “Fattest Cities in America” are in Texas, with Houston ranked number one, Dallas ranked number six, and San Antonio ranked number ten. El Paso is ranked number 11.¹⁴⁶

Sexual Education

- Texas does not require schools, nor does it provide state funds to give students information on HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, or pregnancy prevention education.¹⁴⁷
- 51% of Texas high school students have had sexual intercourse. 38% of those students did not use a condom the last time they had intercourse. 88% of those students did not use birth control pills the last time they had sex.¹⁴⁸
- Texas has no state law or administrative rule that addresses attendance for pregnant or parenting students, nor does the

state require districts to offer alternative programs for such students.¹⁴⁹

Transportation

- Traffic delays cost Texas urban drivers about \$5.5 billion per year.¹⁵⁰
- Traffic delays in Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston cost each driver in those cities \$711 a year. In Austin, traffic delays cost each driver \$590 a year.¹⁵¹
- Traffic volume is growing 16 times faster than lane miles are added.¹⁵²
- Every two minutes, someone is injured. The resulting economic loss to Texas is \$9.3 billion annually.¹⁵³
- 3,725 people died on Texas highways in 2002.¹⁵⁴

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