



Texas on the Brink

How Texas Ranks Among the 50 States

You get what you pay for. In Texas, we do not get much because we do not pay for much. Compared to other states, Texas ranks near the bottom in spending for education, health care, environmental protection, workforce development, public safety, and other services and protections. Our failure to invest in ourselves puts our children at risk and our future in jeopardy.

In tough times, families tighten their belts and take long, hard looks at their budgets. But even in tough times, families still find ways to buy food and clothing, to put a roof over their heads, and to send their children to school. Texas should do no less for its citizens and it must not further tighten its belt around the necks of those most in need.

Some assert that Texas has engaged in a spending spree. A review of the dismal numbers below will substantiate that this is clearly untrue. For Texas' and our children's future to be prosperous, we must reverse past patterns and begin to invest in ourselves. Texas does indeed have a problem, but it is in how we invest, not how much we spend. In a misguided effort to be frugal, we are starving the Texas dream.

State Government Spending and Per Capita Tax Rankings (50th = lowest, 1st = highest)

▶	Tax Revenue Raised¹	49th
▶	Sales Tax Dependency²	2nd
▶	Total General Expenditures³	50th
▶	Public Health ⁴	45th
▶	Mental Health ⁵	47th

▶	Education ⁶	37th
▶	Highways ⁷	42nd
▶	Public Welfare and Medicaid ⁸	46th
▶	Parks and Recreation ⁹	48th
▶	Police Protection ¹⁰	49th
▶	Government Administration ¹¹	50th
▶	Environmental Protection ¹²	46th

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

▶	Percentage of Population Graduated from High School ¹³	46th
▶	High School Completion Rate ¹⁴	45th
▶	State Aid per Pupil ¹⁵	41st
▶	Secondary Teachers with Degrees in the Subjects they Teach ¹⁶	45th
▶	Average Teacher Salaries ¹⁷	30th
▶	Percent of Adults with at Least a Bachelor's Degree ¹⁸	27th
▶	Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Scores ¹⁹	47th

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

▶	Percentage of Population without Health Insurance ²⁰	1st
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▶ Percentage of Poor Covered by Medicaid ²¹	44th
▶ Physicians per Capita ²²	40th
▶ Dentists per Capita ²³	41st
▶ Pharmacists per Capita ²⁴	44th
▶ Psychiatrists per Capita ²⁵	36th
▶ Number of Women Receiving Prenatal Care ²⁶	45th
▶ Rate of Disease per 100,000 People ²⁷	9th
▶ Risk for Heart Disease ²⁸	12th
▶ Percentage of Obese Adults ²⁹	10th
▶ Percentage of People with Access to Dental Care ³⁰	48th
▶ Rate at which Citizens Receive Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Abuse Problems ³¹	45th
▶ Overall Health of the State ³²	37th

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) ³³	1st
▶ The total assets of banks, trust companies, and savings institutions located in the state ³⁴	38th
▶ The 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 local communities through loans ³⁵	48th

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

- ▶ Amount of Toxic Emissions from Manufacturing Facilities³⁶ **1st**
- ▶ Amount of Toxic Release Inventory Chemicals Used by Manufacturing Industries³⁷ **1st**
- ▶ Number of Clean Water Permit Violations³⁸ **1st**
- ▶ Number of Environmental Civil Rights Complaints³⁹ **1st**
- ▶ Number of Hazardous Waste and Spills⁴⁰ **1st**
- ▶ Amount of Ozone Pollution Exposure⁴¹ **2nd**
- ▶ Park Spending and Acreage⁴² **49th**
- ▶ Per Capita Spending on Water Quality⁴³ **47th**
- ▶ Open Space Protection⁴⁴ **46th**
- ▶ Per Capita Consumption of Energy⁴⁵ **5th**

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

- ▶ Percentage of Uninsured Children⁴⁶ **1st**
- ▶ Percentage of Fully-Immunized Two-Year Olds⁴⁷ **50th**
- ▶ Percentage of Population Under Age 18 who are Living in Poverty⁴⁸ **9th**

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

▶	Poverty Rate ⁴⁹	6th
▶	Percentage of Population that goes Hungry ⁵⁰	2nd
▶	Percentage of Population that is Malnourished ⁵¹	3rd
▶	Amount of Welfare and Food Stamp Benefits Paid ⁵²	47th
▶	Teenage Birth Rate ⁵³	2nd

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

▶	Unemployment Rate ⁵⁴	10th
▶	Average Hourly Earnings ⁵⁵	44th
▶	Workforce Education ⁵⁶	43rd
▶	Income Gap Between Rich and Poor ⁵⁷	8th
▶	Number of Job-Discrimination Lawsuits ⁵⁸	3rd
▶	Percentage of Adults with Internet Access ⁵⁹	39th

Cost of Living (50th = worst, 1st = best)

▶	Homeowners as Percentage of Population ⁶⁰	45th
▶	Homeowners Insurance Affordability ⁶¹	50th
▶	Auto Insurance Affordability ⁶²	39th

- ▶ Residential Electric Bills Affordability⁶³ **50th**

Public Safety (1st = most, 50th = least)

- ▶ Number of Executions⁶⁴ **1st**
- ▶ Number of Adults in the Criminal Justice System⁶⁵ **1st**
- ▶ Number of Adults Incarcerated⁶⁶ **2nd**
- ▶ Number of Firearm Deaths⁶⁷ **2nd**
- ▶ Number of Registered Machined Guns⁶⁸ **1st**
- ▶ Number of Traffic Fatalities⁶⁹ **1st**
- ▶ Number of Alcohol-Related Traffic Fatalities⁷⁰ **1st**
- ▶ Number of Road-Rage Traffic Fatalities⁷¹ **2nd**
- ▶ Highway Expenditures, per Vehicle-Mile Traveled⁷² **44th**
- ▶ Highway Expenditures, per Capita⁷³ **45th**

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

- ▶ Percentage of Eligible Voters that are Registered⁷⁴ **46th**
- ▶ Percentage of Eligible Voters that Go to the Polls⁷⁵ **47th**

Texas Facts

Children

- Over 1 million Texas children are without health insurance.⁷⁶
- 1 in 5 Texas children are poor.⁷⁷
- Nine percent of Texas children were in extreme poverty (income below 50 percent of the poverty level) in 1999.⁷⁸
- Maximum Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance for a family of three is \$201.⁷⁹
- Although nearly 1.3 million children are potentially eligible for child care in Texas, only eight percent of these children will receive a subsidy.⁸⁰
- In 2001, Children's Protective Services (CPS) staffing and projected expenditures were \$576,031,456.⁸¹
- In 2002, 297 children were placed into CPS custody as a last resort for mental health services.⁸²
- In 2001, about 43,000 Texas children were victims of abuse and neglect.⁸³
- In 2001, the average CPS worker had a caseload of 27 children.⁸⁴

Education

- The high school dropout rate for Texas is 40 percent. Whites drop out at a rate of 27 percent, whereas Blacks dropout at a rate of 46 percent and Hispanics at 52 percent.⁸⁵
- 71 percent of Texas fourth grade students read below the proficiency level in 2000.⁸⁶
- 23 percent of Texas fourth grade students scored below the basic math level in 2000.⁸⁷
- 32 percent of Texas eighth grade students scored below the basic math level in 2000.⁸⁸
- Texas has an average combined SAT score lower than the national average. In 2002, the national combined score was 1,020, whereas for Texas it was only 991.⁸⁹
- While the national SAT average has been slowly but steadily rising since 1995, the Texas average has been slowly dropping. In 1995, the US average SAT score was 1,010, and now, it has risen to 1,020. The Texas average in 1995 was 996 and has now dropped to 991.⁹⁰
- While California has six public universities ranked in the top 50 nationwide, Texas has only one, the University of Texas at Austin (47).⁹¹

Income Disparity

- The average income in the top fifth of income distribution in Texas was at least ten times greater than the average income in the bottom fifth.⁹²
- 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 percent.⁹³
- 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.⁹⁴

Taxation

- Middle and low-income Texas families have a higher tax rate than wealthy families.⁹⁵
- Texas' tax system is listed as one of the "Terrible Ten" most regressive states in the nation.⁹⁶
- Texas asks poor families, those in the bottom 20 percent of the income scale, to pay more than three times as great a share of their earnings in taxes as the wealthy.⁹⁷
- Middle income families pay more than twice as high a share of their income in taxes as the wealthiest families.⁹⁸
- Tax regressivity has worsened since 1998. Overall, low and middle-income taxpayers saw their burden grow, while the top-fifth wealthy Texans primarily received tax reductions.⁹⁹

Transportation

- About 25,000 lane miles need rehabilitation, and over 12,000 bridges are classified as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Only 70 percent of bridges in Texas are in good condition.¹⁰⁰
- Rough roads in Texas are increasing annual vehicle operating costs by \$163 per motorist.¹⁰¹
- Traffic delays cost Texas urban drivers about \$5.5 billion per year.¹⁰²
- Traffic volume is growing 16 times faster than lane miles are added.¹⁰³

- Every 2.5 hours there are 75 vehicular crashes in Texas, someone dies, and two people are injured, with an economic loss of about \$9 billion annually.¹⁰⁴

Health Care

- Texas has 162 physicians per 100,000 population; the national average is 198 per 100,000 population.¹⁰⁵
- Texas has only 633 Registered Nurses per 100,000 population, significantly fewer than the national average of 798.¹⁰⁶
- Five of the 15 cities deemed to be the “Fattest Cities in America” are in Texas, with Houston ranked number one.¹⁰⁷

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